

# RAQnews



*Hello, fellow retirees!* It is an honour to be your new president and to follow John Meisel and Joyce Zakos, who each did such an able job (along with other founding RAQ members) in getting our organiza-

tion up and running. I came to Queen's in 1969 after a few years teaching Nursing at the Universities of Toronto and New Brunswick. Each of the seven universities at which I spent time as either a student or a faculty member demonstrated its own culture. The "Queen's way" is familiar to us all, even though it may have had changes over the decades. Queen's was a good place to work, and it is hard for me to believe that more than ten years have now passed since I retired.

**What's new with RAQ?** In June, the Executive and Council approved making John Meisel the Honorary President in recognition of his major contribution to RAQ and his skill in establishing positive relationships among members and with the university administration. Recently RAQ also strengthened its ties with the College and University Retirees Association of Canada (CURAC) through the election of George Brandie, RAQ Vice-President, as secretary of the national body. Congratulations, George!

In May, Queen's provided financial support for me to attend CURAC's 5<sup>th</sup> annual conference, expertly hosted for three days this year by the University of Windsor and St. Clair College. CURAC is made up of retirees from colleges and universities across Canada. It produces an interesting newsletter and publishes committee reports and some conference proceedings on its web site: [www.curac.ca](http://www.curac.ca).

Several CURAC Committee reports may be of interest to you.

The Non-medical Benefits Committee did a survey that illustrated various levels of non-medical benefits in different member institutions.

The Housing Committee reported that Laval is planning a large residential complex on campus, with fully 150 units for retirees. UBC also plans campus housing that includes a seniors' residence. The U of T continues to explore the housing issue.

The Committee on Support for Continuing Professional Activities contacted several national Funding Councils. They found moral support for retiree research, but nothing tangible re seed money or small grants for pilot projects came of it.

The CURAC Conference focused on pensions and health care. Across the country there are concerns about the sustainability of pensions. Similar pressures are being felt within universities and colleges as elsewhere in the work force. Many pension plans are dealing with un-funded liabilities due to decreasing returns on pension investments combined with pensioners' increasing longevity. There is universal concern about support for pension plans from an aging, downsized workforce. No matter which approach is used for annual pension adjustments, few plans have been able to offer increases in recent years. On the brighter side, investment returns are improving (or were in May), and the Canada Pension Plan is considered by experts to be on sound footing. Queen's pensioners have been most fortunate in this area, as Bill Wright reports on page 2.

Regarding health care for seniors, shortage of resources and cost of care were major concerns. Home care is in short supply across the country. The CURAC Healthcare Policy Committee's discussion paper focuses on problems with Canada's healthcare system. There is a lengthy report on CURAC's web page.

It was enjoyable to mix with retirees from across the country and to acquire a broader perspective that makes clear what good social and intellectual events, pensions, benefits, and co-operation with the Administration we enjoy through RAQ.

ARLENE AISH, *President*

## Presidential News and Views

## Pension and Benefits Committee Report

IN THIS ISSUE we would like to provide some information on Queen's Pension Plan matters – things you may not be aware of, should know, may have forgotten, or at least may find of some interest. In a future column we hope to address medical and other insurance issues.

### DID YOU KNOW...?

As of June 30, the market value of the Queen's Pension Plan (QPP) assets was \$1,478,400,000 – almost \$1.5 billion dollars! When the current plan started in 1969, the total value was less than \$4-million.

There are currently more than 3,300 active plan members and 1,555 pensioners.

The Pension Committee of the Board of Trustees decides all matters relating to the QPP, including its administration, and reviews the fund's investment managers. There are 11 Pension Committee members: Four are active employee representatives (Bill Cannon as Chair, James McKinnon, Linda McCauley and Bonnie Cuddon), three are Board appointees (James Angus, Gordon Hall and Kathy Thompson), two are retired employees (John Gordon and Alison Morgan), and two are *ex officio* Vice-Principals – Operations and Finance (Andrew Simpson) and Human Resources (Rod Morrison). The day-to-day administration is carried out by the Pension and Benefits section of Human Resources under manager Bob Weisnagel.

There are eight separate Investment Managers currently responsible for investing the entire pension fund. They are chosen for their particular professional expertise in such various market segments as Canadian Equities, Global Equities, Balanced Funds, Fixed Income and Private Debt Investments. Based on

mandates established by the Pension Committee, the total fund's current asset mix is roughly 33% Canadian stocks, 34% global non-Canadian stocks, and 33% regular bonds

Compared with other pension plans, the QPP's investment performance has been quite good. The Royal Bank of Canada provides regular reports of performance for a very large number of pension plans. Their results show a *median* return of 14.6% for the one-year period ending June 30, 2007, 11.7% for the four-year period, and 8.7% over ten years. The corresponding Queen's figures are 17.7%, 14.1% and 8.9%.

Once a Queen's pension starts for a retiree, future adjustments are entirely based on the Plan's investment performance. A key component of the provisions is that *it will never go down*. Pensions provided by other employers may be quite different, and in most instances they are. In some, the pension amount never changes; some are increased sporadically at the goodwill of the employer; others are increased based on a formula tied to the Canadian Consumer Price Index (CPI).

How have we done? As an example, a Queen's person retiring in 1990, and assuming current expected returns, will have seen their actual pension doubled with **an increase of about 100%** over that period. The CPI for the same period went up by about 40%. Another example is a person retiring under the QPP in 1995, whose pension has increased by 45%, whereas the CPI over the same period went up 24%.

Financial markets fluctuate significantly, but the evidence is strong that over a long period of time since the Plan's inception in 1969, we have all been very well treated by sound and successful financial investing and a uniquely beneficial plan design.

BILL WRIGHT, *Chair*

## Campus construction projects underway: *A survivor's checklist*

As many of you experience the frustration of trying to navigate around the campus this summer, the number of significant construction projects underway becomes obvious. Below is a list of projects and their proposed completion dates. This won't get you through the ever-changing detours, but it's an attempt to inform you of the upgrades undertaken to keep our university on the leading edge.

- \* **The Queen's Centre** (*completion date Fall 2014*). This largest capital project ever undertaken by any Canadian university will completely refurbish and expand Queen's athletic, recreational and Kinesiology program facilities.
- \* **University Avenue Rehabilitation** (*Summer 2008*). The blocks below Union St. are being redesigned to make this artery more user-friendly for pedestrians and to replace all the diseased trees.
- \* **Union Street Reconstruction** (*Fall 2007*). Torn up last spring to accommodate major underground services, the street will soon be repaved from University Ave. to Division St.
- \* **Tindall Field/Underground Parking Garage** (*Fall 2008*). Additional parking space will be provided underground and then tracks and playing fields replaced on top.
- \* **McNeill House Restoration** (*September 2007*). This 1950s Albert St. residence is being renovated to meet current residence standards..
- \* **Tett Centre/Performing Arts Venue** (*Summer 2010*). In collaboration with the City and its arts community, and with a major gift from Alfred and Isabel Bader, this lakeside site will be a major Queen's venue.
- \* **Richardson Hall Restoration** (*Fall 2008*). This early-'50s main administration building is being completely renovated internally to meet modern office standards, with air conditioning.

JOHN R. GORDON

# Reports of Past Events – Spring & Summer 2007

## *Golf Tournament canceled*

RAQ's first golf tournament, planned for August 27 at the Colonnade Golf & Country Club, was canceled when insufficient numbers had signed up by the August 13th deadline, during a heat wave. A few keen foursomes enjoyed a day of golfing anyway. A retirees' tournament may be tried again at another time of year.



Sunny July weather and great food to share:  
Another happy RAQ picnic on Lake Opinicon



Last summer's lunch at the  
Boathouse Inn at Rockport

## *Monthly lunch program heading to its 20th restaurant*

Meetings for lunch the last Monday of each month at a variety of restaurants continue to be of interest. Between 19 and 26 RAQ members, spouses and friends regularly turn out. So far, they've enjoyed lunches and conversation at 17 restaurants in Kingston – some frequented more than once. They've also patronized the General Wolfe on Wolfe Island and the Boathouse Country Inn in scenic Rockport.

How about some new faces in new places in the months to come? If you don't receive e-mail reminders, please call Jessica (Jerry) Roddy at 613-353-6959 for the next restaurant's name and to make reservations.

## *Some battiness at the Lake Opinicon picnic*

What is now a very popular annual event – RAQ's pot-luck picnic at Queen's Biology Station on Lake Opinicon – took place on a sunny day in late July. As usual, we were able to sample everyone's favourite recipes, so we ate well.

After lunch, a faculty member gave a brief talk on the development of the station and current projects and then introduced a graduate student who described her research with bats – especially their techniques for homing in on their prey. It turns out that what the bats home in on is the mating call of the insects they hunt, so their prey must choose between not mating or getting eaten. Luckily, enough of them make the right decision that the species continue to propagate.

From the photo of Raquetteers relaxing in such an inviting lakeside setting, those of you who didn't attend can see what you're missing. Perhaps next summer?

ROBERT CRANDALL

## *Momentous years in Queen's history: Tell your story*

Although there are official (to 1961) and less formal Queen's history books (to 1981), plus film and tape collections available to researchers, RAQ and the University Archives have jointly set up a new oral history project we call *The Human History of Queen's*. Realizing there are former faculty and staff around with vivid memories of the fastest-changing decades in the University's history, we aim to collect and preserve their stories as a resource, concentrating first on the momentous period 1960-79.

This summer we had a wonderful student, Laura Swan (under the SWEP program), researching the events of

those two decades, largely through the Queen's Senate Minutes. She also prepared the background for interviews, evaluated interviewing techniques and determined the equipment required. We will begin our *Human History* in earnest next summer, hoping for the funding needed to employ up to three trained students to conduct 20 to 30 interviews each.

First-phase interviews will cover the 1960s, focusing on themes and events prominent on campus then: dramatic increases in student, faculty and staff numbers, new degree programs, the building boom and the usual financial hardships. These years

were also marked by the advancement of women, Canadian nationalism, security issues of the Cold War, plus student protests for housing and Senate seats and *against* the RCMP's secret presence on campus.

We have begun compiling names of potential interviewees – those of you who were both witnesses and shapers of those times. But we're always looking for more. The initial interviews will start this winter. If you're interested yourself or have subjects to suggest, please consult the RAQ website, which will soon host a page dedicated to this project. ALISON MORGAN

## RAQ Events Fall 2007

### *Monthly Lunches*

Attendance continues to be high at these informal noon meetings at various restaurants, usually on the last Monday of each month. Everyone is welcome, including members' spouses and friends. E-mail Jessica (Jerry) Roddy at [jroddy@kingston.net](mailto:jroddy@kingston.net) or phone 613-353-6959 for locations and reservations.

RAQ'S PROGRAM PLANNERS  
HOPE YOU'LL ENJOY THE  
FOLLOWING FALL EVENTS.

### **The Monday Morning Forums**

The following four events will take place at the University Club, 168 Stuart St., and will follow the same pattern: Coffee and muffins at 8:15 a.m., guest's lecture at 9:00, and then a discussion and exchange of ideas at 9:30. RAQ members and friends both welcome. No reservations necessary. These Forums are co-sponsored by RAQ and the University and convened by Prof. Agnes Herzberg.

**September 17**

#### ***Unpasteurized Milk: Is Bug Wisdom Fading?***

This popular program returns with a presentation by **Dr. M.S. McQuigge** of the University of Toronto.

**September 24**

#### ***Hamlet, Bloody Hamlet***

A lecture by Queen's Drama Professor and playwright **J.A. 'Fred' Euringer**

**October 1**

#### ***What Do You Believe and Why? Six Impossible Things Before Breakfast***

**Prof. L. Wolpert**, University College, London, UK, is our guest during his campus visit as Dunning Trust Lecturer.

**October 22**

#### ***Is It Important to Rank Universities?***

**Dr. R.P. MacKinnon**, President, University of Saskatchewan, will address what has become a controversial annual exercise by *Maclean's* magazine.

#### ***Reception with V-P Patrick Deane***

**Thursday, October 4  
University Club, 4-6 p.m.**

Enjoy a friendly Raquetteers get-together with the chance to hear a few words from Vice-Principal (Academic) Deane on new directions for RAQ-University co-operation, leading to a Retiree/Emeritus College. His remarks will be made about 5 p.m. **Cash bar.** A \$5 fee covers vegetable dip, cheese, pate and crackers.

#### ***Canadian Portrait Exhibition & Lunch in Gananoque*** **Thursday, October 11**

The Kingston Arts Council's Contemporary Canadian Portrait competition has produced a juried selection of the top 30 paintings, on exhibition in Gananoque's Firehall Theatre. Meet for car-pooling at the Kingston Centre's Canadian Tire gas bar area at 12:15. Lunch is at Jake's Pub, Gananoque Inn, at 1:00 p.m., followed by a guided tour of the portraits at 2:30. Between this tour and the return to Kingston about 4:30 or 5:00, visit the Arthur Childs Heritage Centre, go shopping or exploring. Tables need to be reserved through Juliet Milsome at 613-544-9893 or [milsomej@post.queensu.ca](mailto:milsomej@post.queensu.ca)

#### ***Art Conservation Tour*** **Wednesday, October 31**

Join an afternoon tour of the Art Conservation Research Program at 3:15 p.m., beginning at the Art Conservation Office, 15 Bader Lane. Please call Bruce Hutchinson at 613-542-7645 or e-mail [hutchinb@queensu.ca](mailto:hutchinb@queensu.ca) to register. Art conservation for future generations is an exciting and challenging multi-disciplinary field involving the examination, interpretation, analysis, and conservation of cultural, historic, and artistic objects. The tour will include demonstrations of the sciences and humanities involved. Queen's offers the only Canadian Master's degree in Art Conservation (MAC).

#### ***Queen's Theatre Matinee — KING LEAR: Meet the Director*** **Saturday, November 10**

**Prof. Judith Fisher**, director, has agreed to discuss with us what will be an unusual performance: a shorter adaptation with Lear as a female character and "the conflict between youth and age as the prominent issue," making the play more accessible to younger audiences (i.e., Raquetteers!). Matinee at 2:00. Tickets \$8.

#### ***Silver Bells Dinner & Carol Service***

**Last Sunday in November  
OR first in December**

The Alma Mater Society is again sponsoring this popular campus dinner (around \$10) for Kingston seniors and RAQ members, followed by the Engineering Society's traditional Carol Service in Grant Hall. Reservations needed. Please contact the AMS at 613-533-3001 for information and to register.

RAQnews is published three times a year by The Communications Committee, *Chair*, John Gordon.

*Contributors to this issue:* Arlene Aish, Bob Crandall, John Gordon, Bruce Hutchinson, Juliet Milsome, Alison Morgan, Jerry Roddy and Bill Wright. *Photos:* Bob Crandall, John Gordon and Cathy Perkins.

*Editor:* Cathy Perkins; *Design and Production:* Peter Dorn; *Website manager:* Bob Cavanagh.

*Printing and mailing:* Special thanks to Queen's Printing Services, Queen's Post Office and RAQ volunteer staffers.

RAQ's postal address is: Mackintosh Corry Hall, Room B410, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, K7L 3N6.

Telephone 613-533-6986. E-mail [raq@post.queensu.ca](mailto:raq@post.queensu.ca) Website [www.queensu.ca/retirees](http://www.queensu.ca/retirees)