

RAQnews



"AND SO, my fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country." These oft quoted words in J.F. Kennedy's Inaugural Address

serve well to introduce the presidential musings of this issue of RAQnews. At least they fit, if the word "community" is substituted for "country." They remind us that RAQ should be more than merely inward looking and self-serving and could pursue interests beyond the direct gratification of its members. We might also perform benevolent acts supporting the larger community of which we are part.

These thoughts arise from the recent visit to the campus of Peter Russell – prime mover of the U of T and Canadian retiree associations, as well as of the international one. He met recently with Alison Morgan and John Gordon and dwelt, among other things, on the usefulness and desirability of RAQ and similar bodies becoming involved in causes going beyond their immediate jurisdictions. John Gordon, a keen and farsighted soul, jumped on this and wondered whether we should assist some useful local project not directly involving RAQ. One possible candidate, dear to his heart as a key fund raiser for it, is the refurbishing of the Grand Theatre indisputably a jewel in Kingston's cultural crown.

But many others of us in RAQ are already immersed in other worthy causes and projects - hospitals and other health care and research entities large and small, community sports facilities and youth service groups such as Big Brothers and Big Sisters, the John Howard Society, the Thousand Island Playhouse, libraries and literacy programs,

monuments and events celebrating Kingston's history and heritage, – the list is literally endless – and closer to home a possible project to keep the so-called student ghetto a tidier and more

A Presidential Message

community conscious social and residential environment.

In other words, a lot of us, as individuals, enjoy various volunteer activities which benefit others as well as ourselves. So the question to be decided is whether RAQ, as such, should collectively become involved in matters which are not of immediate benefit to its members but may make a positive contribution to our larger community.

If we embark on such a path, RAQ needs to select one or two targets for its external involvement, devise mechanisms for deciding what might be done, how we ought to go about it, and who is to be mobilized. This issue is being put before the Executive for a decision which, if precedent is anything to go by, will be exceedingly wise as everyone knows.

JOHN MEISEL, *Founding President*, RAQ

JOYCE SAKOS, *Incoming President*, RAQ

Membership is Important

If you haven't yet renewed your membership in RAQ for 2005-06, please do so **NOW**.

And please encourage other retirees and prospective retirees to join.

Forms are available on our web-site www.queensu.ca/retirees or phone 533-6986.

Pension and Benefits Committee Report

Each retiree recently received a lengthy discussion paper from the University outlining a number of proposed changes to the Queen's Pension Plan. Only one of the six revisions, the use of geometric average rather than arithmetic, in the calculation of any pension increase, would apply to

retired staff. In the material included in the mailing for the AGM, we outlined why RAQ was opposed to this change. With "normal" investment returns, the difference between arithmetic and geometric is not likely to be great, but could result in a reduced increase from what otherwise would have been anticipated. It is our belief, however that each retiree entered into a specific arrangement at the time of retirement and the proposed change would be a violation of that arrangement,



Two Town Hall meetings were held early in April with plan members, both active and retired. The reasons for the six p r o p o s e d changes were

provided, along with a clear warning that remedial action was essential to stabilize the plan. The current unfunded liability is significant, and will clearly grow severely without remedial action. In our opinion, the overall set of proposals deserves support in principle.

RAQ representatives have met with Pension Committee and University representatives on a number of occasions since late last year. After hearing a suggestion from the floor at the first Town Hall meeting, we decided to pursue with them the possibility of a compromise solution for the retiree portion of the problem. We subsequently received a favourable reaction to our suggestion that the proposed shift from arithmetic to geometric would

apply to current retirees, if, and only if, each individual is given the opportunity to opt into the new method, if he or she was so inclined and felt capable of incurring any potential financial penalty. Anyone wishing to continue the current method of calculation can do so by simply doing nothing.

We support the Pension Committee and the University's attempts to resolve this problem, while at the same time being pleased that apparently each retiree will be able to make his or her own decision. Thus, the following motion was made and passed unanimously at the April 25, 2005, AGM:

RAQ recognizes that its members are part of the larger Queen's community and RAQ also recognizes its responsibility to preserve the inviolability of existing individual retirement arrangements. Therefore;

(a) RAQ supports in principle the overall set of proposals regarding changes to the Queen's Pension Plan as being imaginative and prudent measures to ensure the healthy continuation of the plan; and

(b) RAQ recommends to all retirees if their individual circumstances allow it, and providing the new indexing formula for calculating interest over a four year period is implemented with the option for retirees to use the old method, that they consider opting in to the new geometric approach.

Beneath the rather complex verbiage is a simple message: only those current retirees who volunteer to do so will switch to the new geometric method.



Exercise anyone?

A free exercise program for sedentary individuals over age 60 is still being offered as part of an ongoing study at the School of Physical and Health Education.

Dr. Peter Froud has written a personal account of his participation which can be found in full on the RAQ website www.queensu.ca/retirees. He found it a pleasant and rewarding experience. For more information, telephone Shelley Atkinson at 533-6000 ext 75118.

“RAQ is not a Wreck, but very much Alive”



So said President John Meisel when addressing some 80 RAQeteers gathered for the Annual General meeting at the University Club after an excellent lunch featuring lemon chicken, and profiteroles for dessert.

He summarized new directions for RAQ by first pointing out the work of the Pension/Benefits Committee. Their activities and subsequent passage of a resolution are covered in detail in the report of the chairman, Bill Wright. (*Opposite*)

Another emerging theme was that some uni-



versities have been setting up institutions so retirees could continue to play an active role in university life. The President

had started talks with the Principal, who was interested in the idea. As well, RAQ was becoming more outward looking by planning a series of Town Gown events, open to all. The first will be a ***symposium and discussion on the reform of Canada's electoral system, with Sean Conway, John Meisel and Hugh Segal, on 17 May, at 3:00pm in the Policy Studies building.*** Further diversification of programs and activities would depend on volunteers willing to implement new initiatives.

John Meisel noted that, while retiring as President, he would continue his involvement as Past President for two years. He thanked everyone for enormous cooperation and geniality. It had been a pleasure to work with people of great talent and gentle and sensitive dispositions.

Reports from the Membership Secretary, Treasurer and Committee Chairs had been circulated to all members with the Agenda. In addition to the symposium(see above) members were asked to note ***luncheon get-togethers being organized by Jerry Roddy Contact her at 353-6959 to express interest or for further information.***

Members approved the recommendations of the Nominating Committee to elect two new members: **Eileen Fleming** and **Barbara Aitken**. They re-elected: **Pat Bogstad, Dave Bonham, Joy Hoselton, Dan Soberman, Bill Wright, and Joyce Zakos** for two year terms and **Alison Morgan** for a one year term.

The new Executive, as proposed by the Nominating Committee(and approved by the Council following the Annual Meeting) is as follows:

President: **Joyce Zakos;**
Vice President: **Dave Bonham;**
Treasurer: **Alan Green;**
Membership Secretary: **Joy Hoselton;**
Secretary: **Alison Morgan;**
Members at Large: **Arlene Aish, John Gordon, Bill Wright.**

At the close, Dee Padfield rose to thank John Meisel for his outstanding leadership and the meeting broke into sustained and enthusiastic applause.



Message from the Events Committee

Welcome to new Events Committee members Bob Crandall, Bruce Hutchinson, Rosemarie McUen, Juliet Milsome, and Jessica Roddy.

Coming events for Summer '05 are described in detail in the Overview and other enclosures. Please note that parking for any event on campus is available on the West Campus. The shuttle bus goes every 20 minutes.

Events include:

Tuesday 7 June 11 am

Arboretum Tour

Back by popular demand, Howard Pearce has agreed to lead RAQeteers around the unusual trees of Queen's and check out their well-being. This is a year the Tulip tree should bloom. Meet at the tree at the east terrace of the University Club at 11am, on Tuesday June 7, 2005. After the walk, if anyone is interested we could have lunch at the University Club. I can arrange that you can pay in cash if you are not a member. If you wish just to come for lunch, arrive about 12:30 and ask for the RAQ table. Please let me know if you plan to come to lunch so I can make a reservation: 544-9854 or Morgana@post.queensu.ca.

Tuesday 21 June 3:30 pm

Home Care Forum

Anything from an unexpected fall to a serious debilitating illness can leave a retiree unable to manage at home without help. Or perhaps you, or someone you know is providing care to a family member at home and it's becoming overwhelming. The purpose of this forum is to inform RAQ members of the kind of help that is available, who provides

it, how to access it, and how much it costs. Representatives from the Community Care Access Centre, the home care agency that arranges services such as nursing and physiotherapy, the Victorian Order of Nurses, and the Seniors Association, Kingston Region, will describe the information, care, and assistance offered to seniors in their homes. Attend the Forum to learn about and discuss home care in the Kingston area.

Location: Walter Light Hall, 19 Union Street, Room 210.

To avoid stairs, enter Goodwin at street level. Meter parking on Union or Division.

If you plan to come, please let us know. Email aisha@post.queensu.ca or phone Arlene Aish at 546 2979.

Thursday 7 July 12 noon

River Review Luncheon Cruise and Matinee:

Enjoy lunch on a Cruise from Kingston to Gananoque departing at 12:00 noon. See the performance of "Trying", a story of a May-December friendship, at the Firehall Theatre (up the hill from the Springer Theatre; cart available for transport). Cost remains the same as last year, \$67.00, with a refund of \$19.00 for theatre subscribers. See enclosed Registration Form for details. You must register by June 25th. Wednesday 27 July 11 am Rain Date,

Thursday July 28

Opinicon Pot Luck Picnic

Our previous visit to Queen's Biological Station in 2002 was the very first RAQ event, attended by about 60 members. Please join us again for a visit to this delightful spot on the shores of Lake Opinicon to see the Biology Department's

great facility. Learn about various graduate student projects while enjoying the surroundings. See enclosed Registration Form for details and directions. Information is also available on the **RAQ web site**. **You must register by July 15.**

Thursday 18 August 7:45 am

McCoy trip to St. Jacobs

Join a group of fellow RAQeteers for a bus trip to visit St. Jacobs Farmer's Market, the village of St. Jacobs, and the Mennonite Story Visitors Centre. Buffet dinner in Elmira before returning home. See the enclosed information sheet for itinerary, details, and information about how to register with McCoy Tours. Early registration is strongly advised and no down payment is required.



This "living wall" was one of the fascinating features seen by 25 RAQeteers who toured Beamish-Munro Hall, Queen's new Integrated Learning Centre on 26 January. The building is designed to support a new approach for the undergraduate programs in Applied Science. A detailed report on the RAQ visit is posted on the website www.queensu.ca/retirees along with one on The Whirligig of Time, 15 January.

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