



**A newsletter for members of the York University Retirees' Association**

**Summer 2014**

**No. 28**

### **Contents**

Message from the YURA Co-Presidents.....	page two
In Memoriam.....	page three
Senior Priority.....	page three
Life as it Was Back then: Reminiscences, Frances Frisken.....	page three
YURA's Showcase 2014.....	page five
Good Reads.....	page five
Amazing Grace.....	page six
Interesting Photos on Religious Themes.....	page six
Humour Department.....	page seven
YURA Executive.....	page eight
YURA Office Hours.....	page eight

## Message from the YURA Co-Presidents

On the cusp of summer, we are bringing you up to date on the office transition that will be taking place at the end of June. How Chee Un is retiring and the Retirement Planning Centre will be physically moved to the Department of Human Resources in the Kinsmen Building.

While YURA will remain at its present location, 101 Central Square, other developments will affect the operation of the YURA office. Human Resources will be assuming much of the management of membership and membership renewals as well as the distribution of YURA parking vouchers, all of which are done mostly by mail or email. Those members wishing to pick up their parking vouchers in person will need to go to the Department of Human Resources in the Kinsmen Building in order to do so.

The YURA office will now be staffed exclusively by member volunteers. In June the office hours are Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. The office will be closed in July and August. At the end of August/beginning of September, we will post our office hours for 2014-2015.

All transitions bring their own adjustments and we will do our utmost to minimize those glitches that will no doubt occur as we accustom ourselves to an altered way of doing business. We are grateful that in this transition, the Department of Human Resources has

undertaken to maintain and enhance the service that we offer to our members. Communication with our members will remain paramount. Please bear with us, however, as we get used to a new way of doing things.

We want to thank How Chee most sincerely for all the support that she has offered YURA over the past fifteen years, for the human face that she has put to many of the aspects of a volunteer organization like YURA, and for being so diligent in the performance of her duties. All is not sorrow, however, since she has already taken out her YURA membership and we look forward to seeing her at our various activities as we wish her a happy and healthy retirement. Likewise, we thank Catherine Federico for her support, co-operation, and good humour. We also want to express our gratitude to the Office of the Vice-President Finance for the parking privileges that we are able to offer our members.

With respect to our spring calendar, we had a terrific outing to Stratford on May 22. Thanks to the talents and attention of Jean Levy, all proceeded smoothly, we enjoyed a delicious lunch, and the company, as always, was very congenial. The production of *Crazy for You* was stellar from beginning to end with a four-out-of-four-star rating from the *Toronto Star* and kudos from the *Globe and Mail*. This experience bodes well for our trip to the Shaw Festival on October 1 to see *The Philanderer*.

John attended the annual conference of CURAC (College and Universities' Retirees' Association of Canada) from May 28-30 at McMaster University. There were numbers of interesting

presentations and he gave a short talk on retirees' associations and volunteer opportunities.

Please mark our Annual General Meeting in your calendar: Friday, October 24 with lunch at noon followed by the AGM at 1 p.m. We send best wishes for a sunny, healthy summer.

**-Janet Rowe and John Lennox**

### **In Memoriam**

William B. Gibbons	February 18, 2014
Colin Hissa	March 12, 2014
Roy Witty	March 14, 2014
Jean McNeil-Smith	March 19, 2014
Isaac Bar-Lewaw	March 26, 2014

### **Senior Priority**

I wanted to put this short video at the beginning of this *Newsletter* because I am sure that it will speak to you. It was sent by Mary Pfister who wrote: "ageism is so stupid; it is discrimination."

<http://www.sunnyskyz.com/happy-videos/365/The-Judges-Gave-Them-No-Chance-Because-Of-Who-She-Was-And-Then-OMG->

### **Life as it Was back then: Reminiscences**

*The author of our 8<sup>th</sup> reminiscence, Frances Frisken, taught for 25 years in the Urban Studies Program of the Division (now Department) of Social Science. She has entitled her reminiscences "A Northern Childhood"*

Nothing in my early years foretold a career of teaching and learning about large cities. I was born in the eight-year-old mining town of Noranda, Quebec, where I learned to walk well enough to walk away from home by myself, to be picked up in a downtown drug store happily eating ice cream with the young woman who had found me. (I was about a year and a half old.) Soon afterward I was removed from the hazards of town life to the property of the Waite Amulet Mines, eight miles outside town, where my father had been hired as mine accountant. By this time I had a brother, Murray, who would be my principal playmate for the next nine years.

After living for two years in a roughly built, poorly-insulated duplex on a hill above the mine we moved into a newly-built "townsite" consisting of two duplexes and two single-family homes, the latter being reserved for the mine Manager and Assistant Manager. The white-shingled duplexes were surrounded by thick black muck, which Murray and I happily used to decorate an outside wall of the building next to ours. The woman of the house was not amused. She also objected to the colourful language Murray (then about 3) had picked up from the children of squatters who lived in an old mine building on the hill. Concluding that ours was not a family with which hers and others should associate she persuaded the other women on the site to exclude my mother from their morning get-togethers. My mother said later that she didn't mind being ostracized because there were many other things she liked to do. These included picking the wild fruits that proliferated in summer and preserving them in jars. My brother and I went along as pickers, and I retain pleasant memories of sitting in hot sun

on a mound of rocks in the middle of a large blueberry patch, lulled by the buzz of insects, breathing in the scent of wild sage, and proudly watching the level of berries rise in my pail.

The war formed a sinister backdrop to our daily lives, dominating dinner table conversations and rendering solemn the voices of announcers who delivered the news out of our Stromberg Carlsen radio, a prized family possession. It was even present when we gathered as a family to listen to Sunday evening radio programs: Jack Benny, Charlie McCarthy, the Green Hornet, and also “L for Lanky,” which featured the adventures of a Lancaster bomber crew that flew missions over Germany. Murray and I played often with a set of jigsaw puzzles that formed pictures of aerial battle scenes, with fiery red streams issuing from gun placements and planes with enemy insignia going down in flames.

A laneway connected our back yard to the road into the mine, a route we followed to catch the mine bus that took us into Noranda for school every morning and brought us home at night. I walked home along this lane on May 8<sup>th</sup>, 1945 in a state of happiness more intense than I’ve ever experienced since. The day was warm, the sun was shining, the trees were freshly green, and **THE WAR WAS OVER.** We had been let out of school early but my happiness came from a deeper source: a conviction that something truly awful had ended and the world would now be, and remain, a better place. It was still three months until Hiroshima brought a horrific end to the war with Japan and it would be several years before I began to understand the full horror of what had been happening in Europe and the Far East while I was heedlessly climbing

rocks or digging tunnels in snowbanks in the northern Quebec bushland.

What I find most remarkable in recalling those early years is the amount of freedom we were given and responsibility we assumed. My mother took me and then Murray into Noranda by bus for our first day of school, after which we were on our own. I was only 8 or 9 when I insisted that we no longer needed a sitter when my parents went into town; we could look after ourselves. When I was 10 a neighbor family added twin girls to the one they already had. Their mother, a trained nurse, responded to my interest in the babies by showing me how to care for and comfort them. Before long I became the family’s babysitter, the beginning of an occupation that I pursued until I left Noranda seven years later, and that gave me some financial independence at an early age.

My social life during my commuting years was confined to the school playground and the school lunch room, which was open only to pupils who were bused to school. It was supervised by the school janitor, Mr. R., a good-looking, middle-aged man with snow white hair, a dignified manner, and a reputation among the students for being overly fond of little girls. Nonetheless we liked both him and his wife, a plump, motherly woman who was always kind. Several years later my mother told me that Mr. R. had been fired because a girl at school had complained to her mother that he had molested her. “Oh, Mother,” I said, “We all knew he was like that! We just kept away from him.” My mother was shocked; I was indignant. Why, I wondered aloud, couldn’t that child have just stayed out of his way, as we had,

instead of telling her mother and ruining two lives. Those were different times.

**-Frances Frisken**

## YURA's Showcase 2014

Our annual sale of Attic Treasures and Baked Goods will take place on **Tuesday November 4 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Bear Pit, Central Square.** We are soliciting small items (such as personal, decorative, and domestic pieces; new or "gently used" games) and baked goods. We gratefully decline books, clothes, or big items. And we are always ready to welcome volunteers to help with this event.

Showcase Day is YURA's chance to show itself on campus and to raise money for the two YURA-sponsored undergraduate awards. All proceeds from Showcase are donated to the awards. Every item for the Attic Treasures and Baked Goods tables is donated and there is no overhead charged for the day. Thanks to this kind of generosity, the revenue generated from the sale allows us to continue contributing to student support and to the success which comes from that support.



Please contact us at [yura@yorku.ca](mailto:yura@yorku.ca) OR at 416-736-2100 ext. 70664 and let us know if you have items to donate or baked goods to contribute. Further information about dates and times when

items can be left at the YURA office will be provided closer to Showcase.

If you would like to display your hobbies for interest and/or for sale, please let us know. We'd be happy to accommodate you.

We encourage our members to come up to campus on Showcase Day. Your attendance will provide welcome support, show the flag, and, who knows, you may find an item or two that appeals to you.

With our thanks for your support.

**-John Lennox**

## Good Reads

John Grisham's new suspense novel, another court drama, **Sycamore Row**, is a masterpiece, perhaps one of his best. It was published last year. The action takes place in a small town in the South in the late 1980s but the plot reaches back to the 1930s and the focus is on black and white relations. The plot is intricate and the ending is both unexpected and simply superb as well as horrific. It can be found in the Toronto Public Libraries.

**G. Johnson's *The Cancer Chronicles*** (2013) is for those who like to know more about science and medicine within a jargon-free format. The author presents material from paleontology (did you know that dinosaurs had cancerous tumours?) to nutrition to unlock some of the secrets of cancer. Quite a bit of medical history is related. Throughout this book are segments about his wife's own treatment for cancer and their experience searching for a cure in the best treatment centres in the U.S.



Published by A.A. Knopf. Available in the Toronto Public Library.

For those interested in history and who read French, the biography of **Eugénie, la dernière impératrice**, by Jean des Cars, is very interesting. Eugenie actually belonged to the Spanish nobility and her trajectory to becoming the last French empress is quite something to read. The only downside is that it is hard on the eyes, packed as it is in 600 pages of small print. Perrin Editions in France.

-Anne-Marie Ambert

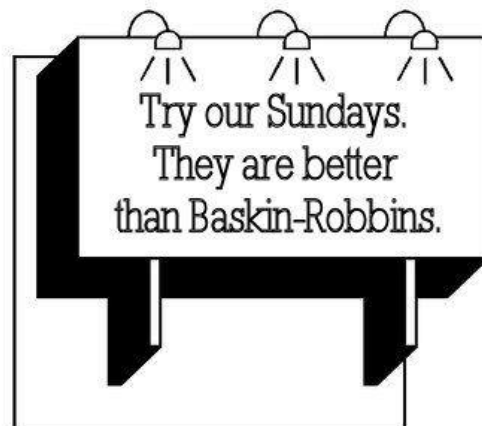
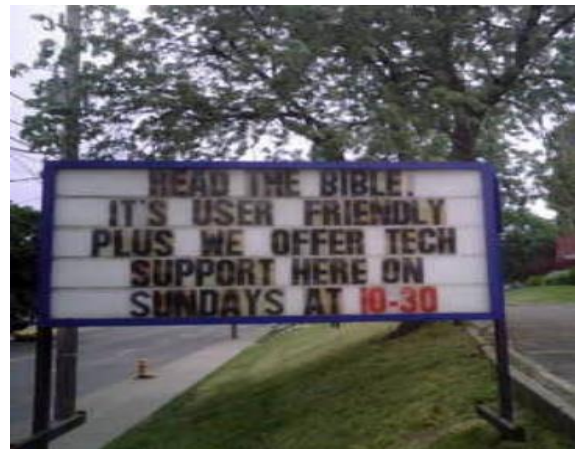
### Amazing Grace

*This is copied from the web. The video lasts 8 minutes. (Contributed by Mary Pfister)*

At Carnegie Hall, gospel singer Wintley Phipps delivers perhaps the most powerful rendition of Amazing Grace ever recorded. He says, "A lot of people don't realize that just about all Negro spirituals are written on the black notes of the piano. Probably the most famous on this slave scale was written by John Newton, who used to be the captain of a slave ship, and many believe he heard this melody that sounds very much like a West African sorrow chant. And there is a hauntingly plaintive quality to it that reaches past your arrogance, past your pride, and it speaks to that part of you that's in bondage. And we feel it. It's just one of the most amazing melodies in all of human history." After sharing the noteworthy history of the song, Mr. Phipps delivers a stirring performance that brings the audience to its feet!

<http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=1312>

### Interesting Photos on Religious Themes



## Humour Department

### Church Volunteers with Computers-- They're Back! Those Wonderful Church Bulletins!

*These sentences (with all the bloopers) actually appeared in church bulletins or were announced in church services:*

Ladies Bible Study will be held Thursday morning at 10 AM. All ladies are invited to lunch in the Fellowship Hall after the B. S. is done.

Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 PM. Please use the back door.

A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening in the church hall. Music will follow.

Weight Watchers will meet at 7 PM at the First Presbyterian Church. Please use large double door at the side entrance.

Potluck supper Sunday at 5:00 PM - prayer and medication to follow.



## YURA Executive

### Officers

John Lennox, Co-President  
[jlennox@yorku.ca](mailto:jlennox@yorku.ca)  
Janet Rowe, Co-President,  
[janet-R@rogers.com](mailto:janet-R@rogers.com)  
Sandra Pyke, Past President  
[spyke@yorku.ca](mailto:spyke@yorku.ca)  
Gill Teiman, Secretary  
[gteiman@yorku.ca](mailto:gteiman@yorku.ca)  
Marilyn Cartmill, Treasurer  
[cartmim@yorku.ca](mailto:cartmim@yorku.ca)

### Members at Large

Sheila Creighton  
[sheilac@yorku.ca](mailto:sheilac@yorku.ca)  
Jane Crescenzi  
[gemma.crescenzi@yahoo.ca](mailto:gemma.crescenzi@yahoo.ca)  
Margo Gewurtz  
[mgewurtz@yorku.ca](mailto:mgewurtz@yorku.ca)  
Cliff Jansen  
[jansenc@rogers.com](mailto:jansenc@rogers.com)  
Jean Levy  
[levyjr@yorku.ca](mailto:levyjr@yorku.ca)  
Billie Mullick;  
[bmullick@yorku.ca](mailto:bmullick@yorku.ca)  
Colin Deschamps  
[colind@yorku.ca](mailto:colind@yorku.ca)  
Mildred Theobalds  
[theobald@yorku.ca](mailto:theobald@yorku.ca)  
Michelle Young  
[myoung@yorku.ca](mailto:myoung@yorku.ca)

### Ex-Officio members:

Al Stauffer, AUCP  
[stauffer@yorku.ca](mailto:stauffer@yorku.ca)  
Fred Fletcher, ARFL  
[ffletch@yorku.ca](mailto:ffletch@yorku.ca)  
Anne-Marie Ambert, Editor  
[ambert@yorku.ca](mailto:ambert@yorku.ca)

---

### YURA OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
Wednesday 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
Thursday 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

**The office will be closed July and August**

---

The *YURA Newsletter* is published by the York University Retirees' Association.

Anne-Marie Ambert, Editor.

### York University Retirees' Association

101 Central Square, York University  
4700 Keele St., Toronto, ON Canada  
M3J 1P3

Telephone: (416) 736-2100, ext. 70664

E-mail: [yura@yorku.ca](mailto:yura@yorku.ca)

Website: <http://www.yorku.ca/yura>