

# RAQnews



## President's Report

For those of us associated with academic institutions, autumn often brings a fresh measure of energy and inspiration. It's a time for fresh starts. This is certainly the case with RAQ, as the various reports in this newsletter show.

You will already have noticed the updated format of the newspaper, especially the ease with which you can choose articles to read in an electronic format. Comments about the change are welcome.

This season's focus is on membership, developing ways to reach out to recent retirees and encouraging ongoing members to renew early. New members will be honoured at the Fall Reception, November 21, where Dr. Tom Harris, the interim provost and VP Academic, to whom we report, will give us his vision of the future of Queen's.

In the events section of this newsletter, you'll find information about the term's opportunities to hear interesting and informative speakers. Please plan to join us for both the upcoming Monday Morning Forum talks and the Lunchtime Guest Series talks.

New council officers have taken on their responsibilities with vigor and vision. Donna Lounsbury, our new membership chairperson, is eager to hear your suggestions or concerns and acts promptly to resolve issues important to Queen's retirees. Bill Forbes, our new treasurer, must deal with greatly

changed financial policies at Queen's. Cheryl Descent is our new office administrator, and provides wonderful support to our members and RAQ council.

This is the time the RAQ council begins to plan for next year's slate of officers. The makeup of the nominating committee and the nominating process is under review, and we hope to have a slate of new council members for your consideration long before the 2019 AGM. If you'd like to be more involved in RAQ's activities or know someone you feel would be an asset, please contact us.

RAQ has always had an advocacy role for retirees, and that role has intensified in the last months. Our Pensions and Benefits committee watches pension negotiations carefully and gives as much input as possible to discussions about benefits. Retiree staff cards and ongoing access to Queen's email services are two issues whose resolution we're pursuing energetically.

We're grateful, as always, to the Provost's office, a RAQ partner from the beginning, for its ongoing support. I look forward to participating with you in this year's activities.

*Eleanor Rogers, RAO president*



**Are you a  
Queen's Retiree  
with a retire-  
ment question  
or concern?**

**RAQ is here to help! Contact RAQ at  
613-533-6986, or [RAQ@queensu.ca](mailto:RAQ@queensu.ca)**

# Pension & Benefits Update

## Pensions

The preliminary results of the investment returns of the Queen's Pension Plan (QPP) for the full pension year (September 1, 2017, to August 31, 2018) have been posted at

<http://www.queensu.ca/humanresources/news/monthly-pension-update-20181001>

The QPP gained 8.61%, falling just short of the 9% gain needed to finally bring increases in the monthly deposits of long-retired Queen's pensioners. Individual details will be given in the annual pension letters each pensioner receives from Pension Services, probably in late November. That letter will also give the time and location of the QPP Annual General Meeting, which is scheduled for Friday, December 14, 2018.

Negotiations for a new University Pension Plan (UPP) for Ontario universities are continuing between administration representatives and employee unions of Queen's, the University of Guelph and the University of Toronto. The details being worked on apply to particular groups of employees, not current pensioners. All of this is leading toward a required process in which plan members of the three universities must vote on whether to continue to actually create the new multi-university plan. Details of current status, the legally specified voting process, and the project timetable can be found on the UPP website at

<http://universitypension.ca/> Retirees should note the "Retirees" tab at the top of the website's home page, which states that our pensions and pension increases will continue as specified by the QPP at the time we each began receiving monthly pension payments under the new plan. When material for the Approval/Objection voting is distributed, we will have more to say.

## Benefits

Great-West Life has created a new procedure for filing reimbursement claims for medical expenses. For details of the new procedures see page 6 of this issue of this issue of RAQnews.

As always, the Pension & Benefits Committee welcomes questions, comments, and reports of problems from RAQ members, which we will bring to our regular meetings with senior administrators of Queen's.

*RAQ P&B Committee: George Brandie (Chair), Chris Chapler, Bill Forbes, Bruce Hutchinson, Sue Miklas & Joyce Zakos*

### RAQ Welcomes New Members

James Cordy (School of Computing) & Nancy Quinn; Dana Edge (School of Nursing) & Paul Thomson; Mary Ann Emmons (ITS/PeopleSoft) & Randy Emmons; Ray Filteau (CMC Microsystems) & Alison Filteau; Dan Gale (CMC Microsystems); Irene High (University Registrar's Office); Paul Juniper (Industrial Relations Centre); Nancy Leake (Faculty of Law); Suzanne Maranda (University Libraries); Patrick O'Neill (Languages, Literatures and Cultures) & Trudi O'Neill; Shirley Roth (School of Music); Judy Russel (ITS) & Rick Pim (ITS); Ann Smithers (University Libraries); John Whiteley (Psychology/U of Manitoba) & Marilyn Goodyear Whiteley.

# Upcoming RAQ Events: Discussions That Matter

The Lunchtime Guest Series talks and discussions are sponsored by RAQ and the University Club. **Lunches and discussions are at 12:00 p.m. at the University Club (Urquhart Lounge) unless otherwise noted.**

\* \* \*

**Monday, November 5, 2018**

**Topic: New Developments at the Four Directions Indigenous Student Centre**

Ms Kandice Baptiste, Director, Four Directions Indigenous Student Centre

Meet at 11:00 a.m. at 144/146 Barrie St. for tour; lunch will follow at 12:00 p.m.

\* \* \*

**Tuesday, November 27, 2018**

**Topic: What next for NAFTA?**

Dr. Robert Wolfe, Professor Emeritus, School of Policy Studies, Queen's University

\* \* \*

**Thursday, December 6, 2018**

**Topic: Rejuvenating a Language in the Kanyen'kéha Story**

Greg Lessard, Professor, French Studies/School of Computing; Nathan Brinklow, Lecturer, Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures; & Michael Levison, Professor Emeritus, School of Computing

The Lunchtime Guest Series talks are open to all members of the public. The cost is \$15 and includes a sandwich lunch. *Reservations are required for the Lunchtime Guest Series as space is limited for these popular events.* To make a reservation, contact Valerie at the University Club ([admuclub@queensu.ca](mailto:admuclub@queensu.ca), or 613-533-2846). If you reserve but can't make it let Valerie know as we often have a waiting list.

The Monday Morning Forum talks and discussions are sponsored by Queen's University; Cunningham Swan, Lawyers; and the Frontenac Club Inn, Kingston.

**Meet at the University Club at 8:15 a.m. for coffee and muffins, followed by a lecture at 9:00 a.m., and a discussion at 9:30 a.m.**

\* \* \*

**Monday, October 29, 2018**

**Topic: Fibre Security: Is it possible?**

Ms D. Robinson, General Counsel, Department of Justice, Canada

\* \* \*

**Monday, November 12, 2018**

**Topic: The Six-Day War: Fifty Years On**

Ambassador (Ret.) L.A. Delvoie, Centre for International Defence Policy, Queen's University

\* \* \*

The Monday Morning Forum talks are open to all members of the public; reservations are not required and there is no cost.





## RAQ Membership Update



### Calling All Queen's Retirees!

We count on a strong membership base to support RAQ's efforts to promote and enhance the advantages of being a Queen's Retiree. For a nominal annual rate (\$25 for a single and \$40 for a couple membership), RAQ members have access to an array of exceptional learning opportunities and preferential rates on many products and services.

Queen's pension and benefits are priorities for all of us. RAQ advocates forcefully and continuously for retirees' interests as new plans and benefits programs are negotiated. RAQ members also have access to a host of other privileges, including preferred rates for travel, car and home insurance and discounts on a variety of tours world-wide. Your new Queen's Retiree Card, which RAQ will finalize this year in collaboration with the University, will open the door to a range of other products and services. We invite you to visit the RAQ website at <https://queensu.ca/retirees/> and click on *Deals and Discounts* to learn more about current privileges and benefits.

If you are not currently a member of RAQ, or if you know other Queen's retirees who might be interested, please email Cheryl Descent, Office Administrator, at [raq@queensu.ca](mailto:raq@queensu.ca) for information on how to join RAQ (or renew your membership). You'll be pleased to know that we offer a free one-year membership for new members. There is lots going on this fall as RAQ launches its 2018/2019 program of activities so don't miss out. We look forward to seeing you at the Fall Reception for new members on November 21<sup>st</sup>.

Thanks for your support.

*Donna Lounsbury, RAQ  
Membership Chair*

*The RAQ Annual Fall Reception  
for RAQ Members and Guests  
will be held on  
Wednesday, November 21, 2018  
3:00 p.m. — 5:00 p.m.  
at the University Club  
Watch for your invitation!*

# RAQ Members Making a Difference: Rural Medical Care

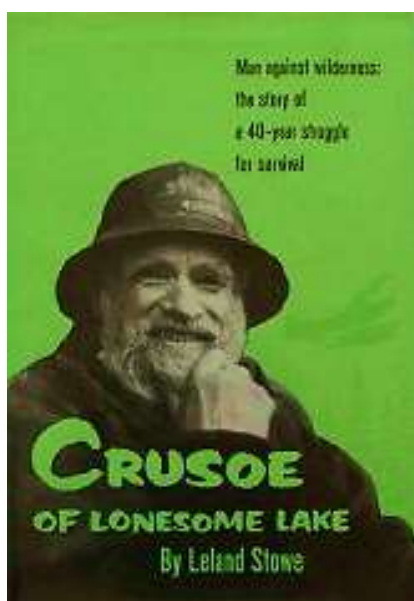
## Beyond the Dark Wood...by Neil Hobbs, MD, FCFP.

As a physician nearing retirement, and perhaps without the credentialing that marks the progress of many academics, I have often looked on the middle part of my life spent at Queen's from 1987-2007 as somewhat of a tangled wood "in the thick of thickets, in a wood so dense and gnarled" as Seamus Heaney's translation of Dante has it.

The life "beyond the wood" is really the way I look at the decade or more since I left the Department of Family Medicine and followed several streams of private practice, but always with an eye towards practice in more rural or remote areas of Canada.

*In the middle of the journey of our life I came to myself within a dark wood where the straight way was lost...*

*Dante Alighieri, The Divine Comedy*



Where does this story all start? My earliest memory that I have that I believe is real, (and not imagined) is of somehow escaping over a fence from the front yard of the house where I lived as a young child and, to the embarrassment but relief of my parents, being found by the police. Do such early impulses play out on the character development of one's later life? How I came to an appreciation of practice in less populated parts of Canada is really another story, but the idea of what life *might* be like there, dates to teenage years growing up in England and my father introducing me to Leland Stowe's 1957 biography of Ralph Edwards, Crusoe of Lonesome Lake. Parents, beware of the books you give to your children! I was enthralled by Edwards' story of heading into the wilds of British Columbia to carve out a life for himself and think that the germ of enthusiasm was sown there first.

After undergraduate medical studies at Cambridge, and as a medical student at St Mary's Hospital, London in my first year of clinical training I was able to go on elective study time to St. Anthony in Newfoundland and Labrador, working out of the Curtis Memorial Hospital there. Later, in the 1970s as a young trained physician I found myself working in Labrador and Moose Factory.

Then, when my wife and I had become Canadians and started a family, I settled in for 6½ years as a physician in Placentia, NL. It was a chance encounter idly leafing through a medical journal in the 1980s that I came across an ad for an academic position in the Department of Family Medicine at Queen's University... and thus began 20 years in Kingston.



Curtis Memorial Hospital, St. Anthony, NL

...continued on page 7

## RAQ Member Bulletin Board

### Making a Great-West Life Health Benefits Claim? It's All New!

If you've tried to print the old claim form for Great-West benefits from the Queen's HR website lately, you'll notice that it has changed!

Most claims can be submitted on-line, once you sign-up for GroupNet for Plan Members with Great-West:

<https://groupnet.greatwestlife.com/public/signin/login.public?blank&brand=pm&lang=en>



You will need your Policy # (139046) and Member ID # (your staff number) to complete the sign-up process.

Please note that even if you signed up for GroupNet for Plan Members in the past, you will need to re-enrol in this new system.

While most claims can be submitted on-line, there are a few instances where a paper claim will need to be submitted:

- for prescription drugs (for individuals 65 or older)
- for medical equipment and /or supplies
- for a claim to be paid by G-W directly to the service provider
- for a type of claim or expense detail that is not listed as an option to select

In addition, there are daily, weekly and monthly online submission limits. In circumstances where these limits have been reached, a paper claim will need to be completed and mailed to Great-West.

To make a claim on paper, you will have to use the new form available on the Great-West website, print it off, and mail it in (with proper receipts). This form is available at:

[https://www.greatwestlife.com/content/dam/gwl/documents/M635D\(WPG\)\\_FINAL-Locked.pdf](https://www.greatwestlife.com/content/dam/gwl/documents/M635D(WPG)_FINAL-Locked.pdf)

**If you have problems, staff at Great-West are available to help you during business hours at 1-800-957-9777 (you'll need to have the two ID numbers listed above handy).**

The RAQ Lunchtime Guest Series talks (see page 3) aim to take advantage of the extensive knowledge and expertise found among us. Please email Sandra Olney with your ideas and suggestions for future topics or suggested speakers: [sandra.olney@queensu.ca](mailto:sandra.olney@queensu.ca)



*Are you a RAQ member with an interesting project? Please tell us about it, so that we can*

*consider sharing it with others in a future edition of RAQnews. Send an email to: [RAQ@queensu.ca](mailto:RAQ@queensu.ca)*





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Please don't misunderstand me; my life here in Kingston was enormously interesting and I think some good work was done. My family medicine training in the Oxford area of the United Kingdom inspired me with the importance of patient-physician communication (often in the home as well as in the office); and my segue from obstetrics to palliative care was an important course of discovery in the 1990s after I returned from a palliative care fellowship in Ottawa during my first sabbatical. Dr. Balfour Mount's (Queen's 1963) development of International conferences in palliative care which I attended in the 1980s were a great inspiration.

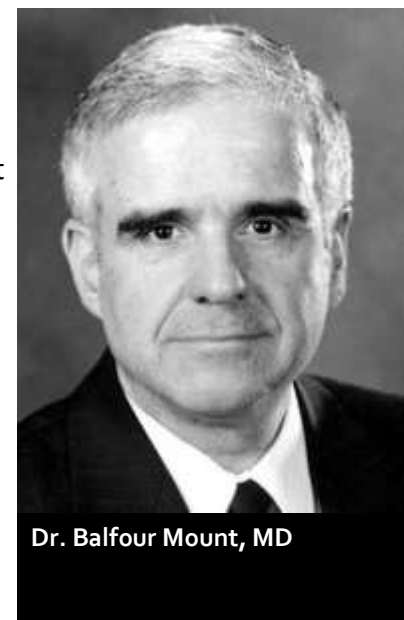
But sometimes in middle life one may perceive that there is a grain of flavour missing from the choice of dishes one dines on, that is hard to put one's finger on. Is it a missed turning in the path, one's own incapacity or blindness in some unknown dimension, some willfulness of spirit that leaves one looking for an undiscovered fork in the path that had been missed? I wonder sometimes if this is a particular predicament of immigrants who find themselves in a country that they love, but away from their family of origin, and not the country in which they were brought up in. And as one gets older, it may become more difficult to look for mentoring help in answering important questions such as these. Often in the physician's private *cabin* *net de travail*, one is expected to provide answers rather than ask questions...

I was very fortunate in the last decade of my work in family medicine to make the acquaintance of Dr. Wendy Pentland, then in Occupational Therapy at Queen's, who I had invited to a conference on wellness at an undergraduate class to talk about life choices for wellness. It was not long after this conference that I decided that I could do with some personal help in answering my own questions about life choices. One simple but

deep question (among others) she asked over lunch was "well, what do you want to do with the rest of your life, Neil?" "Oh, and where do you want to live when you're doing that?" was also a question that I needed to ask myself.

Within the next year or so I had embarked on the next phase of my life. Our children were grown and independent; and I have a loving life partner, Hazel, who was more supportive than I could imagine or ask for. And perhaps some decisions may be made a bit more easily in this window of one's life. As a result of trying to answer the questions Wendy had posed, the "gnarled roots of the wood" gradually untangled. Within a year Hazel and I had decided to move to "a house in the country" in Sydenham. We found a lovely 1870s log home with a garden ripe for further development and a view with stars at night. (We had specifically asked our real estate agent for the night time view!) And I gradually started thinking about a life beyond academe.

In thinking about returning to work in private practice with a rural focus, I was fortunate early on. A chance meeting with Dr. Brian Kain, when we were both waiting for a train in Kingston,



Dr. Balfour Mount, MD



Dr. Wendy Pentland ,PhD

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led to his suggestion of work in the Northwest Territories. Brian was Director of the Queen's Family Medicine program when I arrived in the 1980s. His suggestion led to ten years' work for about three months each year in the Sahtu region of the Northwest Territories working mainly in Dene communities on the Mackenzie River between Yellowknife and Inuvik. It is a region that includes the small oil town of Norman Wells, but all the smaller communities of Tulita, Déljine, Fort Good Hope and Colville Lake, none of which have populations of over 800 souls. It was only this year that I reluctantly decided not to renew my professional license for the Northwest Territories. The incredible people and the remote beauty of the northern wilderness will always stay with me, actually with us – Hazel and I were lucky enough to travel there together on a number of occasions.

But a rural focus does not necessarily comprise only "rural and remote" work. Inquiries to two practices the year I left Queen's, looking for support of vacation time for full-time physicians, led to a number of years of fulfilling and interesting work. I worked for eight years, for four months of the year in Tamworth for two physicians – Drs Sandra Cowan and Laing McFadzean who have been deep in rural practice there for over thirty years. And I have continued to do "locum replacements" for several physicians at Frontenac Medical Associates on Princess Street. Despite its urban location, many patients at that practice have rural addresses. Further inquiries have led to periods of work back in Labrador, and a whole year as a locum replacement in North Island, New Zealand.



North Island, New Zealand

At age 71, next year may be the last year, but who knows? Despite a collection of bionic joints with which good orthopedists in Kingston have thankfully extended my working life, I remain in reasonable health. The College of Physicians and Surgeons carefully reviews the performance of all physicians, but routinely looks at the performance of physicians aged 70 and older. After a review last year they declared that I am still functioning at a satisfactory level. More importantly to me, I have found my way back to the kind of family medicine that I first encountered when I came to Canada. As many professionals may have found, there is often satisfaction to be found returning to work they once enjoyed. Many who write about the nature family practice training emphasize one of its key developmen-

tal tasks: to learn to tolerate a degree of uncertainty about the limits of finding all answers to all questions. That need for toleration does not vanish with advancing age. Indeed with humility, curiosity and enthusiasm still in action I may find my way past more tangled roots ahead of me.

*Neil Hobbs is a Family Physician, RAQ member, and not quite ready to retire.*



Mackenzie River, north of Tulita  
in the Sahtu

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