

YURA NEWSLETTER

A newsletter for members of the York University Retirees Association No. 12 September 2008

Greetings from the YURA Co-Presidents

From Nancy Accinelli

Greetings and welcome to a new year with the York University Retirees Association. The past year has been an active one, and the coming year promises interesting opportunities for our members. **There will be** some new initiatives to enjoy, notably our archival project for York's 50th anniversary. So keep watching your email and mailboxes for coming attractions! Sandra has introduced our new editor for the YURA Newsletter: Iryna Ostapchuk. On that note, I want to take this (my first) opportunity to publicly thank **Barbara Tryfos** for her outstanding work as the editor of the newsletter – since the May 2005 issue!

Barbara has provided the best sort of nudging to bring in our submissions, she had a nose for what would interest our members, and brought decades of editing experience to bear on our newsletter - the Association's best source of written communication. It was with real regret that the Executive Committee accepted her resignation this past summer, and we all wish her well in the future and her expanding business opportunities.

I'll also take this moment to thank the staff who keep our office running from week to week and serve you in a multitude of ways: Mildred Theobalds, Pearl Darlington, Ulla Purdye, Barbara Rowe, and a few others from time to time. Sandra and I both take weekly office hours as well, to complete the team.

I write briefly because Sandra Pyke has written a full report to you all, but I do want to add one more message: I'd like to thank you for maintaining your relationship with YURA, I encourage you to get involved in our many activities, and I hope to see you at the Annual General Meeting on October 24 for the lunch and/or the meeting.

From Sandra Pyke

In May of 2007, I agreed to join the Executive of YURA as co-president, serving with Nancy Accinelli and replacing Albert Tucker. My experiences over these last fifteen months have enhanced my appreciation for the range of activities and events organized by YURA and for the commitment and dedication of the many individuals who participate in the governance and management of the Association, not the least of whom is my co-president. To Nancy, many thanks for shepherding me through the nooks and crannies of the YURA mosaic. I would also like to take this opportunity to formally thank the members of the YURA Executive as well as the volunteers who work in the office and/or take on other important tasks for the organization. All these individuals give unstintingly of their time and expertise and YURA would be impoverished without their participation. Members of the Executive and others who work more or less behind the scenes are listed elsewhere in the Newsletter. Sincere thanks to all. The continuing support of the Retirement Planning Centre is also gratefully acknowledged. It is appropriate to single out a recent addition to our Executive, our new

newsletter editor, Iryna Ostapchuk. Many thanks to Iryna for her willingness to take on this task and congratulations on the production of her first issue of the newsletter. I hope YURA members will take advantage of this opportunity to communicate with our membership and submit items to Iryna for publication in subsequent issues.

This has indeed been an active year (October 1, 2007 - September 30, 2008) for YURA – to wit:

October 2007 – Executive Committee Meeting
October 2007 – Stratford Theatre trip – *Oklahoma* – thanks to the Theatre Committee
October 2007 – Annual General Meeting
October 17, 2007 – Literary Tour of Pioneer Village with John Lennox
November 2007 – Survey of Membership re: Activity Preferences
November 2007 – Showcase – thanks to the Showcase Committee & Office Staff
December 2007 – Executive Committee Meeting
March 2008 – Executive Committee Meeting
April 2008 – CanStage Theatre trip - *Fire* – thanks to the Theatre Committee
April 2008 - Gourmet Club RichTree Market - thanks to Rosemarie Nielsen
May 2008 – Executive Committee Meeting
May 2008 – CURAC Conference - Montreal
May 2008 - Bird Watching Outing – thanks to David Homer
May 2008 – Meeting re: U50 Project
June 2008 – Meeting re: Showcase
July 2008 – Executive Committee Meeting
August 2008 – Meeting with President Shoukri
August 2008 – York Youth Connection Day Camp Showcase
September 2008 – Stratford Theatre trip-

Cabaret - thanks to the Theatre Committee
September 2008 – Meeting re: U50 Project

Forthcoming:

October 24, 2008 – AGM
October, 2008 – John Saywell Book Launch
October 22, 2008 – Shaw Theatre trip – *Mrs. Warren's Profession*
November 26, 2008 – Showcase & Sale
May 2009 – ARFL/YURA Reception for U50 Project

It has been a truly enjoyable experience becoming more involved with YURA and I would recommend it to others. Please let us know if you would like to enhance your participation and/or there are other projects you would like the Association to pursue.

A Message from the York President

As we begin another academic year, I want to take this opportunity to greet the members of YURA, and tell you how important your association is to York University.

The life experience and different perspectives that groups like YURA contribute to the dialogue that is York University make this a richer place for everyone.

I look forward with great anticipation to YURA's contribution to the celebration of York's 50th anniversary in 2009—who better to guide us through York's history than the people who helped shape it?

My best wishes for a fruitful and productive year.

-Mamdouh Shoukri

Annual General Meeting and Luncheon

YURA members are reminded that the Annual General Meeting will be held Friday, October 24, at 1:15 p.m., preceded by a buffet luncheon (note that reservations are required for the luncheon). Parking passes for The Arboretum parking lot will be available at the Registration Desk in the luncheon/meeting area to members who drive. The lunch (served at 12 noon) will be a hot and cold buffet, including coffee/tea and desserts, with a cash bar. The subsidized cost to members is \$15; guests and friends pay \$25. The full agenda, together with registration information for the luncheon, is enclosed with this Newsletter.

For further information or to confirm a reservation by October 17, please phone the YURA office, (416) 736-2100, ext. 70664, or send an email to yura@yorku.ca

Tenth Annual YURA Showcase & Sale

A good reason to visit the York campus on Wednesday, November 26th, 2008, 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Location: the East Bear Pit, Central Square, just outside the YURA office. Christmas is coming and it's time to think about participating in this annual event, as a vendor, exhibitor, helper, or even as a savvy Christmas shopper. New vendors are always welcome, but spaces are limited, so book now to secure your place. For information, contact Noel Corbett at ncorbett@yorku.ca or (905) 833-6714.

The Showcase is an excellent occasion to get some friends together for lunch, complete your Christmas shopping, and get home before rush hour begins.

Among the unusual items on offer this year, we are anticipating: Arts & Crafts produced by York Retirees; Canadiana Antique & Country Furniture; Original Works of Art and Photography; One-of-a-kind Jewelry and Hand-Knitted Items; An Incredible Teddy Bear Blow-Out!

New this year is our "Attic Treasures Department". For this booth, we are soliciting donations of high quality items that would assist YURA in its fundraising efforts (e.g., cookbooks, Christmas decorations, and "re-giftable" giftware). If you have any items appropriate to this theme that you would like to contribute, please contact the YURA Office, Central Square at (416) 736-2100 x 77064 or email yura@yorku.ca

On the same day, YURA will be hosting a seminar of special interest to retirees. Our speaker is Dr. Jill B. Rich, a clinical neuropsychologist from the Department of Psychology. Her presentation is entitled "Alzheimer's Disease and Parkinson's Disease". First, Dr. Rich will provide a definition of dementia and distinguish it from mild cognitive impairment. She will then review the primary clinical and neuropathological features of Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease. Various treatments used in these two disorders will also be discussed.

Mark your calendars now, folks. We look forward to seeing you on November 26th, before winter sets in.

-Noel Corbett

New Members

YURA is pleased to extend a hearty welcome to 47 new members who have joined since our last *Newsletter*:

Teferi Adem, Maria Agresti, Paul Anisef, Eshrat Arjomandi, Karen Cochrane, Lilian Dayan, Gene Desfor, Robert Deutsch, Elizabeth Dolan, John Doran, Edgar Dosman, Tom Duck, Claudio Duran, Alain Favrod, Robert Fink, Enore Gardonio, Marg Gilligan, Francesco Grano, Newton Gurdyal, Myriam Hazan, Alan Hopkinson, Cliff Ives, Alex Keegan, Brigitte Kitchen, Vinay Kumar, David Logan, Robert MacDonald, William Mahaney, Anna Mancini, Ann Mandel, John Miller, Eva Murphy, Glen Norcliffe, Ronald Okada, Joyce O'Keeffe, Lynherst Pena, Richard Pope, Silva Redigonda, David Rennie, Carmela Scola, Peter Scola, Joan Shields, Denise Smith, Vladka Soltesz, Jane Takaoka, Claude Tatilon, Robert Witmer, Michele Young.

CURAC Annual Conference Report

The 2008 conference of the College and University Retiree Associations of Canada (CURAC) was held in Montreal May 21 to 23.

There were 45 registrants and Nancy Accinelli, Janet Rowe and I attended as representatives of YURA and ARFL. Professor Howard Fink from Concordia University and Professor Roch Meynard from the Universite de Quebec a Montreal were the conference organizers. The conference, which was very well organized and administered, opened with a reception Wednesday evening.

The Thursday morning sessions focused on provincial and federal pension regulations, followed by an afternoon presentation on aboriginal peoples and higher education. The Annual General Meeting closed out the day. At the AGM, Nancy proposed that the 2010 CURAC conference be held in Toronto, jointly hosted by ARFL and YURA. The delegates responded enthusiastically to this invitation. That evening, a banquet was held and awards were given out.

Friday's schedule included presentations on the mental health of seniors (in particular, a discussion of depression in seniors and the importance of life goals), a report on the 2008 Quebec Commission and the needs of retirees, elder laws at they affect retirees, and the news and concerns of member associations. The conference closed with an evening cocktail party.

The 2009 CURAC conference will be held in New Brunswick.

-Sandra Pyke

Former YURA Fitness Program Ends

Our YURA fitness program, which ran for many years under the guidance of Rosie Carusi, Manager Fitness and Lifestyle Programs, has come to an end. Participation by members in the last few years became exceedingly low and the program was not sustainable with such small attendance.

We encourage all who might be interested in keeping fit that York offers an "Employee Fit for Life Program" on the York campus which retirees are welcome to join. The Glendon campus also provides fitness facilities.

Exercise is important in one's senior years as it is the key to maintaining good health, and we would encourage all to stay engaged, whether through a local fitness centre or through the York offerings.

Further information on York fitness programs can be obtained at the Tait Mackenzie Customer Service Desk by calling (416) 736-5184 or online at www.recreation.yorku.ca. You can contact Todd Rietschin, Member Services Coordinator at the Glendon Athletic Club at (416) 736-2100 ext. 88338 or email him at trietschin@glendon.yorku.ca.

-Mildred Theobalds

Estate Planning Seminar

On September 9, I attended an hour-long information session organized by the Retirement Planning Centre at York. Presented by investment advisor Rudy Dabideen and lawyer Penny Rounis, the seminar dealt with matters such as the importance of having an up-to-date will, reducing probate fees and taxes and powers of attorney. Both professionals stressed a valid will as the key component of estate planning. Penny Rounis discussed the pros and cons of will kits, emphasizing the value of consulting a lawyer so that you could ask pertinent questions and make sure your will clearly reflected your wishes. For example, if you want to leave assets to a non-family member, you need to have this spelt out clearly in a will. A will prepared by a lawyer, who specializes in wills and estates, is less likely to be challenged later on. The large audience in the Senate Chamber found the topic very interesting and relevant and they had many questions for

the presenters. People also appreciated Rudy Dabideen's handout that reiterated many of the points he made in his talk. Because of the overwhelming demand for this seminar, Catherine Federico of the Retirement Planning Centre plans to organize another session on estate planning, hopefully this winter.

-Iryna Ostapchuk

Birdwatching Outing: May 27

A Report from Our Series of Walks

Thirteen YURA members participated in this trip, two of whom drove to the area in their own car. The rest boarded a school bus at York and set off for the Dalrymple Lake Resort, a fishing lodge east of Orillia, where our genial host David Homer greeted us. We enjoyed coffee and muffins before reboarding the bus with David as our guide.

It was a sunny day, although rather breezy and chilly, but the countryside looked fresh and lovely as we drove along and David pointed out points of interest. We stopped several times to walk about and observe various birds. Some members of our group, experienced birding enthusiasts, brought along a 'scope'. All the birders had binoculars although we weren't always sure of what we were seeing!

The Carden Alvar is an area well known to birdwatchers and several species of birds rarely seen elsewhere make it their home. Some of the varieties we observed were Kingbirds, Swallows, Eastern Sandpipers, Orioles, Killdeer, Bobolinks, Redwing Blackbirds and Robins. David was hoping we would see a Northern Shrike or two but as it was already late in the morning and windy, many birds were elusive.

The area is also ranching country and we were intrigued to see a large herd of yearling cattle, delivered from Alberta the previous day and pastured for the summer. They ran through the fields alongside our moving bus. When the bus stopped so did they, crowding the fence and looking imploringly to us for attention! About 1:30 p.m. we returned to the resort for a lunch consisting of salads, sandwiches, dessert and coffee. The meal was followed by a quiz that David had prepared on birds of the area, which he illustrated with his beautiful bird carvings. The two members with the highest score received Northern Shrike pins.

The last event of the day was David's slide presentation about the Carden Alvar, beginning with its formation and showing the many species of flora and fauna that inhabit it. Soon after 3:00 pm it was time to leave for our journey back to York. All participants agreed it had been a wonderfully interesting and unusual outing and expressed the hope we would return before too long!

-Pearl Darlington

A Cautionary note

Beware of emails, supposedly from the York helpdesk administration, that ask for personal information such as username, password, date of birth, etc. I recently received such an email that threatened to close my York email account unless I responded with the above information. I followed York Helpdesk guidelines and deleted the message. If you have any problems, direct inquiries to CNS Client Services at: (416) 736-5800 or email them at: helpdesk@yorku.ca

-Iryna Ostapchuk

Book Review

John T. Saywell, *Someone to Teach Them: York and the Great University Explosion*. University of Toronto Press, 2008.

Though it began as a memoir, this book must be considered the most reflective and interpretive account that we have to date on the early history of York University. The role of the author as the founding dean of the Faculty of Arts from 1963 to 1973 is central to the structure of the book, but the reader is led by the scope of his writing into larger institutional issues that absorbed not only his own energies, but also the energies of those who worked with him.

It was clear when he accepted the offer from Murray Ross in 1963 that the position presented a very different challenge from that of dean at a well-established university. York was new and small, but with a mandate to expand within seven years from a few hundred students to at least 7,000-10,000. Debates occurred almost daily over the sources and qualifications of new faculty, curriculum, the number and size of academic departments, and the structure of facilities for the teaching and housing of students.

As founding president, Murray Ross asserted a direct influence on the curriculum, and he was profoundly impressed by the place of general education and interdisciplinary studies in the undergraduate program at Harvard. He wanted also to see the colleges or "Houses" of Harvard as the model for the projected twelve colleges at York that would decentralize accommodation and study for students. Unfortunately, rationale for these goals was never adequately clarified and eventual consensus seldom rested on the conviction that general

education and the colleges were fulfilling well-defined goals. There were, therefore, restraints on innovative direction by the Dean of Arts. General Education courses had to be conceived and mounted that were sometimes barely intelligible to first-year undergraduates, and some academic definition had to be attached to the buildings that were called colleges. Yet even as this struggle continued, Saywell worked creatively toward three clear achievements.

A Faculty of Graduate Studies was begun in the late sixties that had a positive effect on the hiring and retention of highly qualified professors. After repeated meetings and correspondence with the provincial Ministry of Education, which wanted to attach Lakeshore Teachers' College to York University, Saywell negotiated a new and different Faculty of Education, based on the concurrent degree and integrated with the other Faculties of the university. This achievement was followed by the creation of the Faculty of Fine Arts, again, an unusual, even unique and vibrant component among the faculties of Ontario universities.

Woven into this history are two crises: one in 1970 over selection of a successor to Murray Ross, when Saywell himself was a serious candidate; and the other in 1972 and 1973 which erupted out of faulty projections on the relation of enrolment to government income, and which led to the unfortunate resignation of President David Slater. Throughout the book, Saywell introduces personalities, including those administrators who became central figures in managing the Faculty of Arts – staff such as Vicki Draper, Sheldon Levy and, at a senior university level, Bill Farr. For those who are retired now but who worked at York in the sixties and seventies, this is

a personal account of York's beginnings by someone who was not only at the centre of events but who writes as one of Canada's best known professional historians.

-Albert Tucker

In Memoriam

The Department of Human Resources has received word of the passing of the following York retirees.

Michael Cowles, August 21, 2007
Enid Davis, April 22, 2008
George Doxey, June 5, 2008
George Farley, July 8, 2008
Philippe Garigue, March 23, 2008
Robert Grasley, April 3, 2008
Michael Gregory, December 15, 2007
Irene Harper, November 28, 2007
Albert Hatch, March 30, 2008
Jules Heller, December 28, 2007
Roland Keresztessy, March 15, 2008
Arthur Knowles, June 24, 2008
Reginald Lang, September 30, 2007
George Lazaroff, December 25, 2007
Gerald Marshall, December 28, 2007
David Mazzacato, January 14, 2008
Alexander McKay, August 31, 2007
Peter Moens, April 28, 2008
Johann Mohr, April 11, 2008
Cleveland Moore, January 10, 2008
Gordon Munro, November 23, 2007
Ralph Nicholls, January 25, 2008
Charles Plourde, April 30, 2008
Iliene Porter, January 8, 2008
Heinz Schueler, January 24, 2008
Harry Schulz, May 16, 2008
Thomas Seager, December 1, 2007
Elizabeth M. Smith, August 31, 2007
Donald Solitar, April 25, 2008
Frank Tarrant, March 31, 2008
Edna Templeton, October 27, 2007

...In Memoriam, continued
Donald Theall, May 15, 2008
Nelson Varga, March 12, 2008
Norman Welsh, March 15, 2008

**TIME TO CONTRIBUTE!
YURA/ARFL PROJECT
CELEBRATING YORK'S 50TH
ANNIVERSARY,
TO BE PRESENTED BY THE
RETIREES OF YORK UNIVERSITY**

York's two associations for retirees - YURA and ARFL - are collaborating in a joint project approved as part of the celebrations marking York's 50th anniversary. The end product of the project will take the form of a collection of the recollections and reminiscences of retirees, highlighting the theme of the university as a community. The submissions received will be presented to the York University Archives at a ceremony/reception in which the aggregated materials will be displayed. These accounts may take the form of photos, letters, programs, memos, videos, tapes and/or written narratives. We would like to encourage all members of our two organizations to participate by submitting a contribution and/or encouraging others to do so.

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