

RAQ *news*



Our eighth Annual General Meeting was held on Monday, April 26. Approximately 80 attendees enjoyed a reception and lunch at the University Club and received the reports of RAQ committees on their activities over the

past year.

I am pleased to welcome new members and a new chair, David Bacon, to our Pension and Benefits Committee, and am equally pleased that the committee will continue to benefit from the wisdom and experience of retiring chair, Alan Green, and its other continuing members.

A new issue – retiree parking – blew up unexpectedly last summer. The university administration unilaterally and without prior consultation changed long-standing parking arrangements for retirees continuing to conduct research or engaged in teaching or other service activities on campus. After RAQ and a number of individual members objected to this unilateral change, then-Principal Tom Williams agreed to reopen the issue and discussions continued after Principal Daniel Woolf assumed office in September. Those discussions, conducted in a collegial and friendly atmosphere, culminated in a new policy and procedure with which RAQ concurred. Those discussions also affirmed the value of consulting RAQ before changes involving retirees are promulgated. I am grateful to Principals Williams and Woolf and to their associates in the administration for their openness to reasoned argument. Over the summer, a new round of permit renewals will take place. Anyone encountering problems with those renewals should contact me or the RAQ office.

On the subject of the RAQ office, to accommodate an expansion of the offices of the Global Development Studies Department, we were asked to move our office down the hall and around the corner (A412 Mackintosh-Corry). The move was accomplished at no cash cost to RAQ, but at a cost of extra work for Joy Hoselton in packing and unpacking the office. Joy's cheerful and efficient work for RAQ is invaluable.

Presidential News and Views

In addition to providing RAQ a campus office, Queen's (through the VP-Academic) has supported RAQ's activities by giving us a grant to support our office. Last year that grant did not increase and, given the state of university finances, it may not increase in the near future. Our costs, of course, for printing, postage, telephone, etc. do increase each year. To ensure that RAQ's office expenses do not move us into a deficit position, RAQ members attending the AGM voted to support a dues increase of \$5.00, starting in the 2011/2012 membership year.

Through RAQ's membership in College and University Retiree Associations of Canada (CURAC), RAQ members may obtain discounts on home and automobile insurance, membership in CARP, and subscriptions to the *Literary Review of Canada*. When my own insurance policies came up for renewal last September, I saved 30 percent by switching to the CURAC-affiliated company. Information on all of these offers can be found on the CURAC web site, <http://www.curac.ca>

I wish you all a carefree summer and I look forward to seeing you at upcoming RAQ events

GEORGE BRANDIE
George.brandie@queensu.ca

Just a Reminder: This is the time of year to renew your membership in RAQ for the coming year (2010-2011). For only \$15/individual or \$ 25/couple you can keep in touch with each other and Queen's as well have access to the many events available. Please contact the RAQ office at 613-533-6986 or by email: raq@queensu.ca

Pension and Benefits Committee Report

Let me begin this report on a personal note. This will be my final act as chair of this committee, on which I have served since the inception of RAQ – now eight years ago. Bill Wright was the first chair until his early death in 2008. Based on Bill's strong efforts and our work since

then, we believe that the committee is now in a good position to carry out its important role well into the future.

We are particularly encouraged by the new members who have joined the committee this year: George Brandie, Joyce Zakos, Sue Miklas and David Bacon. Chris Chapler had joined earlier so, along with Dave Bonham, we are now at full strength. More, David Bacon has agreed to become the next chair. All of this allows me to leave this office with a higher degree of optimism that I might otherwise have had.

The strong concerns about the economy which dominated our attention last year have been significantly diminished, much to our relief. Also, our fund performed very well in calendar year 2009 relative to various other pension funds. In the first six months of the current fiscal year (September 2009 to February 2010) our fund showed a net return of about 5 percent. Also, the month of March 2010 was strong with a further increase of 2 percent. This comes close to covering the 7.9 percent overall shrinkage in the fund in the previous fiscal year. Consequently, we believe that we are well on the road to financial recovery and we are therefore upbeat about the future. But pension increases

based on the earnings formula are not yet in sight. We will continue to monitor the economic progress of our fund carefully and regularly, both directly and also relative to other pension funds.

As we have reported before, there is an actuarial deficit in the pension fund which the university is now dealing with. The next formal actuarial review is due in 2011. While corrective measures will likely be necessary at some stage, we have been told that no impact is anticipated with respect to the pensions of retirees. We will however continue to track developments in this area as they occur. In addition, you may recall that we expressed some serious concerns last year relating to governance issues in the pension plan. As far as we know at this stage, that topic is not a current problem.

We are fortunate indeed to have open and cordial relations with the university administration through the offices of Vice-Principal Rod Morrison (Human Resources) and Bob Weisnagel (Associate Director of Pensions & Benefits). In fact our most recent meeting with them just occurred on 13 April 2010. It is our intention to keep in contact with Rod Morrison and Bob Weisnagel on a regular basis.

In closing, let me say that I very much enjoyed being a member of this committee from the beginning, and more recently as its chair. Best wishes for the future.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Pension & Benefits Committee.

ALAN GREEN, *Chair*



AGM 2010 and new Executive 2010-11



Audience at Memorial Hall for Brian Osborne's RAQonteur Forum

Reports of Past Events Winter 2010

RAQonteur Forum provides long-term view of Queen's / Kingston relationship

On 30 March, RAQ presented the Third RAQonteur Forum, "Sustaining Kingston: Old Paths, New Directions," in Memorial Hall at Kingston City Hall. Professor Emeritus (Geography) Brian Osborne entertained and enlightened an audience of 110 with an illustrated lecture that looked back at the history of Kingston and the role played by Queen's, as well as looking forward as Kingston tries to become a more sustainable city. We learned that many of today's controversies – Cataraqui River crossings, student over-exuberance, the economic base of Kingston, etc. – have existed for at least a century. Professor Osborne was optimistic that Kingston has the resources to be successful in the future, and that Queen's will remain a central part of that future. At the end of the presentation, many audience members remarked that they had learned things about Kingston that they hadn't known, despite their long residence in the city.

We are grateful for the support of Vice-Principal (Advancement) Tom Harris for this event.

GEORGE BRANDIE

Drama Department production: Our Town

On February 13, twenty-three Queen's retirees attended the matinee production of Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*, directed by Craig Walker.

In this play Wilder gives us a glimpse into the everyday lives of the people who inhabit a small New England town in the early 1900s.

The seating arrangement was interesting: the audience sat on opposite sides of a rectangle surrounding the central floor and level with the stage, enabling us to become participant-observers. Physical props were few and on stage only when needed. Much depended, therefore, on the actors' presentation of the written script.

Tim Fort, playing the role of the stage manager, provided an expert descriptive commentary on the principal characters' main life events: youth, courtship, marriage and death. Despite aspects of the play being a little sentimental, all of the actors contributed most creditably to presenting the many small, precious moments in the individual lives portrayed.

In the usual post-performance question and answer session, Craig Walker elaborated for us on his direction and on Wilder's comments in writing the play.

MARION MEYER

Monday Morning Forums: Winter-Spring 2010

The winter-spring series of five Monday Morning Forums featured diverse specialists and lively discussions.

This series is coordinated by Dr Agnes Herzberg, under the joint sponsorship of Queen's University and Four Points Sheraton Hotel & Suites, Kingston.

January 11

The pros and cons of wind energy: Wind energy or health?

PROFESSOR J. HARRISON
Department of Physics
Queen's University

January 18

What happened in Copenhagen: What next?

DR J.M.R. STONE
Formerly of Environment Canada

January 25

What are the current challenges to hospitals in the present environment?

MS L. THOMPSON
President and CEO
Kingston General Hospital

March 8

Pandemic. What Pandemic?

DR G. EVANS
Department of Medicine
Queen's University

March 22

Emerging viral epidemics: A "Made in Canada" solution?

DR M. CHRÉTIEN
Ottawa Health Research Institute

Still hoping for the paperless society! We can help you and you can help us reduce RAQ's mailing costs. If you would like to have the Newsletter sent electronically rather than by post, let us know by calling the RAQ office at 613-533-6986 or by email: raq@queensu.ca

Coming RAQ Events Fall 2010

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, jroddy@kingston.net or (613) 353-6959 for details and reservations.

Campus Construction Tour

Monday 31 May 2010

10:30 to noon (1:45 if staying for lunch at the University Club.

We will tour Phase 1 of the Queen's Centre: the School of Kinesiology and Health Studies; the Athletics and Recreational Centre; and Student Life. Next, we will pass by Goodes Hall and hear about the construction of Phase II of the Business School, just begun. We will then make our way to the University Club for lunch (for those who wish it). With regard to lunch, it is not necessary to be a member of the University Club, and you may pay by credit card.

Guides: Bob Polegato, project manager, Physical Plant Services, and Herb Steacy, associate director, Facilities and Business Development, Athletics and Recreation.

If you would like to come on this walk-about, please notify Cherrilyn Yalin by e-mail (yalinc@queensu.ca) or phone (613-542-4201) by Monday 24 May at the latest. We have up to twenty parking spaces available, to be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. If leaving a phone message for Cherrilyn, be sure to leave your contact information.

Opinicon Pot Luck Picnic

Wednesday, July 28

11 a.m. (Rain or Shine)

This will be the sixth RAQ picnic at

Opinicon. If it's bright and sunny we'll enjoy eating outside in the park-like setting. If it rains, we will eat in the Research Station's comfortable pavilion. Please join us again or for the first time for a visit to this delightful spot on the shores of Lake Opinicon to see the Biology Department's renowned research facility and the grad students' current projects. The enclosed registration form gives details and directions. Cost is \$6.00, plus a picnic lunch to share. **Please register by July 18.**

Prince Edward County Music Festival

Friday, September 17, 2010

Bus trip, dinner and concert in Picton

This year's Prince Edward County Music Festival will feature Steven Gellman as Composer-in-Residence. One of Canada's most original composers, he has received numerous international awards. He is currently Professor of Composition and Theory at the University of Ottawa. The program will include his composition, "Love's Garden," two songs for soprano, flute, harp, cello and piano. Also on the program are works by Debussy and Fauré, as well as songs by Mozart. The guest artists this year include: soprano, Donna Brown; Aaron Au, viola; Susan Hoepfner, flute; Judy Loman, harp; Martin Riseley, violin; and the Alcan String Quartet. The performance will be held in the acoustically superb Church of St. Mary Magdalene.

For more information, see www.pecmusicfestival.com

As in previous years, the bus will arrive at the parking lot of ToysRUs (outer Princess Street) at 3:45 p.m., and will leave at 4 p.m., arriving back in Kingston around 10:30 p.m.

Portabello Bistro will again offer a delicious pre-concert dinner at 5 p.m. for \$35.00 (including taxes and gratuities). We have been asked to make a choice of entrée ahead of time. You will pay for your own dinner at the restaurant.

Return the registration form (also

available from www.queensu.ca/retirees) with your cheque for \$55 per person to cover the bus and concert before September 3, 2010.

Fall Events

An information update will be in the September newsletter.

1. An information session on dementia and Alzheimer's disease. Jack Henderson, a member of the RAQ Council and of the Kingston Alzheimer's Society, will organize this event. Others have offered their help.
2. A visit to the delightful Fifth Town Artisan Cheese Company in the Picton area. Along with producing an amazing variety of delicious cheeses, Fifth Town has also won a number of environmental awards. We need a volunteer to organize this visit for approximately the end of September.
3. Monday a.m., September 27. Bill James, a new member of the RAQ Council, will organize a tour of the Agnes Etherington Art Centre and the rental gallery. The rental gallery, managed by Lin Bennett, displays many works of local artists. Janet Brooke, director of the Art Centre, will be our guide.
4. Marion Meyer will keep us posted on Drama Department performances. If you are interested in organizing the visit to the Fifth Town Artisan Cheese Company or in planning another event, please contact Joyce Zakos: zakosj@queensu.ca or (613) 546- 9494.

Monday Morning Forums: Fall 2010

The Fall series of Monday Morning Forums featuring diverse specialists and lively discussions. This series is coordinated by Dr Agnes Herzberg, under the joint sponsorship of Queen's University and Four Points Sheraton Hotel & Suites, Kingston. Details will be announced later separately.

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

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