

RAQnews



Happy New Year! As we enter 2011, I hope everyone had safe and happy celebrations with family and friends over the holidays. RAQ had a number of successful events over the fall term. We are grateful for the dedicated efforts of the volunteers who have organized—and continue to organize—these events.

when you travel out of Kingston in the event that you or your partner are stricken with a medical emergency while travelling. We thank the Queen's Administration for their prompt response to this problem.

Chairing of Thesis Defence Examinations I am working with the School of Graduate Studies and Research to extend their previous invitation to invite Professors Emeriti/Emeritae to volunteer to chair PhD thesis defence examinations. If all the details can be worked out, an invitation will be sent out inviting Professors Emeritae/Emeriti to submit their names and former Departments if they are willing to chair three examinations a year in their area of research, freeing faculty time for other work. Anyone willing to be considered for chairing the examination of a Master's thesis should have a word with the Head or Graduate Chair of their former Department, Faculty or School.

Finally, please enter the date of the RAQ Annual General Meeting in your calendar. I look forward to seeing you there.

George Brandie, President
George.Brandie@queensu.ca

Queen's Health Cards In November we learned that a member who had been travelling in Europe discovered that the Queen's Health Card he was carrying was out of date and did not have the correct telephone numbers to call in case of a medical emergency. I immediately looked into my wallet and found that the card I was carrying was so old (and out of date) that it might qualify for a place in Queen's Archives. At our meeting with Administration officials in November (summarized on Page 2), we brought this to the attention of the Administration. On behalf of the Queen's Pension and Benefits Office, Bob Weisnagel agreed to mail current cards to all retirees. You may have yours by the time you get this Newsletter. Please remember to take it with you

Presidential News and Views

Pension and Benefits Report

The death of Alan Green, past Chair of this RAQ committee and for many years Chair of the Queen's University Pension Board, is a great loss to this committee and to Queen's University at large. Alan provided expert guidance on pension policy and implementation with wisdom, enthusiasm and good humour. He will be sorely missed.

The principal focus of the RAQ Pensions and Benefits Committee has always been the Queen's Pension Plan. Policy decisions related to the Queen's Pension Plan are

the responsibility of the Pension Committee of the Board of Trustees. That Board committee consists of two members of current faculty, two members of current staff, two Queen's retirees, and five appointees from the Board. The Board committee has an Investment Subcommittee that is responsible for deciding how the assets of the Queen's Pension Plan are invested.

In late September members of the RAQ Pensions and Benefits Committee met with Bill Cannon, Chair of the Pension Committee of the Board of Trustees, and Alison Morgan and John Gordon, retiree members of that Board committee, to hear their impressions of Board delibera-

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Mark your Calendar

RAQ Annual General Meeting and Lunch

Monday April 25, 2011— University Club

Reception and Cash Bar 11:30 am; Lunch 12 noon. Meeting to follow.

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tions about pensions and to share with them concerns of the RAQ membership. This was a stimulating and informative meeting. Queen's retirees are extremely fortunate to have members such as Bill, Alison and John on this Board committee.

Matters discussed at our meeting with Bill and Alison and John, in addition to those identified above, were:

- There should be no concern about payments to Queen's pensioners; they are guaranteed under the terms of the Queen's Pension Plan.
- Queen's retirees are living longer than most other people in Canada and longer than was assumed when most of us retired.
- There is a need to identify potential candidates to serve on the Board Pension Committee in the future.

We also met with Caroline Davis, Vice-Principal (Finance and Administration), Bill Forbes, Special Advisor (Investments), and Bob Weisnagel (Associate Director – Pensions and Benefits) in mid-November. Vice-Principal Davis reiterated assurance that current pensions paid to Queen's retirees will not be adversely affected by any future changes in pension policy adopted by the Board of Trustees. She also confirmed that the existing governance structure of the Board Pension Committee and its Investment Subcommittee would be retained. Finally, the Vice-Principal confirmed that the existing consultative process for suggesting candidates for membership on the Board Pension Committee will continue.

Recent Pension Plan Performance All Queen's pensioners will have recently received a letter from Queen's summarizing Pension Plan investment performance during each

of the past four years. The rates of returns were positive for two of those years but negative for the other two years. The result is a geometric four-year average rate of 1.26%. Pensioners receive an increase in their pension payments only when the geometric four-year average exceeds 6.0%. Thus the Pension Plan must make up the current deficit ($1.26\% - 6.0\% = -4.74\%$) before pension payments will be increased.

However, under the terms of the Queen's Pension Plan this deficit is **not** passed along to retirees, but instead pension payments for the period from September 1, 2010, to August 31, 2011, **will remain unchanged** at the level received during the past twelve months.

Furthermore, as stated in that recent letter from Queen's, "your pension is guaranteed to never reduce during your lifetime".

Travel Insurance The *Pensions and Benefits Update 2010* enclosed with letters recently mailed to Queen's pensioners from Queen's included an insert box as a reminder of medical coverage provided through the Global Medical Assistance program of Great-West Life for those travelling out of country or out of province. For Queen's retirees who are 65 or older this coverage provides 80% of charges for emergency treatment. Additional coverage can be purchased from other insurance providers such as Ingle International (www.ingle-international.com 1-800-360-3234) and Medipac Travel Insurance (www.MedipacInsurance.com 1-877-888-3540).

Our Committee (David Bacon, Dave Bonham, George Brandie, Chris Chapler, Sue Miklas, and Joyce Zakos) welcomes questions and comments from members of RAQ.

David Bacon, Chair
david.bacon@kos.net

Reports of Past Events Fall 2010

RAQ holds session on Alzheimer Disease and Related Dementia

The local Alzheimer Society and members of RAQ teamed together October 14th to host an information session at the Waterford Retirement Residence. Dr. Henry Dinsdale, a neurologist and Professor Emeritus, spoke on the pathology of the disease, current research, and clinical aspects

of dementia.

Several people then shared their stories of living with a family member with dementia. Ellen Bater is a Member of the Board of the Alzheimer Society KFL&A and is the primary partner-in-care to her partner. Harold (Bus) Still, retired from the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, was the primary caregiver for his wife. Jack Henderson, a volunteer with the Alzheimer Society, spoke of

his experience as a primary partner-in-care for his father.

Ellen spoke of the importance of getting help early in the journey with the disease and the challenges of family issues. It is vital to respect the dignity of the person living with the disease. Bus shared stories of his ways of coping. It is important to recognize the significant burden on the caregiv-

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er and to take good care of the caregiver.

Jillian Dahm McConnell, Public Education Coordinator for the Alzheimer Society talked about the services provided by the Society. Many useful resources are available at www.alzking.com, 613-548-3078. The Waterford then provided refreshments and a tour of their beautiful residence.

JACK HENDERSON

Prince Edward County Music Festival, September 17

On a fine sunny afternoon a group of 26 RAQ members set off in a McCoy bus for Picton. After enjoying an excellent dinner at the Portabella Restaurant on the main street, we walked



RAQeteers finishing dinner at Portabella

to St. Mary Magdalen Anglican Church, a fine old building with excellent acoustics. Here we went to the opening concert of the 2010 Prince Edward County Music Festival. The concert opened with four Mozart songs sung superbly and expressively by the celebrated Canadian soprano Donna Brown to the expert accompaniment of Stéphane Lamelin. Then followed two contrasting songs by composer-in-residence, Ottawa's Steven Gellman: *Love Song* and *Dance My Heart*. These were again sung by Brown accompanied by flute, harp, cello and piano. Next up was a Sonata for flute, viola and harp, a beautiful combination, written by Claude Debussy in 1925. The second half of the concert consisted solely of the G minor Piano Quartet by Gabriel Fauré, a

passionate work with a dramatic opening, dreamy second movement and an exuberant finale. Directly following the concert we were transported back to Kingston on our bus, arriving home around 11 p.m.

JULIET MILSOME

Tour of the Agnes Etherington Art Centre

On Monday, September 27th, Janet Brooke, Director of the Agnes Etherington Art Centre, conducted a 90-minute exclusive tour for a small group of appreciative RAQ members. Most of our time was spent exploring the recently opened *New Canadiana: The Chancellor Richardson Memorial Fund and Art as Social History*. *New Canadiana* offers over 90 works among 450 acquired by the Richardson Fund over the past forty years, indicative of how Canadians see and define them-



Gallery Director Janet Brooke (3rd from left) with RAQ visitors.

selves. The highlights included Joyce Wieland's *O Canada* quilt (familiar to Chez Piggy patrons), a memento mori photograph of a recently dead AIDS patient (AA Bronson's *Felix*, June 5, 1994); Adrian Blackwell's exploded overhead photos of artists' lofts in Toronto, just before eviction; and a seemingly compliant robot that soon expresses its demanding annoyance with its operator (Norman T. White's *The Helpless Robot*). RAQ members had a rare chance to pause and appreciate these unique contemporary works that were juxtaposed with other historic pieces from a century and more ago. Janet Brooke's expert and

sensitive commentary enhanced the occasion greatly.

BILL JAMES

RAQeteers Meet Vice-Principal Tom Harris

On October 20th, the annual RAQ Reception provided RAQ members an opportunity to meet the VP (Advancement), Tom Harris. Vice-Principal Harris thanked retirees for their donations of time to Queen's. He also noted that Queen's retirees have been the top contributors to United Way campaigns among retirees at Canadian universities of comparable size, providing more than \$470,000 over the last five years.

Harris then reviewed the changes



that have affected Queen's over the decades. Government support of the Operating Budget has dropped from 74% in 1992-93 to only 47% of the current Operating Budget of \$300 million. This has led to tuition increases and has also raised the importance of philanthropy in support of Queen's. He emphasized that fundraising priorities are set by the Principal and Provost, not the Department of Advancement.

Last year Advancement raised some \$53 million for Queen's. Harris noted that last year there were nearly 14,000 small donations that totalled about \$3 million. These donations can often be allocated to the areas of highest priority, so they are enormously valuable.

The next major campaign will aim to raise at least \$500 million. Harris hoped that retirees will continue to

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play a role in assuring the success of the campaign.

GEORGE BRANDIE

Principal Woolf Addresses RAQonteur Forum

On November 23rd, Principal Daniel Woolf spoke about “Telling our Story” to the 4th RAQonteur Forum. Dr. Woolf described how he sees his role as ambassador for Queen’s internationally, nationally, provincially, and locally. He believes it is important to put Queen’s on the global stage.

He went on to describe the real need to make Queen’s better known

and to relate well to governments.

Queen’s is developing a more systematic strategy regarding government and public affairs. Recent activities include cosponsoring with RMC the Canadian Military and Veteran Health Research Forum.

Locally, the Principal has already met with the incoming new City Council. The issue of Homecoming



has been addressed by cancelling it for three more years. A three to five year joint strategic plan is being developed with the City. Efforts are being made to retain more graduates locally. The coming Performing Arts Centre is a joint project with the city.

In order to tell a good story to the world about Queen’s, the story needs to be consistent. Choices need to be made about what to emphasize, without letting other areas deteriorate. Excellence is essential in all areas. Both teaching and research are important. In summing up his story of Queen’s, Principal Woolf said his aim is to have a “balanced academy”.

ARLENE AISH and HENRY DINSDALE

Coming RAQ Events Spring 2011

Monthly Luncheons

RAQ monthly luncheons continue to be a popular choice for members to meet informally and sample the cuisine of various Kingston-area restaurants.

The luncheons are usually held on the last Monday of each month. Everyone is welcome—including members’ spouses and friends. Contact Jessica (Jerry) Roddy, (613) 353-6959 or jroddy@kingston.net for details and reservations.

Coming Spring Events

Elder Law Issues

(Coming in April, 2011)

Speakers: Professor David Freedman of Queen's Faculty of Law and Mary Alice Thompson of Cunningham, Swan, Carty, Little and Bonham.

As well as teaching in the area of elder law, wills, estates and trusts, Professor Freedman is the Director of the newly formed Elder Law Clinic at Queen's Law. Mary Alice Thompson is a partner at Cunningham Swan and a Specialist in Estates and Trust Law certified by the Law Society of Upper Canada. This session promises to be both interesting and informative.

More information when date, time and place, etc. are confirmed will be sent by email. For those without email please call the RAQ office in March.

SUSAN MIKLAS

Campus Tour—May 2011

Another campus tour will be arranged for the end of May to include the new medical building. More details in the May Newsletter.

CHERRILYN YALIN

Monday Morning Forums Winter/Spring 2011

The Winter/Spring series of Monday Morning Forums is coordinated by Dr. A. M. Herzberg under the joint sponsorship of Queen's University and the Four Points Sheraton Hotel and Suites, Kingston.

Although the Monday Morning Forum schedule is not yet complete the schedule will include:

January 17, 2011
In Defense of Elitism
Eric Friesen

March 14, 2011
Panning for Gold
Charlotte Gray

Watch your mail for the flyers for more detail and the complete schedule.

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