



A newsletter for members of the York University Retirees' Association

Summer 2017

No. 40

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Message from the YURA Co-Presidents

Dear YURA Members,

We expect that members' summer plans have probably firmed up by now. They may involve cottages, trips, family gatherings, or just the

pleasures of a garden or the city. Whatever yours may be, we hope that, in spite of the wet spring, we'll be enjoying good sunny weather and good company.

You will already be in receipt of your membership renewal letter and form, and we hope that you will renew your membership as soon as possible. We are about 560 members strong and we want to maintain and even increase that number. The revenues from membership allow us, in part, to continue our support of students and programmes within the York community. So please do renew.

You will see an announcement in the newsletter about Showcase 2017, our annual fund-raiser in support of student awards. It is scheduled for Tuesday November 7 and we look forward to another successful day. Further information will be forwarded to you in the next weeks.

We attended the annual meeting of CURAC (College and University Associations of Canada) at Carleton University from May 24-26. In honour of Canada 150, the organizers chose as their theme: "Canada, Carleton and CURAC – Stronger than Ever." The conference began with several attendee roundtables on the topics of "The Economy and You," "Health," and "Higher Education." There were numbers of presentations on "Health and Health Equity," "Successful Aging," and "Learning in Retirement." Three other topics that had nothing to do with retirement and that drew much interest were papers on "Trump and the Canadian Economy," "The Joint Algonquin College-Carleton University Bachelor of Informational Technology," and "New Evidence on Earnings of Post-Secondary Graduates: a Tax Linkage Approach." These conferences are well-attended and there is useful exchange of information among attendees.

As usual, York was well-represented with two YURA representatives, Bob Drummond from ARFL (Association of Retired Faculty and Librarians of York) and Fred Fletcher who is Chair of CURAC's Communications Committee and who was re-elected to another two-year term as a CURAC director. Congratulations, Fred! One comes away from these meetings with a feeling that retirees from York are well-treated by the university.

The many changes in York's senior administration will be of great interest to retirees. We anticipate and have reason to believe that our Association will continue to enjoy the support and good will of the new administration.

All best wishes for a restful, healthy, and satisfying summer.

--**Charmaine Courtis and John Lennox, Co-presidents**

In Memoriam

Heidi Theiss	January 5th 2017
Penelope Doob	March 11, 2017
Gordon Roberts	March 22, 2017
Anthony Richmond	March 28, 2017
Shirley Reynolds	April 2, 2017
Vincenzo Scida	April 3, 2017
Margaret Sokoloff	April 2, 2017
Carolyn Lundell	May 31, 2017

Welcome to New Members

Carol Anderson; Sharon Chisholm; Louie DeVuono; Tom Elmer; Ian Gentles; Marilyn Green; Joanne Guidi; Carl Hassanali; Judy Hellman; Craig Heron; Cindy Hughes; Gary Jarvis; Nancy Johnston; Carolyn King; Sara Kozlowski; Sandra Locke; Martha Lunderville; John Mahaffy; Constance Marshall; Lynda McMann; Mary Jane Mossman; Nancy Nicol; Monica Pegg; Martha Rogers; Megan Simons; Donna Smith; Edith Vezer; Les Wheatcroft.

Showcase 2017 – Save the Date!

The 18th YURA ANNUAL SHOWCASE AND SALE will take place on Tuesday, November 7, 2017 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm in Central Square at the University. Turn your creative pursuits, kitchen talents and attic treasures into support for York students. All proceeds from our Attic Treasures,

Bake Sale and Exhibitors tables sponsor the three YURA-sponsored student awards.

We are looking for retirees and friends who have a craft or hobby to display and/or sell at our Showcase event. Past participants have displayed or offered for sale their art and photography, authored books, textiles, wood carvings, hand-crafted jewelry, holiday décor, hand-knitted and sewn items for children and adults, teddy bears and Canadiana antiques. For further information, or to reserve one or more spaces, contact Noel Corbett, ncorbett@yorku.ca or 905-833-6714.

Downsizing? If you are purging or downsizing, you may have small re-giftable items to donate to our Attic Treasures Table. We welcome any small light weight items in re-giftable condition, such as jewelry, candlesticks, holiday decorations, knick-knacks/curios, board games, puzzles. This year, we are accepting pocketbooks, cookbooks, children's books and DVDs. If you require help in getting these items to campus, please call us at 416-736-2100 ext. 70664 or email us at yura@yorku.ca and we will get back to you about pick-up.

We are also looking for bakers and canners for contributions to our fabulous Bake Table.

If interested in contributing to the Bake Table or to volunteer to help staff one of the tables on the day of Showcase, please contact either Steve Dranitsaris, sdrano@rogers.com; Pat Murray, pmurray@yorku.ca; or the YURA office, yura@yorku.ca

THIS IS OUR TIME TO SHINE!

Life as it was back then: Reminiscence

Our 20th Reminiscence (for this 40th no of our Newsletter) is authored by Bryn Greer-Wooten and, as he writes, "strongly aided by my sister Annemarie's memory." When Bryn officially and "forcibly" retired from York in 2003, he continued teaching in Environmental Studies and remained

until today the Associate Director of the Institute for Social Research at York. He has entitled his reminiscence "A brother and sister remember July 18, 1944."

On the 18th of July 1944, at about half past ten in the evening, our home in Days Lane, Sidcup, in Kent (about an hour's drive from London) received an unpleasant surprise package from Herr Hitler – a V-1 'doodlebug' – one of Adolf's *vengeance weapons* (*vergeltungswaffen*). It landed – without warning other than the stopping of the whine - in the front garden, virtually demolishing the house. The air raid siren had sounded some time before, and most of the family had taken refuge in the Anderson air-raid shelter in the garden – a concrete rectangle built below ground level, with a prefabricated curved tin roof covered in soil. There we were, in the dark: me, six years old, together with Gillian, four, Annemarie, three, and – oddly enough - our Dad, Francis (universally known as Jack) who was on short leave from the RAF. *Our Mum, Ivy May, had taken shelter in the cupboard under the stairs with baby Mary, nine months.* In the shelter Dad stood with his back to the entrance and we huddled together on makeshift bunks.

The blast threw Dad across the shelter to the opposite bunker wall. I can remember the ambulance men carefully lifted him up and carried him out of the shelter, but they didn't come back for us. *We didn't know it at the time, but Mum and baby Mary had, in fact, been found alive in the rubble and had also been taken off to hospital.* How long were the three of us in that shelter – who can say? Annemarie remembers that *"It felt like forever, but it was probably only an hour or so. A tall man who smelled of smoke and bent nails lifted me up – he had curly red hairs on the backs of his fingers and his yellow jacket was hard and crinkly – and carried me out of the shelter. I was so cold my teeth were chattering."* Whoever it was – probably an ARP warden – our rescuer took us to the nearest rescue centre. My sister remembers *"we were given hot bricks wrapped in flannel to hold and a large lady wrapped the three of us in an itchy grey*

blanket as we sat, side by side, on one of the many camp beds. Most of the beds were full, and from the far side of the room I could hear someone singing 'Jesus bids me shine, with a pure clear light, like a little candle burning in the night.' Then we were given tin mugs of hot cocoa and told to 'drink it all up'."

In the morning the ARP warden who had taken us to the rescue centre came back to see what had happened to us. Nobody had claimed us so he took the three of us back to his own home. All I can remember is hiding under their dining room table. We did not know where our parents were, or even if they were still alive and, according to my sister, I remained silent – probably traumatised. Gillian calmly took control of the situation, speaking up and asking questions. The decision was made to evacuate the three of us (we knew not where), and I do remember standing in a very long line at the station waiting for a train, where – thank goodness – we were joined by our mother and the baby. They had been released from hospital and, after a frantic search, had discovered where we were – just in time to catch the train. [Dad was still in hospital but he made a fairly swift recovery and went back to active service.]

Our destination that day was Brinscall, a small industrial village not far from Chorley in Lancashire. Little did we realise that the gentle North Downs around our home on the outskirts of London would soon be replaced by rugged grey moors, foreboding in their cover of bracken, or that the house where we were billeted (as evacuees) would be rat- and lice-infested. Our mother spent hours with brushes and brooms, mops and pails to make it clean enough for us to settle in. *The three of us helped as much as little kids can but – the resilience of youth -- we were soon out exploring, finding someone to play with – as if nothing had happened!*

Of course, we had to go to school. How else could the authorities cope with a sudden influx of small children? In September, accordingly, I was

registered and entered into the nearest primary school in the form appropriate for my age. Then, there was the first 'test' / 'examination', I do not remember which, but my mother was called to the school and asked what education I had received before we were housed in Brinscall. My one year spent in the first year of a London primary school was 'worth' two years in Lancashire! So, I was moved forward two years. Suddenly I was six and 'playing' with much older 8 or 9 year olds. One changes a lot at that time in one's life, especially if you don't speak the same language as these older boys. They were good soccer players, however, and did let me play with them – in some minor role, of course, as I was so small. It was a rather rapid acceleration in acculturation to 'strange' ways, perhaps even a distancing in ways of viewing others. I remain unsure of the effects.

I do not remember anything at all about my childhood before that sixth year, but Annemarie remembers clearly what happened in the year or so we were in Brinscall: *"I was only three, but once out of nappies school was the rule! I can vividly remember Miss Lightbound – ramrod straight back, tiny steel-rimmed glasses, and a stickler for what was 'right' and, for Miss Lightbound, being 'right' meant being right-handed. Every time I picked up a pencil in my left hand her metal ruler came straight down on my knuckles. There was no way I could use my right hand and after a day or so I'd had enough. I grabbed hold of the ruler and hit her! Then I ran..... Summoned to the school to discuss my "evil" behaviour, Mum told them in no uncertain terms that I was left-handed and I should not be forced to switch. [At that time being left-handed was considered aberrant and children were often forced to use their right hands.] I don't think Miss Lightbound ever forgave me. I was moved into another class the next day!"*

Although the war ended in 1945 it was not until the following summer – 1946 – that we came back to Kent. Not back to Days Lane, of course, but to Burnt Oak Lane, a safe five-minute walk from school. For me, a return to the 'proper' class for my

age, but now that I think about it, I was a strangely changed child. I had experienced social and cultural class inequality (effectively, in a reverse fashion) in that time as an evacuee. My mother had always insisted that we (her children) did not mix with the factory workers' children. My father, who had survived several risky assignments in the war, including the 'dam-busters' episode, was now engaged in forming a union of electrical and mechanical engineers. The Labour Party headed by Clement Atlee won the 1945 election, and identification with Labour, unions and 'equality for all' was strongly entrenched in my family: I emerged devoted to the left. It has never left me. Even today, in somewhat desperate optimism, I will always vote for the NDP -- optimist, as ever, given these past experiences, if for nothing else, then for everything that matters in the future.

--Bryn Greer-Wootten



Sand sculpture by **Carl Jara**, a Cleveland-based sculptor and woodworker. (Sent by Helen Mannion.)

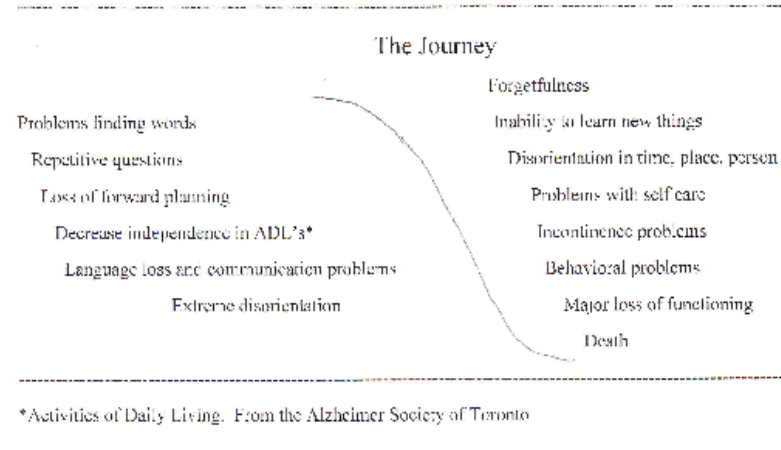
HUMAN ASPECTS OF ALZHEIMER

At the Retirement Residence I live in, a totally wonderful speaker, Esther Atemo, from the Alzheimer's Society of Toronto gave a very humane and instructive presentation on the various types of dementia with a focus on Alzheimer's warning signs, development, and what are called its

7As (amnesia, aphasia, agnosia, apraxia, anosognia, altered perception, and apathy). I have copied below a table called The Journey. I suggest their websites for complete presentations.

www.alzheimertoronto.org

www.dementiatoronto.org



(My apologies for the light print above but that is the best I could do with the minimal computer skills I possess.)

One very interesting aspect of the journey described in the Table is the third item to the left: loss of forward planning. In other words, as she explained, the average person gets up in the morning and knows that next, she heads for the toilet for the morning ablutions, after which she gets dressed, then may eat breakfast while listening to the news and so on for the rest of the day. The average person has a plan. But, at some point, persons afflicted with Alzheimer lose this ability to plan and stand there not knowing where they are and what to do next.

While visiting a long-term care facility, the staff mentioned to Esther, our speaker, an elderly lady who was "so difficult." When asked why she was so difficult, the staff explained that the lady in question always complained "that we are feeding her garbage." Esther explained something that perhaps many of us do not know either, and it refers to one of the 7As mentioned earlier: agnosia or the inability to process sensory information. In other words, we lose our senses, in that case, taste and

smell. Thus, to the afflicted woman, everything tasted like garbage and she was very upset that the staff were feeding her like that. She felt maltreated.

In another case, because of altered perception, a lady was terrified to just enter into her room, especially near her bed. She looked in its direction with terror. The staff, which had received a good training, started looking at the room, particularly near the bed to see what could be so wrong from her perspective (rather than convince the woman that “there was nothing to be afraid of”). They finally figured out that the round and curved lamp on her bedside table had a vague resemblance to reptiles. They took the lamp and the bedside table away and told her that the snake was gone and would never be back. After that, the afflicted person calmed down and was able to rest in her room.

What is very important is to take the person’s altered perception seriously and see the world as she sees it, not as it is for us. In this context, Esther mentioned that TV programs may be taken as reality because the persons may no longer be able to distinguish reality from fiction as the disease progresses. Therefore, this is something that caretakers have to take into consideration, among the many aspects of the person’s environment and thinking that differs from how we see things.

I would also highly recommend reading a very touching report of a caregiver daughter focusing on her mother’s altered perception. Her mother’s present was her past and it is within that past that we have to understand and find the person. This is where “we find the beauty of the soul!” (Dorothy Womack).

http://www.caregiver.com/channels/alz/articles/alter ed_perceptions2.htm

--Anne-Marie Ambert

Banking and the Elderly

I am providing some quotes from an article in The Economist of February 11, 2017, p. 60.

“Older people are more likely to struggle with day-to-day banking and are more susceptible to poor investment decisions. They are also more vulnerable to fraud or to financial exploitation, often by relatives.”

“The older brain seems more susceptible to ‘too good to be true’ scams, from lotteries to dating schemes. According to the “Scams Team” At Britain’s National Trading Standards, a consumer-protection body, the average age of victims of mass-marketing scams is 75.” (Which is probably why my email brings me daily letters informing that I have won this and that and would I please provide them with my bank account... I even receive dating proposal...from both men and women: I wonder if I should be flattered?)

Now, at least in England, “Banks are training staff in how to spot dementia and signs of financial abuse. First Financial Bank, in America, gives staff who uncover a scam a ‘Fraud Busters’ pin.” (Whereas here in Canada, our five big banks try to sell us products we don’t need—whatever our age.)

THE MYTH OF CYBER-SECURITY

The following two items come from the April 8th issue of The Economist—a particularly interesting issue.

“The arrival of the ‘Internet of Things’ will see computers baked into everything from road signs and MRI scanners to prosthetics and insulin pumps. There is little evidence that these gadgets will be any more trustworthy than their desktop counterparts. Hackers have already proved that they can take remote control of connected cars and pacemakers [...] such weaknesses are compounded by the history of the internet, in which security was an afterthought.” [This was written before the world-wide cyber-attack.]

The Average Car Moves Just 5% of the Time

“To improve transport and cities, focus on the other 95%. [...] Researchers have found that much traffic consists of drivers looking for spaces. The record is held by the German city of Freiburg—in one study 74% of cars were on the prowl.”

[...] “One study of Washington, DC, found that the availability of free parking is associated with a 97% chance somebody will drive to work alone.

Generous parking requirements create asphalt deserts, sapping cities of vigor and beauty”.....

“Parking adds 67% to the cost of building a shopping centre in Los Angeles” [...] “Cities should be for people not for stationary metal boxes.”

SUGGESTED OUTINGS

I highly recommend two religious sites as worthy of a visit within Toronto itself. Both are accessible.

The Aga Khan Museum, a delight of Arabic cultures, is well laid out and not overwhelming, is quiet and also very interesting in terms of architecture both inside and out—whatever the season. The Museum has its own permanent exhibits but harbors other timely exhibits on a regular basis.

They have a very good dining room or restaurant near the entrance and it is a good idea to make reservations. The museum is located at 77 Wynford Drive, North York (near the Don Valley Parkway) and has parking space. Phone 416 646-4677

BAPS Mandir and Museum. This Hindu shrine that can be seen off highway 427 north of Finch is a feast to the eyes. It is like a monument made of marble lace. So delicate and so powerful at the same time. It will celebrate its 10th year this summer. It is open 7 days a week.

At the entrance, one has to leave the footwear we come in with: they have a nice system of coat racks and cubbies for footwear. However, if one wears orthotics, they provide blue “surgical” cover that one puts over one’s shoes.

They give a short lecture and off you go. There are the regular stairs but also elevators. It is simply beautiful. Ample parking space. 61 Claireville Drive, Toronto Phone 416 798-2277

TRAVELOGUE

An article by Rob Nunn reprinted with permission from the *Newsletter of the Retirees’ Association of Brock University*:

My Trip to Japan (*Oct. 26 - Nov. 23, 2016*)



My trip to Japan last fall was the fifth time I have gone at the invitation of a remarkable Japanese

woman, Akiko Ishikawa, and her family. My late wife Janet and I became close friends with her during the six months in 1996-1997 when we were her host family. She was a volunteer with a Japanese-American organization called The Never Again Campaign, which trained and sent volunteers to North America to convey the message of the *hibakusha*—the atomic bomb survivors. She worked tirelessly during her stay with us, giving presentations to many groups. You can see a plaque honouring her and the Never Again Campaign at the peace monument in Rennie Park in Port Dalhousie.

Akiko and her husband invited us to visit Japan as their guests, which we did in 1998 and again in 2002. Last fall's visit was the third time I have returned alone since the death of my wife in 2006. Its twenty years since Akiko was with us; and she and her husband are still deeply involved peace activists.

During my visit I joined Akiko at a rally and March protesting Prime Minister Shinzō Abe's project to rewrite Article 9 of the constitution, which committed Japan to having no military force. The Prime Minister and his party have passed a bill to allow Japan to have a military presence on the world stage. I listened to the speeches with great interest. Like Joe Gargery in *Great Expectations*, who could pick out the "J's" and "O's" in newspapers, I could understand two words: *heiwa* (peace) and *sensō* (war).

The first two weeks of my stay in Japan were in the home of Akiko and her husband, in Fukuoka, Kyushu. The second half was travel. I chose to travel with my rail pass to Nagano, in the Japanese Alps, a region new to me.

From Nagano I went on day trips to nearby towns. One was the village of Nozawa Onsen, a ski resort during the winter, and all year round a village of thermal baths (*onsen*), most of which are maintained by the villagers and are free of charge.

The other was Obuse, a town noted for its apple and chestnut orchards, its sake breweries, and a magnificent museum dedicated to the art of the

great Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849), best known for his woodblock print *The Great Wave off the Coast of Kanazawa*. [Shown at the beginning of the article.] In his eighties he travelled from his home in Edo (now Tokyo), on foot, to Obuse, where a wealthy friend had built a studio for his use. There until his death he painted one masterpiece after another. He had a restless spirit, never satisfied with what he had achieved, constantly innovating, always striving to transcend himself. I have included an image of an extraordinary painting which I saw at the museum, done shortly before his death, of a dragon rising into the heavens above Mount Fuji. It is not hard to imagine that the dragon symbolizes Hokusai's spirit, especially given that at the end of his life, he said, "If only Heaven will give me just another ten years... Just another five more years, then I could become a real painter."

From Nagano I went to Matsumoto, famous for its castle, one of the few in Japan that have survived destruction over the centuries. The city offers free guided tours of the castle ("no tips; smiles are welcome"), and I had the privilege of a tour of at least an hour and a half with an excellent guide.

I ended my travels in Tokyo, where I was able to connect with other Japanese friends, and where I learned that a new museum also dedicated to Hokusai was opening the day before I flew home. My flight wasn't until the early evening, so I had time on my last day in Japan to visit the new Sumida Hokusai Museum (<http://hokusai-museum.jp/?lang=en>) where the very same painting was on loan from the museum in Obuse. I felt that I had been guided to this immersion in the work of Hokusai, and that I was meant to see the same painting in two different locations just a few days apart. As if something was making sure I got the message: this is how to live as you grow older.

--John Nunn

GOOD READ

***Crooked: Outwitting the back pain industry and getting on the road to recovery.* 2017.** Amazon. I heard an interview with the author, Cathryn Jakobson Ramin, an investigative journalist, on

CBC at the end of May and found the following description of her book on Amazon. I have not personally read the book. **Anne-Marie**

“The acclaimed author of *Carved in Sand*—a veteran investigative journalist who endured persistent back pain for decades—delivers the definitive book on the subject: an essential examination of all facets of the back pain industry, exploring what works, what doesn't, what may cause harm, and how to get on the road to recovery.

The result of six years of intensive investigation, *Crooked* offers a startling look at the poorly identified risks of spine medicine, and provides practical advice and solutions. Ramin interviewed scores of spine surgeons, pain management doctors, physical medicine and rehabilitation physicians, exercise physiologists, physical therapists, chiropractors, specialized bodywork practitioners. She met with many patients whose pain and desperation led them to make life-altering decisions, and with others who triumphed over their limitations.

Ramin shatters assumptions about surgery, chiropractic methods, physical therapy, spinal injections and painkillers, and addresses evidence-based rehabilitation options—showing, in detail, how to avoid therapeutic dead ends, while saving money, time, and considerable anguish.”

A Bit of Entertainment

A dance routine by Bob Hope, aged 52 and James Cagney aged 56. Mary Ffister, a frequent non-YURA contributor, writes that “this video represents a side of these two entertainers we hardly ever saw but it shows their enormous talent. Bob Hope, the best of the comedians, and Jimmy Cagney...mostly cast as the bad guy, gangster in the movies.”

One problem, however, is that we have to ignore the distractingly ugly adds on both sides of the video.

<http://videos2view.net/Hope-Cagney.htm>

How women burn calories in France

You may have to look at the video twice!

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/yEH4Yum4nN4>

“REVERSE BUCKET LIST”

This is described by **Mary Pfister** as “things I will NOT do before I die!

I am ALREADY old.

I didn't get here by being stupid!”

Jumping on the Trolltunga rock in Norway



Extreme Picnicking



Sky Walking on Mount Nimbus in Canada



Tree Camping in Germany



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