



McMaster University Retirees Association

Spring 2022

<http://mcmaster-retirees.ca>

President's Corner



This Spring President's Corner is my last as MURA's President. In my previous message to McMaster retirees, I lamented the negative effect COVID-19 has had on our social life. My whole year as President has been a Zoom year. As well, the previous year when I was Vice President was also a Zoom year. However, I expressed optimism that 2022 was hopefully the last of these gloomy years. I still maintain that optimism despite the sixth spike of COVID-19. Despite the staying power of this infection, I believe if we get four doses of the vaccine, we will see each other face-to-face at our December Holiday Lunch.

For this year, our last Zoom meeting will be our Annual General Meeting on Tuesday, June 7th. Please plan to join us.

Our most recent meeting was for our new retirees over the last year, held on April 5th. While we were not able to have our traditional in-person lunch, I believe it was a success. The purpose of this meeting is to welcome new retirees and to introduce them to the organization and services of MURA.

As with all our meetings of members, we had an interesting McMaster speaker, Margaret Denton, who spoke on the topic "Moving towards an age friendly Hamilton". Margaret is a sociologist by training who specializes in health, aging and society. She is the former Director of the McMaster Centre for Geriatric Studies. In her talk she demonstrated her

Notice of Annual General Membership Meeting

Date: Tuesday, June 7, 2022
Time: 1:00 - 2:30 PM
Location: Zoom, online or by phone
(Due to the restrictions of COVID-19)

See p. 3 for details and please plan to attend.

expertise in age-friendly cities and how this knowledge is being used to make Hamilton an age-friendly city. Margaret brings theory and application to the city of Hamilton in her role as a Director for the Hamilton Council on Aging. All participants in our meeting found Margaret's presentation highly informative.

After our guest speaker, the meeting turned to an introduction to MURA as an organization. This was performed by our webmaster Nora Gaskin. This included a handout on who we are and what we do, how we introduce new retirees to MURA, the role, functions and activities of MURA Council, and our promotion of scholarships for students studying to gain knowledge of issues that promote the well-being of seniors. Nora's handout described our December Holiday lunch, our communication activities and our connection with the College and University Retirees Association of Canada (CURAC) and CURAC benefits and services available to MURA members. All this information can be reviewed on our website <http://mcmaster-retirees.ca>.

A second handout was one from Human Resources, “New Retiree Benefit Reminders”. This handout explained many aspects of retiree benefits and how they might differ from employee benefits. A very useful part of this handout tells you how to check your coverage. This includes the phone number (1-800-361-6212) and website of www.sunlife.ca. MURA complements the work of McMaster Human Resources. This was acknowledged by Tim Doucette who represented McMaster Human Resources. Tim, in his remarks, mentioned that MURA does an excellent job in explaining retiree benefits to our members.

The third handout, “Mac Retiree Benefits and Perks” is probably the most valuable to a new McMaster retiree. This handout is a composite of MURA’s Pension and Benefits page <http://mcmaster-retirees.ca/pensions-benefits> and McMaster Human Resources Retiree Information <http://hr.mcmaster.ca/retirees>.

The material on pensions explains the difference between defined pensions and group RRSPs. This is followed by material on health, dental and life insurance. Be sure you have your benefit booklet. The third subject is travel and emergency medical

insurance. Sections four and five deal with home, auto and pet insurance as well as travel opportunities. These are provided by the McMaster Alumni Association and CURAC. The rules around campus parking are next. Section seven explains McMaster email, computing, and connectivity. The next section lays out how you can gain access to fitness and rehabilitation services. The last section has the interesting title, “McMaster perks”. The subtitles define ten various McMaster opportunities open to retirees.

Active membership in MURA can keep you up to date on all these benefits and perks. But even if you find it difficult to attend our social events, you can keep up with these benefits and perks by reading *MURAnews*, by going to our website and by exploring McMaster’s Human Resources website.

I’m hoping I’ll see many of you in-person at our social events next year and I wish you all a pleasant summer.

Hank Jacek
Email: jacek49@cogeco.ca
Phone: 905-628-8857

News from MURA

MURA Scholarship Fund
McMaster University Retirees Association



MURA Graduate Scholarship Fund
Please Give Generously

We are very close to awarding the first annual MURA graduate scholarship. Retirees and friends of MURA have made generous gifts to the endowment fund, and MURA Council allocated a \$3,000 extraordinary budget surplus generated during the COVID-19 pandemic. Only \$6,000 in additional donations is needed to reach the goal.

The graduate award fund will provide a \$1,000 annual scholarship to a graduate student researching technological advances related to seniors.

Please donate online at MURAscholarship.ca, or by phone at 905-525-9150, ext. 24224.

Your tax-deductible gift, whether small or large, will help future McMaster graduate students.

MURA members have been supporting academic awards since 1992. A separate, fully-funded endowment continues to provide an annual \$2,500 in-course scholarship and a \$750 graduand prize to undergraduate students studying society’s aging population. The new graduate scholarship will add to MURA’s legacy of student support.

Need More Information?

If you do not have access to a computer and would like a copy of any of the items for which we have provided web links, please leave a message on the MURA phone (905-525-9140, ext. 23171) and we will print a copy and mail it to you.

Notice of Annual General Membership Meeting

Date: Tuesday, June 7, 2022
Time: 1:00 - 2:30 PM
Location: Zoom online (Due to the restrictions of COVID-19)

MURA members may participate either online or by phone.

Registration is required by 8:00 pm Monday, June 6.

To participate online:

- RSVP by email to mura@mcmaster.ca, with the subject line "MURA AGM"
- Please include your full name in the email. We will send you a link and password for the Zoom meeting via email by Monday, June 6.

To participate by phone:

- Leave a voice message for MURA at 905-525-9140, ext. 23171
- We will contact you with a phone number and password for the Zoom meeting by Monday, June 6
- Please note that the closest Zoom phone connection is a 647 (Toronto) area code, so you may incur long distance charges.

Please plan to attend. All participants will be entered into an attendance draw for a \$25 electronic gift certificate to Amazon or Chapters.

Special Presentation to the AGM

Listening to nature - all day and all night - in
McMaster Forest



The guest speaker, **Dr. Doug Welch**, Professor of Physics and Astronomy and Vice-Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies, will talk about the Hamilton Naturalists' Club research project he is involved with. While Doug is an observational astronomer, another side of his attention has

concentrated on bioacoustic monitoring of birds (and other species) in the McMaster Forest. He will share his experiences with long-time recording in locations around southern Ontario and with the Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy. The audio recordings are transformed into "sonograms" (also known as "audiospectrograms" in which bird vocalizations can be visualized. The "images" are then passed through a freely-available machine-learning program called BirdNet to produce a list of detections of different species. Such constant monitoring can help reveal the arrival times of migrating birds from year to year in a systematic way.

In this talk, Dr. Welch will present a number of spectrograms of species - and play the corresponding recordings - to reveal the rich lode of information present in such monitoring. Finally, he will discuss how anybody with a modern smartphone can capture sonograms and identify them.

Business Meeting: Including reports of Officers and Council Elections. The report from the Nominating Committee follows.

Contacting MURA

Mail Gilmour Hall B108, McMaster University
1280 Main Street West, Hamilton, ON L8S 4L8
Phone 905-525-9140, ext. 23171
(voicemail is checked once a week)
Email mura@mcmaster.ca
Website <http://mcmaster-retirees.ca/>

2022 Nominating Committee Report MURA Council 2022/2023

Honorary President*: Alvin Lee

Executive

Past President (ex officio): Hank Jacek

President (Nominated): Susan Birnie (One-year term, to 2023)

Vice President (Nominated): Kathy Overholt (One-year term, to 2023)

Treasurer*: Nancy Gray

Secretary*: Nora Gaskin

Councillors

Nominated for office, three-year terms until 2025:

Mary Gauld

Jan Nicholson

Richard Stubbs

Continuing in office until 2024:

Cliff Andrews

Dina LoPresti

Continuing in office until 2023:

John Horsman

Betty Ann Levy

*Appointed

In accordance with Article 8.01 Section 3 of the MURA Constitution: "Further nominations for the nominated positions will be received by the Secretary of the Association up to seven (7) days prior to the date set for the annual general meeting from nominators who are regular members of the Association together with the verbal or written acceptance of the nominee.

Nominations will also be received from regular members at the annual general meeting."

Nominating Committee

Helen Barton (Chair)

Helen Ayre

Barry Diacon

John McKay

Kathy Overholt



McMaster note cards

“Fall Colours at Mac”

Original watercolour by Stephanie Lisak, McMaster Retiree

9 x 4-1/8”, 80 lb. textured paper, inside is blank

\$1.50 per card, plus postage (or, in the Hamilton area, you can arrange to pick up your cards)

Proceeds to the MURA special projects fund

- To order online and pay by email money transfer, email MURA at mura@mcmaster.ca
- To order by post, mail your request to **MURA, Gilmour Hall B108, McMaster University, 1280 Main St. W., Hamilton, ON L8S 4L8**

Please include your name, postal address, phone number or email address, and the number of cards you would like.

- Online payments: please make your e-transfer payable to mura.treasurer.22@gmail.com
- Mailed requests: please enclose a cheque or money order for the amount of your order, payable to MURA

Cost: \$1.50 per card, plus postage

Postage charges within Canada:

- 1 to 5 cards - \$2.20; 6 to 10 cards - \$3.60
- more than 10 cards: \$3.60 per every 10 cards; \$2.20 for any additional number from 1 to 5

As an example, for MURA to mail you 25 cards:	Cards	\$37.50 (25 x \$1.50)
	<u>Postage</u>	<u>\$ 9.40</u> (\$3.60 + \$3.60 + \$2.20)
	Total Cost	\$46.90 (Cards + Postage)

Non-Canadian addresses – please contact MURA for a postage estimate at the above address, or by email to mura@mcmaster.ca before placing an order.

Retirees in the News

By Mary Johnston

May Cohen, Professor Emeritus, Family Medicine, has donated a comprehensive collection of documents to McMaster's Health Sciences Archives. This resource for future generations spans Cohen's life from medical school to the present. In January, the Mac *Daily News* web site announced the donation and published an [article](#) documenting her remarkable life as a physician, educator and advocate for women's rights.

Welcome New Retirees

Compiled by Kathy Overholt

Dawn Hoogstraten, Media Production Services, Printing
Lisa Morine, Environment & Occupational Health

Belated welcome to:
Gina Robinson, Student Affairs
Robert Snider, Library

Recent Passings

Compiled by Kathy Overholt

Judith Anderson, Music, Jan 25/22
William Bennett, Surgery, Mar 1/22
Cameron Crowe, Chemical Engineering,
Feb 3/22
Marju Drynan, Library, Feb 19/22
Susan Fletcher, Printing Services, Jan 25/22
Edward Glanville, Anthropology, Jan 28/22
Alvin (Archie) Hamielec, Chemical Engineering,
Jan 30/22
Alan Hart, Pediatrics, Mar 23/22
Hans Heinig, Mathematics & Statistics,
Apr 4/22
Rudy Heinzl, Student Affairs, Feb 12/22 *
Helen Howard-Lock, Chemistry, Feb 17/22
Anthony Kerigan, Medicine, Jan 17/22

Anna Kosicki, Facility Services, Mar 8/22
Susan McGowan, Medicine, Mar 6/22
Ernest Mead, Mathematics & Statistics,
Feb 20/22
Irene Miller, Library, Feb 24/22
Claris Price, UTS – Enterprise Systems,
Jan 9/22
Averil Thompson, Human Resources,
Mar 17/22
Susan Watt, School of Social Work, Feb 21/22
Hazel Young, Hospitality Services, Jan 27/22

*See the *Daily News* article "[Remembering Rudy Heinzl](#)".



courtesy of Meanwhile in Canada

Members' Corner

The views and opinions expressed in Members' Corner are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of MURA Council.

Time Well Spent

By Dennis McCalla, Biochemistry

I got my start as a woodworker in my teens, encouraged by my father who was an accomplished woodworker, and through grades 7 to 10 by an excellent shop teacher. Upon retirement, my wife Kay and I moved to 50 acres overlooking the Beaver Valley in Grey County. This provided scope to increase my woodworking activities. With family help, we built a garage with an attached insulated and heated shop which was well separated from the house. Kay especially appreciated having my noisy and dusty activities out of the house!

I first made a variety of furniture for our home as well as for our children. For a time, I had a small business with commissions from neighbours and friends. It turned out that many of our daughter's friends saw furniture I had made for her and offered commissions. We joked that I had a showroom at her home in Port Elgin! The business didn't make me rich but it more than paid for the tools I purchased over the years and for materials.

Over the years I have designed and made dining room chairs and tables, cabinets, tables of various types, desks, including custom computer desks, bookcases, blanket boxes, and a number of turned bowls. Some of these items were made with maple harvested from our own woodlot. Making toys for our grandchildren and those of friends has been a special pleasure.

For many years woodworking has kept me happily occupied especially through the winters. There is much joy in taking rough lumber and turning it into useful and attractive items. And yes, I still have two thumbs and all eight fingers!



Objurgatory? Dwy?

By Elaine McKinnon Riehm, Faculty of Humanities,
Eighteenth-Century Studies
(This article was previously published in the
McMaster Macaroon.)

During the past long winter, I made the acquaintance of Gervase Fen, Oxford Master of English Literature and irregular sleuth created by William Crispin (1921–1978) in a series of murder mysteries. The book cover of *The Case of the Gilded Fly* assures readers that Crispin's tales are “intelligent, humane, surprising and rattling good fun.” While engaging, his characters are often eccentric, tending towards the dotty; their vocabulary is high Oxford, tending towards the cryptic perhaps.

Crispin tells us that to keep him within bounds, Gervase Fen's wife often has reasons to caution him, frequently interjecting “Now Gervase' in an objurgatory but automatic manner.” Just what manner is that? I wondered. A short paragraph later a character observes as Fen “became launched on his logomachy.” Had I missed something? How did an ancient Greek vessel find its way into an Oxford quadrangle? A few pages later, readers bump into a “goetic ritual of exorcism” (cryptic indeed, and we are only at chapter 3 and have just heard a gunshot).

Edmund Crispin was a writer and composer and graduate of Oxford. He wrote *The Case of the Gilded Fly*, his first Gervase Fen story, while still an undergraduate in the 1940s. It is possible that his contemporary readers glided over “objurgatory,”

“logomachy,” and “goetic” without a pause let alone a dictionary. Perhaps at that time such words were commonplace or at least were understood by most readers, especially Oxford folk.

How far we have fallen since then, I thought, opening my father's *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (1921). There we find “objurgatory”: a chiding or scolding manner; “logomachy”: a dispute about words, a controversy turning on merely verbal points; “goetic”: pertaining to black magic or necromancy.

The book that has recently risen to the top of my bedside pile is Newfoundland writer Michael Crummey's *Sweetland*. Not a mystery, nevertheless like Crispin's mysteries it employs an exuberant, sometimes cryptic, vocabulary, for example: “mauzy,” “strel,” and “dwy.” I am glad that by chance on a recent trip to St. John's I bought the *Dictionary of Newfoundland English*. Otherwise, how would I know what a dumbledore is? For our mutual enlightenment: “About the best time to visit the Awlin is in June when the dumbledores is buzzin' round the pissabeds, or as they would say upalong where the language has been watered down to a shocking extent, ‘when the bees are buzzing around the dandelions.’”

Be forewarned, in addition to a distinctive local vocabulary, subject-verb agreement is up for grabs in Crummey, “idn't it”?

Judges have awarded first prize in the Odd Word Award to writers from Newfoundland and Labrador with an honourable mention to those from Oxford.



“You, my friend, are what we call
the way-too-early bird.”

courtesy of **Rose Anne Prevec**
Instagram: [@groundhog_hill](https://www.instagram.com/groundhog_hill)



Meanwhile in Canada

@MeanwhileinCana

There are 5 stages of winter:
Shock
Denial
Anger
Depression
April

courtesy of Meanwhile in Canada

The Birthing of the Canadian Phoenix

By Steve Staniek, *Health Physics*

We had retired from the constant noise of the big city to a quiet place in the country we called High Reach, where we learned that we were to become grandparents for the first time. Our son's growing family would need more space during weekend visits. It was time to finish the basement by constructing a separate apartment with a private walkout.

Granddad's Workshop

It meant finding a new home for all my woodworking equipment and materials, so the idea for a small workshop under the back deck emerged. My first choice for materials was a traditional board and batten cladding to cover the exterior. I love the rustic texture and piney fragrance of rough-cut pine, and I've used it on many projects. It weathers to a warm grey and reveals the interior character of the tree it came from.

As the new workshop grew, it became evident it would require a bit of engineering to control water, ice, and snow from above. Big doors and windows would facilitate the easy movement of construction materials.

The announcement of a new life in the family was welcomed with instant joy. I wanted the workshop to commemorate the event, so I decided to decorate the exterior with a bold sign declaring: "Granddad's Workshop". The large side doors, hinged to swing open like shutters, looked like a good place to make my sign.



One early morning as I began to draw letters on a cardboard template for "Granddad's Workshop", my momentum suddenly disappeared, like air rushing out of a balloon. It no longer felt like the right thing to do. As my original concept faded away, more exciting thoughts, like new life from old, began to visit me.

I surveyed the workshop from a different perspective, a shamanic perspective. The side doors faced east and would be the first thing to be illuminated as the solar wind rushes ahead of the rising sun each morning, sending waves of charged particles over the waters of the Bay of Quinte, behind my home. To my shamanic eyes this was a sacred spot, a place where human and divine energies converge each morning to begin their daily journey that ends at sunset.



I brought the pine doors inside, and as I admired the intimate beauty of the heartwood that would be my canvas, the heady fragrance rising from the pine boards filled the house, and me. The raw wood was pregnant with potential, and my thoughts began to reorganize in a new direction. I began to sense subtle creative impulses, which felt more appropriate and compelling as the wood whispered a higher purpose.

Shamanic healing is inspired and guided by helping spirits, and I felt I was being led by my heart to something bigger. Perhaps it was my long and close relationship with the bird world that opened the door to their ancient secrets and allowed the Phoenix of healing compassion to form in my heart and emerge. I felt its energy over me for the next three weeks, as I recreated it stroke by stroke, colour by colour, and brought it to life with dormant skills that surprised me.

As a shaman working to heal communities of their colonial wounds, I've spent years writing anti-colonial, and anti-war articles, so many of my daily thoughts cascade in these directions.

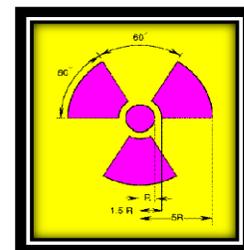
The Phoenix has been an ancient symbol of great change, resurrection, and freedom from death. It was a popular symbol on Christian headstones until the 4th century, when Emperor Constantine the Conqueror imposed the Roman Cross on Christianity.

Now, the completed firebird smiles back at me and the world, as it reveals its transformative, healing colours. It's message to my grandchildren will be: **"We are divinely eternal"**.



The Construction of the Canadian Phoenix

- Two panels of rough-cut pine boards provided a 6 x 3-foot wooden canvas. On this textured surface, I drew feathers styled after Egyptian artwork depicting Isis and Osiris, until the feathers formed a wing. (Osiris may have inspired the Phoenix myth).
- The traditional Phoenix wears the colours of sunrise, but I updated my 21st century Phoenix with today's most significant colours, which happen to be my working colours. For 40 years I protected workers in the nuclear industry under the universal nuclear warning symbol, which in its purest form is a magenta trefoil on a field of yellow. Magenta is a spiritual colour because it exists in our heads and does not occur naturally. We experience magenta in our brain when it processes a specific frequency (vibration) as a colour. Yellow has always been the colour of high spirituality. I dressed my bird in three shades of nuclear magenta, mixed with other sunrise colours.
- I adorned her body with seven raw crystals of amethyst from Northern Ontario. Amethyst has the ability to absorb spiritual energies by charging or altering its crystal structure and releasing it as healing energy when needed.
- The blue triangles on the bird's tail represent essential male and female energies in balance.
- The nest below the bird reveals the greatest mystery of human life. It shows how the yellow egg (human spirit) separates from the large blue triangle (our physical body) at the end of life, to renew itself as the spiritual seed preparing for its next life.
- The outline of the Phoenix wings forms a big friendly smile.



The Canadian Phoenix at High Reach



Inspired Artwork

I'm not an artist, but every morning, as I reached over my worktable to pick up my art tools, a gentle warmth would start up my hands, and spread over me. For the next few hours, I would slip into a soft trance state as my mind focused on the magical firebird. My arthritic hands seemed more fluid and moved deftly as they manipulated droplets of paint into wooden crevices. The creative process can lift us out of depression, and as this artwork grew into a meditative process, I began to feel gentle healing taking place on many levels. Those were wonderful weeks when I felt the warm flow of the universe carried in the colours I was using to materialize the Canadian Phoenix. The healing had started.

More of Steve's writings can be read at <https://the-art-of-autism.com/tag/steve-staniek/>.

A Musical Journey from Playing to Composing

by Fred Moyes, *Departments of Anatomy and Kinesiology*

In 1943 when I was ten years old, I bought my first little accordion with ten pounds I had earned picking potatoes for a local farmer. There was no accordion teacher in Aberfeldy, the tiny Scottish country town in which I grew up, so I bought a six-page tutor titled simply "How to play the piano-accordion". Five years later, I joined a dance band which played in the Town Hall every Saturday night. The dance program, although primarily 'modern' dancing, contained a few traditional Scottish dances which were danced with great gusto, unbridled energy and a notable lack of the refinements expected by the [Royal Scottish Country Dance Society](#) (RSCDS). This over-enthusiastic display, particularly by young dancers, was seen by one Jean Milligan of Glasgow as a serious deterioration in the true form and beauty of Scotland's national dances. Miss Milligan had joined forces with Ysobel Stewart of Fasnacloich, in 1923 to create what would later become the RSCDS. To ensure the preservation and promotion of county dances as they were described in original written copies, the society collected and published over fifty books of dances over the years, and also set standards for formations, footwork, handing and other aspects of dance hall decorum. Miss Milligan was also an examiner for the Society and was my examiner when, in 1958, I became a qualified teacher of Scottish Country dancing.



Music for Scottish dancing, Country dancing and Highland dancing, had been provided throughout the 18th and 19th centuries by the violin, more commonly known in Scotland as the fiddle, and to a lesser extent the bagpipes. Highland dancing is primarily a solo exercise while Country dancing is the

social dancing of Scotland and is done in sets (groups of dancers). Early in the 20th century the accordion became popular as the instrument of choice for Scottish Country dancing because of its volume and the fact that it had bass and chord accompaniment. With advanced electronic technology, the keyboard (right hand) of the accordion can generate sounds of other instruments such as trumpet, saxophone, and violin, while the bass (left hand) produces bass and chord sounds.

So, with bass and chords and violin augmenting the vibrating reed sounds of the accordion, a single musician can sound like a band. Add a drum machine to this and the 'one-man band' is complete.

When I switched from playing for 'modern' dancing to playing for Scottish Country dancing I took with me a good memory and a good ear along with the electronic equipment needed to perform as a one-man band, and did so over the next several years at dances, dance classes and teacher training in Japan, Germany, Hong Kong, Scotland, England, the United States and Canada. Because I 'played by ear', I had hundreds of tunes stored in my head along with the accompanying harmonies. At an evening dance I would play over ninety tunes, all from memory. I note at this point that the term 'playing by ear' is actually incorrect. Musicians who can play without music may well have 'learned' by ear but are 'playing' from memory.

Since my entire repertoire was learned by ear, the acquisition of hundreds of tunes was time-consuming and quite demanding. It took many hours of listening to tapes and records, then practicing to find and fix good fingering, until everything was committed to memory. This, then, was how I learned and played hundreds of tunes until an embarrassing experience where I was unable to remember how a tune began and so was unable to begin the music for a demonstration dance. I vowed never to let that happen again and set about finding a way to write down the music for even the first few bars of a tune. Then, using the written music as an *aide-memoire*, I could begin playing and allow the memory of the tune to take over and be able to continue playing for the dance. I found the music for a tune which I had memorized and copied out the music as written. In this way I acquired knowledge of note values and other basics of notation and could now take a piece of blank manuscript and begin committing to paper tunes which, until now, had been locked in my musical memory.

Perhaps because, as a boy in Scotland, I listened to Scottish dance music on the BBC every Saturday night, playing for dancing came very naturally to me. I was told quite often by dancers in different countries that my playing made them want to dance. I was aware that something in how I played gave my music 'lift' which helped energize the dancers. Could I now compose music which embodied similar characteristics, tunes which would, as Robert Burns wrote "put life and mettle in their heels"?

So began my first tentative attempts at composing. Perhaps, when suitably inspired, I could write out

new tunes which I could share with other musicians and receive comments, criticisms, or suggestions, all of which would help improve the appeal and Scottishness of my compositions. Scottish music is relatively simple, written on a single staff. Almost all the tunes I write are for 32-bar dances. They are therefore written in multiples of four, eight or sixteen bars. A single staff or stave is used with bass and chord symbols below each bar to indicate the harmonies required. Published music for the tunes I was playing, written specifically for this type of dancing, became a focus of study. I began to wonder if I could compose music of this genre.

When I was 17, I had 'made up' my first tune (at that stage 'composed' was too grand a term), a waltz, of which I was quite proud. With no formal training in music, I was unable to write it down, although that tune now has been recorded and is used by teachers in Scotland. In 1995, when playing for the Teachers' Association of Canada Summer School, a fellow musician asked me for a copy of the jig I was playing, which I had composed and used frequently. I had to tell her there was no written music - that the tune existed only in my head. This was also embarrassing. I decided I should teach myself to write down some of my tunes so I could share them with other musicians. I was now 65 years old and struggled initially with note values. From high school I remembered F-A-C-E and E-G-B-D-F and how these letters related to the lines and spaces of the staff. I also was able to recall the existence of minims, crotchets, quavers, and semiquavers and hoped I could assign values to those. However, knowing how to apply this knowledge to the writing of

a tune on a manuscript was a major challenge. I had to trust that my notation correctly represented the tune I could 'hear' in my head. I had never learned to read music, so I had to wait until I heard someone 'play' what I had written before discovering whether what I had written was accurate.

Then came my introduction to the computer program 'Sibelius'. Sibelius is probably the most powerful music writing program on the market. I was introduced to it by a fellow musician in 2001 when he and I were playing for classes at the RSCDS Summer School in St. Andrews, Scotland. He was astonished to discover I was still writing music with pencil, eraser, and blank manuscript. This random encounter made an enormous difference to the process of music composition for me. On my computer I could select notes of the value required and slide them easily onto the appropriate line or space. When the writing of the tune was complete, I was then able to do the most exciting part of what Sibelius offers: I was able to play back what I had written and make corrections. Bass and chord harmony symbols were then added below the staves to show which buttons to press on the left-hand of the accordion. The great virtue of Sibelius is its simplicity of use, whether for the type of music I write or for complex orchestrations. Several bands have recorded tunes I have written, others have been played in BBC broadcasts and I have 'desktop' published a collection of sixty-one reels, jigs, and strathspeys. I have now written hundreds of tunes and if even one of them is still being played for dancing a hundred years from now it will all have been worthwhile.

Twister *Fred Moyes c 2021*

Reel

Your Money/Your Health

Updated Information on the Shingles Vaccine

By Mary Johnston

Have you been vaccinated against shingles? With all the worry about COVID over the past two years, some retirees may not have considered getting this important vaccination. If you have not received Shingrix, the currently recommended vaccine against shingles, please read on for news about vaccine availability and recent changes to funding.

Shingles, also known as herpes zoster, is caused by the varicella zoster virus - the same virus that causes chickenpox. After a case of chickenpox, the virus lies dormant in nerve cells. Many years later it may become reactivated and appear as shingles, which typically shows itself as a painful rash with blisters in a localized area on the body or face. The rash can be very unpleasant and although it usually resolves in two to four weeks, sufferers may be left with prolonged severe nerve pain, known as postherpetic neuralgia. Over two-thirds of shingles cases occur in individuals over 50 years of age, with the severity of illness and probability of complications increasing markedly with age.



According to the [Canadian Immunization Guide](#), a two-dose course of the vaccine Shingrix significantly reduces the incidence,

duration and severity of shingles and the incidence of postherpetic neuralgia. Immunization is recommended for adults 50 years of age or older, including those who have already had shingles (more than one year ago), those with no known history of chicken pox, and those who received an older less-effective vaccine called Zostavax more than one year ago.

Which brings us to the question of how to arrange for vaccination and the matter of cost. The short answer: it depends on your age and previous vaccination with Zostavax. Here are the details for residents of Ontario:

Publicly funded Shingrix for those between 65 and 70(ish) years of age

The criteria posted by the Ontario [Ministry of Health](#) state "Ontario seniors ages 65 to 70 years will be eligible for the publicly funded Shingrix® vaccine, provided they have not received the Zostavax® II vaccine through the Ontario publicly funded shingles immunization program....Seniors aged 65 to 70 years who previously paid for a dose of Zostavax® II vaccine are eligible for the publicly funded Shingrix® vaccine series."

There is special consideration for individuals who turned 70 and missed the opportunity to receive the publicly funded Shingrix vaccine during the COVID pandemic. [Information for Health Care Providers](#) posted by the Ministry of Health explains that "As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and response activities, individuals born in 1949 to 1951 who missed the opportunity to receive the publicly funded shingles vaccine, per the Ontario program from 65 to 70 years of age, are eligible to receive Shingrix® and complete the 2-dose series by December 31, 2022." The time recommended between the first and second shots is two to six months, so you must get the first shot no later than the end of October and the second no later than December 31st.

The publicly funded Shingrix vaccine is available to eligible individuals through their primary health care provider (physician or nurse practitioner).

Privately funded Shingrix for individuals who are ineligible for public funding

According to [Information for Patients](#) provided by the Ministry of Health, "Seniors outside the eligibility criteria can speak with their primary health care provider (physician or nurse practitioner) about decisions around shingles immunization and purchasing the vaccine privately."

For a time, many MURA members could be reimbursed for the cost of Shingrix through their post-retirement benefits plans. Sadly, this benefit is no longer available because [Health Canada](#) has changed the classification for Shingrix so that it no longer legally requires a prescription. As a result, Shingrix purchased after December 31st, 2021 no longer satisfies the [requirement for reimbursement](#) stipulated in our Sun Life group benefits booklets.

You may purchase Shingrix at your pharmacy and have it injected there. A quick survey of four pharmacies in my neighbourhood on March 26th found that the cost of each dose of Shingrix ranges from \$150 to \$169, with an additional charge for injection of \$15 or \$20. Remember that you need two doses. You may also purchase Shingrix at a pharmacy and have it administered by your primary care provider. It is important that if you do so, you bring the Shingrix directly from the pharmacy to your pre-arranged appointment, with as little delay as possible between the two. This is because of its exacting storage requirements. Although a prescription is not legally required for Shingrix, some pharmacists ask for one to be sure that the patient has discussed the vaccination with their physician.

If you are over 50 years of age and have not been vaccinated with Shingrix, you should consult your health care provider to discuss whether the vaccine is appropriate for you and how you may go about accessing it.

If you live in Ontario, you may also want to write to your [MPP](#) (Member of Provincial Parliament) to express any concern you have about the restrictions on public funding for Shingrix. The current policy leaves many seniors, who are at risk of complications from shingles, to personally shoulder the cost of vaccination.

WARNING: There are some inconsistencies in the information about access to Shingrix appearing on various Ministry of Health web pages, likely due to failure to keep them up to date.

Maintaining Physical and Mental Well-Being in Less-Than-Ideal Circumstances

*By Dawnelle Hawes
(First of a 2-part series)*

I was approached to write about staying fit because of the obstacles I have faced and overcome in the last 3 years to maintain my fitness. For me being “fit” inextricably intertwines mental, emotional, and physical well-being.

Personal Challenges - Part A, 2019, Fractured Lower Leg Bones

In February of 2019, I badly broke both lower leg bones on my left leg by slipping on black ice. This

injury resulted in a plate and screws to hold my ankle together and limited physical movement for months. As a fitness instructor and enthusiast, the impact of the injury for me was huge. To my mind I had two choices: either change my perspective and lifestyle in a hurry or do nothing and feel sorry for myself. For me, the latter was not an option.

Challenging my accustomed lifestyle

I was sent home wearing a plaster cast that was later removed and replaced with an aircast ankle boot. This boot allows air to be manually pumped into the boot to make it fit snugly around the ankle. I was cautioned against any weight bearing for at least eight weeks and temporarily had to wear the boot to bed. I used a walker to “hop” from place to place on my uninjured leg.

To combat inactivity, I got inventive. I soon realized yoga was possible using my couch and the floor (even if getting to the floor was awkward) to



maintain some strength and flexibility. While that did not burn a lot of energy, it was a start. With my “good” leg, I could do a number of single-leg exercises and balancing. While holding onto a wall or chair, I could perform single-leg squats by putting my lower leg (with the cast) on the couch. Strengthening my upper body and abdominal and back muscles was less of a problem. Seated exercises included using tubing to challenge my back muscles, and dumbbells for arms and shoulders. On the floor I was able to do push-ups for chest and hovers (holding the body horizontal to the floor on elbows and toes or knees) to strengthen my core. I found that I could do the hovers on just my right toes by hooking my left foot behind my right ankle.

Physical activity or movement is as vital (if not more so) for my mental health as for my physical well-being. The fact that I was able to move creatively not only kept my spirits up, but also allowed me to feel I had some control over my activity and a sense of accomplishment with my “workarounds.”

Accomplishing simple daily tasks

One of my biggest early challenges was daily tasks like preparing meals, cleaning, laundry, showering and washing my hair, things I took for granted pre-injury. The contortions for getting into and out of the shower while keeping weight off my foot and my injured leg out of the stream of water were

“interesting“ to say the least! My walker had to be bedside for “middle-of-the-night” trips.

My piano bench became my indispensable helper, as I was able to kneel on it to do various tasks and to wash my hair in the kitchen sink. I found that I was able to push it about a little at a time by putting felt pads on the bench legs. I moved it with the front of my walker as I hopped along. My floors are polished concrete, so the task was made easier. Adding this aid (the bench) to my daily routine certainly boosted my spirits, as once again I overcame another challenge.

Figuring out how to carry items

Using a walker meant that my hands were not free to carry food, utensils, or containers of liquids from kitchen to table. Normally these are such simple tasks. To solve this issue, I purchased a basket from Amazon for my walker.

Adapting to a non-accessible building

My building lacks automatic door openers and has a heavy double-door exit. For a single morning, I was despondent as I realized I could not get outdoors on my own. I did not know anyone in the building, nor did I have family nearby to help regularly so it was up to me to “figure it out.” I believe what I actually told myself to avoid a funk was “Suck it up buttercup!” Over that immobile period, my mental health was spared by a few visitors who helped me to get outside. That felt exhilarating as being in nature calms my soul.

About six weeks into my non-weight-bearing stage, I discovered what is called a knee walker. It is like a scooter that kids use, but with a raised, padded area where you put your bent and injured leg, and four wheels instead of two. This transportation device was a gamechanger. I wish I had known about it earlier. I was finally able to get myself out of the building and do some shopping. Oh, the freedom!

Dealing with a pre-planned volunteer opportunity

I had volunteered with International Habitat for Humanity for home-building in Bolivia in October 2019. Sadly, I had to cancel my flight, the build, and a pre-arranged trek in Peru because of the unbearable air pressure on my leg that would be caused by flying. I normally wear compression stockings whenever I travel by air (especially long overseas flights) to combat swelling in my legs. The flight to Bolivia would have been about 23 hours with stopovers. My ankle would never have endured the cramped quarters, inability to elevate my leg and the additional cabin pressure of flying. I was disappointed as this would have been my sixth

international build and I had trouble coming to terms with it.

Coping with transportation

My underground parking is accessible only by stairs. My car has a manual transmission, so I was unable to drive for about six months. (Renting a car with automatic transmission was not an option as my car insurance would not allow anyone to drive while injured.) I quickly learned how to use DARTS (Disabled and Aged Regional Transportation Service) for transportation to and from appointments, groceries, shopping, and trips to my family in Burlington. I now have more empathy for those who rely on DARTS as their primary means for getting places. There are many barriers to this being a convenient and time-efficient mode of transportation. For instance, making contact by phone with the city department that issues approvals to use DARTS was difficult. Often, I was challenged with trying to coordinate available time slots between DARTS and physiotherapy appointments, with DARTS often allotted to others more in need of transportation at “peak times” such as 9-10 am or 3-4 pm. Waiting for transportation for outgoing and returning trips required patience. The upside was that I was able to get from place to place without having to ask others. The result was an uplifting impact on my feeling of independence.

In the next issue: Personal Challenges - Part B, 2020 Hello COVID-19

An Update on Out-of-Province/Country Health Insurance Options

By Nora Gaskin

McMaster retiree \$10,000 out-of-province/country emergency medical coverage



This option is available to McMaster retirees with post-retirement benefits (and their eligible dependents) who live in Canada.

Coverage is provided through Sun Life Financial in partnership with Allianz Global Assistance. Sun Life will pay 100% of the cost of qualified emergency services **up to a lifetime maximum of \$10,000**, and cover emergency services obtained **within 60 days** of the date you leave the province where you live. Note that

this coverage is less than when you were an active employee and is not considered adequate coverage for most purposes. MURA and McMaster Human Resources (HR) strongly recommend additional private travel insurance for all travel out of province or outside Canada. Ontarians with OHIP coverage will be covered for physician and public hospital care when visiting other parts of Canada, but some procedures and expenses may not be fully covered, and if you need to be evacuated back to Ontario the cost can be very high. And don't forget that you should have additional insurance in place if you're going to the United States, even if only for the day.

For retirees who have the McMaster benefit, here are two strategies for using it:

1) Use it to cover the deductible on a private insurance plan

This can save money since a higher deductible means a less expensive premium. Be aware, though, that if you choose to use this strategy, and you have to make a claim, your McMaster coverage will be the first payer on that claim. Your lifetime McMaster coverage will be reduced by that claim, up to the full \$10,000, and the amount saved on the premium may not be worth the loss of the McMaster coverage. This is particularly true since the McMaster benefit covers all pre-existing medical conditions and may, therefore, be the only affordable insurance available to older travelers, which leads to the second strategy...

2) Save it for when you may have more difficulty in getting insured

If your age and/or pre-existing conditions make you more difficult or expensive to insure, the McMaster benefit may be a good option, as it will provide at least some coverage or help to reduce higher private insurance premiums.

If you do use the McMaster benefit, you should review your benefit booklet, as there are some slight differences among the various plans regarding coverage and claims processes. HR encourages you to contact the McMaster HR Service Centre at hr.mcmaster@mcmaster.ca or 905-525-9140 ext. 22247 if you need clarification on your particular coverage prior to your departure. It is important to understand the conditions on which your coverage is based.

For further discussions of these issues, instructions on how to use the benefit, details on coordination of benefits between more than one plan, and steps to

be taken in the event that a medical emergency occurs, see:

- McMaster HR: "[McMaster Retiree Out-of-Province/Country Emergency Medical Coverage Summary](#)"
- MURA: "[Discussion and detailed instructions -- how to use the McMaster Retiree \\$10,000 Out-of-Province/Country Emergency Medical Coverage](#)"

Private out-of-province/country emergency medical coverage



MURA cannot recommend any particular providers. This is a personal choice and will depend on your age, health, pre-existing medical conditions if any,

and whether you want insurance for a single trip or would like coverage that covers several trips over the course of a year. Costs can vary considerably among providers, so you should shop around to get the best price.

An **insurance broker** may be a good place to start. Insurance brokers represent a wide range of emergency travel insurance providers and can provide a broad range of coverage options to match individual travel plans, ages, and pre-existing medical conditions. Brokers attempt to find the best insurance to match your requirements and health. They will also educate you about some of the potential pitfalls in purchasing travel insurance (think COVID-19 complications!), and advocate on your behalf should you have to make a claim. [Medi-Quote](#) (1-800-661-3098) and [Securiglobe](#) (1-866-550-2444) are two examples of such brokers. Google "travel insurance brokers" to find a comprehensive list (but don't forget to scroll past the first items in the results list prefaced by the word "Ad", as they are just paid advertisements and may not be the best options).

You may also wish to get more information and a quote from one of the companies that offer group discounts to MURA members.

- Available through our membership in **College and University Retiree Associations of Canada (CURAC)**, Johnson/MEDOC coverage includes COVID-19 related medical costs for up to \$5 million. More information at the [CURAC website](#) or by calling 1-855-473-8029 and identifying yourself as a CURAC member.

- Through the **McMaster Alumni Association**, both [Manulife Financial](#) (1-866-521-8506) and [TD Insurance Meloche Monnex](#) (1-833-962-1143) offer group rates on travel insurance to McMaster alumni, faculty, staff, and retirees. More information at their websites or by calling and identifying yourself as a McMaster retiree.

There are many other providers of out-of-province/out-of-country medical insurance. [Blue Cross](#), the [CAA](#), [CARP](#), and [RBC](#) are just a few. In addition, many premium credit cards provide travel insurance. **Beware, however, of assuming that your credit card will provide you with adequate medical insurance.** Many premium credit cards do provide automatic travel insurance, but this coverage is limited, often with restrictions on time period of travel, age, and medical condition, so always read the fine print.

Shop around for the policy that provides the best coverage for your individual needs at the best price and always ensure that you explain completely any pre-existing conditions. When completing the medical questionnaire, answer all questions accurately and honestly, and consult your doctor if you are at all unsure as to how to answer a question. In some cases, a **recent change in medication** before the trip may affect coverage for one type of pre-existing condition but not necessarily a different pre-existing condition that has been stable.

An excellent discussion of travel health insurance, a list of questions you should ask when purchasing, and the restrictions and limitations of this insurance is available from the Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association's information pamphlet, [A Guide to Travel Health Insurance](#), or by calling CLHIA at 1-888-295-8112.

Looking for More Information?

- [MURA - Travel Insurance web page](#)
- [Government of Canada - Travel and Tourism information](#)
- [Travel Health Insurance Association of Canada](#)



courtesy of Humour is Contagious

Volunteer Opportunities

Don't want to volunteer alone? Sign up with a friend.

Research Study

Have you had an injury from slip, trip, or fall that has limited your mobility? Do you find you walk or take the stairs differently or less frequently than before?

If you are ≥ 55 and have had an activity-limiting injury from a slip, trip, or fall in the past 6 months, you may qualify to participate in a pilot research study investigating a home-based high intensity functional strength training (HIFST) exercise program.

Eligible participants receive a 12-week home-based HIFST exercise program or a 12-week home-based lower body stretching program; both will include videoconferencing meetings.

For more information or to volunteer for this research study please contact Ashley Morgan, morgaa2@mcmaster.ca.

(Ashley Morgan is a PhD student in the School of Rehabilitation Sciences at McMaster, working under the supervision of Dr. Julie Richardson.

McMaster Convocation Assistants

The Office of the Registrar welcomes retirees to become involved in the most exciting days of McMaster students' academic lives — convocations.

Volunteers are needed to assist at convocations, where your role would be to meet, greet and direct students and guests, check tickets and/or distribute hoods and diplomas to students. You will work alongside a full-time employee who can offer assistance and training.

If you are interested in signing up for any of the days listed below (full or half day options), please contact Rachel Huang in the Office of the Registrar, by emailing convo@mcmaster.ca.

More details on convocation can be found here: <https://registrar.mcmaster.ca/grad/> or by contacting Rachel.

Additionally, **legacy convocation events for the 2020 and 2021 graduates** are being planned.

Spring 2022 convocation ceremonies:

Wednesday, May 25, 2022, afternoon

Thursday, May 26, 2022, afternoon

Monday, June 13, 2022, afternoon

Tuesday, June 14, 2022, morning & afternoon

Wednesday, June 15, 2022, morning & afternoon

Thursday, June 16, 2022, morning & afternoon

Friday, June 17, 2022, morning & afternoon

Legacy Convocation Events (tentative)

Tuesday, May 24, 2022, afternoon

Wednesday, May 25, 2022, morning

Thursday, May 26, 2022, morning

Friday, May 27, 2022, morning & afternoon

Approximate volunteer shifts (for all events):

Morning: 7:30 – 12:30 pm

Afternoon: 12:30 – 5 pm

Full day: 7:30 am – 4 pm

What's Happening at Mac

Back to Mac – Update

By Mary Johnston

As I write this, we are surfing the sixth COVID wave. At this point in the pandemic, campus is busy – with students writing in-person exams, most facilities open and construction projects underway. To enter McMaster buildings, we must all wear masks and have registered proof of vaccination using the

[MacCheck](#) app. The current mask and vaccination mandates will remain in place until the end of May. To stay abreast of the latest regulations, check the [Back to Mac](#) website.

While you're on the McMaster website, you might also want to read an article on [COVID-19 boosters](#) based on an interview with Professors of Medicine Charu Kaushic and Dawn Bowdish.

Did You Know About McMaster's Research Information Website Called "Brighter World"?

by Dawnelle Hawes

McMaster has placed second in the world in a new [international ranking](#) that recognizes the impact universities are making in their own countries and on a global scale.

It is not surprising, then, that the amount of research being undertaken at Mac is impressive.

The [McMaster website](#) provides access to information about McMaster's research and researchers under the 'Research & Innovation' tab. The [Brighter World](#) section divides the research into six broad areas: Health & Medicine, Science & Technology, Canada & The World, Environment & Sustainability, Culture & Society, Business & The Economy. Each of these areas features topics of current interest.

Links to thirteen sub-areas called channels (see below) can be found by scrolling to the bottom of any of the Brighter World web pages. These channels delve into greater detail of the ongoing research at McMaster. The amount of information in each channel is quite extensive.

Here's a highlight of one channel, [Medical Discovery](#), as an example of what is available. A random sample here reveals research as diverse as:

- A “promising new vehicle for vaccine delivery” to protect against SARS-CoV-2 by modifying red blood cells to trigger an immune response
- Analyzing the changing approach for concussion management from “rest is best” toward low to moderate exercise as a safe and useful option
- The impact of antibody development from repeated seasonal-specific flu vaccines for protecting kids against future flu pandemics
- The increased risk of worsening mobility and physical function in people over 50 who have experienced even “mild” or “moderate” symptoms of COVID-19
- Oxytocin as a potential treatment for some forms of autism (research on brain mapping in mice)
- A study revealing a possible link between psychological stress and Crohn’s disease flare-ups, and another study also identifying an increase in serotonin levels as a possible trigger
- A new research centre focussing on treatment-resistant cancers with high death rates (e.g., glioblastoma, pancreatic cancer)
- A diagnostic algorithm (begun by Clive Kearon who passed away in 2020) for detecting deep vein thrombosis (DVT) while reducing the need for ultrasound scans

CHANNELS within the Brighter World website

[BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERING](#)
[DIGITAL INNOVATION](#)
[EQUITY & PROSPERITY](#)
[HEALTH LEADERSHIP](#)
[INDIGENOUS RESEARCH](#)

[INFECTIOUS DISEASE](#)
[MATERIALS & MANUFACTURING](#)
[MEDICAL DISCOVERY](#)
[NUCLEAR RESEARCH](#)
[OPTIMAL AGING & MOBILITY](#)

[STAYING HEALTHY](#)
[SUSTAINABILITY & ENERGY](#)
[WATER RESEARCH](#)



courtesy of Humour is Contagious

Other News

A Reminder for Your End-of-Life Planning

You might be amazed to learn how often Human Resources does not find out about a retiree's death until months – or even years – after it occurs.

Make things easier for the executor of your will and your family by putting a note with your will and other important papers, instructing that Human Resources should be informed of your death as soon as possible. The Human Resources Services Centre can be contacted by phone at 905-525-9140, ext. 22247, or by email at hr.mcmaster@mcmaster.ca.

Without timely notification, your estate will be required to pay back any pension payments received after your death. Also, you should keep a copy of your McMaster life insurance documents with your important papers. The Human Resources Service Centre will be pleased to provide you with a copy if you need it.

Parking on Campus

Permit Expiry Renewal Reminder

Retiree parking permits are issued on a 12-month basis and must be renewed annually. Renew prior to your expiry date by [email](#), [phone](#) or by [postal mail](#). Your transponder number is on the front of your transponder. If you have questions or have not made a note of your expiry date, please contact McMaster Parking Services by email at parking@mcmaster.ca or at 905-525-9140 ext. 24232.

A note to retirees without parking transponders

Free parking on campus is available to retirees. To take advantage of this perk, and to view retiree parking access, go to the [McMaster Parking Services](#) web page. **Due to COVID-19, the Parking Office is accepting permit applications by email only.** For further information, please contact [Parking Services](#).

Notifying Human Resources of Address Changes

Are you moving? Please don't forget to update your address on file at McMaster University to ensure you receive any correspondence, including your T4A, at the correct address. The Human Resources Service Centre provides McMaster retirees with one point of contact to update their new addresses. Upon receiving your address change, the HR Service Centre will update the following as applicable on your behalf:

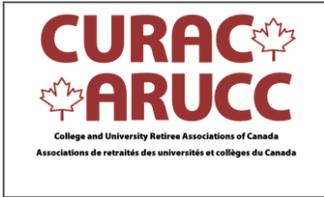
- Communicate updated address information to the McMaster University Retirees Association (MURA)
- Update the Sun Life System (for benefit purposes)
- Communicate address information to CIBC Mellon (for pension purposes)
- Update the McMaster HR System

Address changes can be forwarded to the HR Service Centre using any of the following methods:

- Phone: 905-525-9140 ext. 22247 (222HR)
- Email: hr.mcmaster@mcmaster.ca
- Complete the [Human Resources Retiree Address Change Form](#) and mail it to the HR Service Center at the address on the form.

Please do not hesitate to contact your HR Advisor with any questions.

Remember also to let MURA know if you have a new email address. You can send this information to mura@mcmaster.ca.



The 2022 CURAC/ARUCC Virtual Assembly

The [CURAC/ARUCC](#) 2022 Virtual Assembly will be held on **Thursday, May 19** from **9:30 am – 1 pm PDT (12:30 – 4:00 pm EDT)**. Join retiree association members from across the country to share ideas and participate in a series of educational sessions geared to retirement life.

The program will focus on “*Faces of Wellness and Well-being*”. It is co-hosted by the University of British Columbia Emeritus College, University of Victoria Retirees Association and Simon Fraser University Retirees Association. The focus on wellness and well-being has been a major area of research strength at the three organizing universities. The virtual program with distinguished presenters including Dr. John Helliwell, Dr. Angela Brooks-Wilson, Dr. Gloria Gutman and Dr. Anne Martin-Matthews, will be held with simultaneous French translation to facilitate participation for all Canadian members. The full program and registration information may be viewed at <https://emerituscollege.ubc.ca/CURAC2022>.

2022 CURAC/ARUCC Annual General Meeting and Best Practices Sessions

Retiree association members from across Canada will also be invited to attend the virtual **CURAC/ARUCC AGM and Best Practices Round Tables** to be held on **June 16**. Details will be sent to MURA members by email as soon as available.

Why Does MURA Belong to CURAC?

By Helen Barton

MURA has participated in the organization of [College and University Retiree Associations of Canada \(CURAC\)](#) since its inaugural meeting almost 20 years ago.

MURA Council considers the small annual membership fee (\$300) well worth the expense. Following are some of the membership benefits MURA Council finds valuable.

- CURAC is a good vehicle for keeping in touch with other Canadian post-secondary retiree organizations.
- Learning from others’ experience on topics such as organizational issues, relationship with one’s institution, retiree activities, etc. can be very helpful.
- CURAC’s annual conferences are a good forum for identifying and discussing issues of common concern, as well as providing opportunities to network. The conferences’ “best practices” sessions are a very good source of innovative ideas, through sharing both successful and cautionary experiences.
- Because MURA is a member of CURAC, McMaster retirees can access valuable group rates on home and auto insurance, travel and trip cancellation insurance, extended health benefit insurance, and pet insurance.
- CURAC acts as a central repository of information on topics of mutual interest.
- CURAC has conducted cross-Canada comparative surveys on pensions and post-retirement benefits and other retiree concerns.
- CURAC also researches and speaks publicly on issues of concern to the many thousands of college and university retirees across Canada.

MURAnews is produced by MURA members Denise Anderson (Production Editor), Helen Barton (News Editor), Nora Gaskin, Dawnelle Hawes, John Horsman, and Mary Johnston. We welcome submissions from MURA members.