

ARF Newsletter

Association of Retired Faculty and Librarians of York University

CONTENTS OF THIS ISSUE

1 . From the President	1
2. Highlights of the ARF General Meeting; October 20, 2005	2
3. Lost Access to Passport York	3
4. ARF and Current Negotiations	4
5. News and Notables	4
5a. York Retirees and Space	4
5b. Lee Lorch is 90!	
6. More on the Shadow Pension	6

1. From the President

The new executive has a heavier agenda than usual on its plate because the abolition of mandatory retirement and collective agreement negotiations are taking place at the same time. Each executive member has taken responsibility for specific areas within a wide range of issues.

ARF's involvement in the collective agreement negotiations is, of course, through YUFA. Thus we must convince YUFA to press hard for our priorities amongst the compromising and trading-off that is inherent in the process.

The executive agreed that the following should be our priorities in this order:

(1) ARF should ask YUFA to place increased subsidisation of the York Benefits Plan for retirees on the bargaining table to offset anticipated future deficits in the Plan due to a substantial increase in future retirees and inflation.

(2) Calculations should be made of the costs of increasing lifetime maxima in benefits covered in the York Benefits Plan for retirees and a strategy should be worked out in case trade-offs within the Plan are required to offset such costs. Limits

of one million dollars should apply to both in- & out-of-province coverage.

(3) ARF should ask YUFA to place medical travel insurance for retirees on the bargaining table as a mandatory feature of the existing York Benefits Plan. Specific details should be provided of, for example, the plan provided by ETFS.

ARF has also asked that the equitable treatment of retired faculty who provide graduate supervision be addressed in the negotiations with a view to establishing a formula for a minimum level of equitable compensation. YUFA should make clear to the Administration generally that the transition from mandatory to non-mandatory retirement will be smoothed if potential retirees are offered attractive pension, benefits, teaching, supervision and research packages.

It is likely that the 2005 return on the York Pension Plan could result in an increase of approximately 1.5%, if the Administration does not employ the concept of the "Shadow Pension". Through YUFA, ARF has asked the Administration what its intentions are, but there has been no response. If there is no future response or if the response is negative, YUFA intends to appeal to FSCO and/or the courts.

It is clear that ARF needs all the support it can get to protect and enhance for our younger colleagues what is a middlingly good retirement programme. I urge everyone through every connection they can muster to find out who is, or will soon be, retiring and convince them to join ARF as a full or associate member. □



2. Highlights of the ARF Annual General Meeting, October 20, 2005

The 2005 AGM was held in Founders College Fellows' Lounge.

In his report, the outgoing President, Morton Abramson, discussed various issues confronted by the Executive during the past year. The thorniest of these is the so-called **Shadow Pension** put forward by the Administration and based on its own interpretation of the University Pension Plan. This interpretation has been challenged by YUFA who submitted its objections to the Financial Services Commission of Ontario (FSCO) about two years ago. The matter is still unresolved apparently because FSCO prefers a mutual resolution between YUFA and the Administration. As of yet no negotiations or discussions on this issue have taken place between YUFA and the Administration.

The Shadow Pension has not had an impact on our pension payments up to the end of 2005, because financial markets have not performed well in the past several years. However, this may soon change. Financial markets continue to improve and this year's gains may produce a small increase in our payments. Under this circumstance the calculated increase based on the Shadow Pension assumption will be smaller than one based on the YUFA/ARF interpretation. Thus, according to Mort Abramson's calculations, if the pension fund earns 12% in 2005, the 2006 increase to pension payments will be zero under the Shadow Pension assumption and 1.6% otherwise. The initial consequence of using the Shadow Pension might be small, but discrepancies between the two models will undoubtedly become greater as financial markets continue to improve and with time.

An additional concern is that pension payments to recent retirees may be too low as the result of incorrect calculations. This matter will be investigated further.

In his **Vice-President's Report**, Alex Murray indicated that YUFA and ARF are in agreement on the Shadow Pension. He also speculated that the Administration might be willing to re-negotiate the current indexation formula, which is based on a four-year running average of the Fund's performance on the financial markets. This practice introduces considerable uncertainties into the Administration's annual budgetary planning. However, any negotiated changes to the indexation formula would necessarily involve all unions on campus party to the Pension Plan. In addition, such changes would only apply to employees not yet retired, since all current retirees have individual contracts with York and these would have to be negotiated individually. The replacement of the current indexation formula by one based on, say, a fixed annual increment may not necessarily improve the retirees' financial position.

Alex Murray further reported that the CCRA has ruled that the YUFA Trust Fund is not liable to taxes on its earnings. As a result, the Trust has at its disposal certain funds that were set aside as a contingency in case of an adverse ruling. These can now be used for a variety of purposes, such as increasing existing benefits payments, decreasing deductibles or adding new benefits. Suggestions were received from the floor to establish a catastrophic insurance fund and to effect other improvements to retiree benefits, such as reduction of deductibles, inclusion of coverage for eyeglasses and an increase to the maximum lifetime coverage. The costs of such improvements need to be calculated, but might not be great.

Attendees expressed concern about the Administration's reluctance to officially recognize ARF. Ian Sowton noted, however, that ARF has partial standing with the Administration through its status in YUFA. This status arises from a membership based fee paid by ARF to YUFA for the work they do on our behalf. In addition, the President of ARF attends all YUFA executive meetings. Most speakers felt that something more direct and formal was needed.

Subsequently a motion, presented by Gwenda Echard, was passed under other business that **“ARF request its executive to prepare and present to the University a request for formal recognition of the existence of ARF as an expression of the Faculty and Librarian retirees”**.

Barry Loughton, the **ARF Treasurer**, reported that ARF finances were in good order. A moderate surplus exists that might be useful in paying for legal advice on the Shadow Pension should this be sought. Paid membership stands on a solid base of about 250, but some concern was expressed by Bill Whitla over the relatively small increase in subscribers to the Newsletter and, therefore, members, this year.

Chester Sadowski presented a list of nominees to the Executive prepared by Ted Bieler and himself. Following additions from the floor, nominations were closed and new officers were elected by acclamation. The new executive is as follows:

- President:** Alex Murray
- Past President:** Morton Abramson
- Vice-President:** Al Stauffer
- Treasurer:** Barry Loughton
- Secretary:** Martin Muldoon
- Newsletter Editor:** Chester Sadowski
- Pre-Retirement Member:** Stan Jeffers
- Members-at-Large:** Bob Allan, Sylvie Arend, Ted Bieler, Joy Cohnstaedt, Cynthia Dent, Peter Harries-Jones, Nicole Keating, Tiit Kodar.

Problems continue to arise with regard to the entitlements of Senior Scholars stipulated in the Collective Agreement. One member reported his difficulties in obtaining secretarial support in his department. Others reported problems in obtaining financial support for presentation of their work at conferences. There is apparently no uniform practice among the many departments at York and in any event entitlements are subject to available resources. The ARF Executive will look into the issues raised.



3. Lost Access to Passport York The Editor

Recently a retired York colleague sent your editor an e-mail stating that he was suddenly denied access to York computing services even though he was currently teaching a graduate course and needed to use the York computer system in support of this course. At roughly the same time his wife, who is also a York retiree and teaching an undergraduate course, received an e-mail informing her that her CNS account had expired and that she no longer had access to computing services. The received letter is reproduced in part below:

“Our records show that your sponsored account has expired. As such, all computing accounts that are held in your name will be expired on December 29, 2005.

The following are your accounts:
.....

If you require further information please contact your sponsor as soon as possible. Your sponsor has been notified that your account is expiring.”

These actions came as a complete surprise to the retirees affected. Fortunately they were able to reinstate their accounts after some effort in identifying the appropriate individual in CNS. Since then, your editor has found out that other retirees have received similar e-mails whilst others have been cut off without notice. Further enquiries have shown that policies on the use of York internet services by retirees exist within CNS. These have not been well publicized and become evident to retiree clients only when their access to CNS services is cut off without warning or on receipt of the above notice.

Apparently most, but not all, retirees carrying CNS accounts are placed into a so-called “sponsored list” upon retirement. The employee numbers of some retirees remain active in the system. Such retirees are not placed in the “sponsored” list and the following discussion

does not apply to them.

Each “sponsored” account has a three year lifetime after which the account holder receives the notice quoted above or is cut off without notice. The “sponsor” referred to in the notice is actually CNS Accounts although this is not made clear. To continue the CNS account, the retiree should address an e-mail to accounts@yorku.ca stating that the individual is a retiree and wishes to continue making use of the York internet, e-mail or other services to which the retiree is entitled. Alternatively the retiree should phone CNS Client Services at 416-736-5800. Personnel in the Accounts Office have been very helpful once contact is actually established.

This policy was conceived by CNS to assist it to manage its rather large list of e-mail subscribers effectively and is not intended to minimize use of York computing services by retirees. Renewal of “sponsored” accounts every three years assures it that these accounts are in fact being used. Whilst one cannot quibble with these concerns, one can at least demand that CNS inform retirees of policies pertaining to them and act in a consist way to help retirees maintain their accounts.



4. ARF and the Current Negotiations

Now that the latest Collective Agreement has reached its conclusion, the negotiation process for a new agreement has begun. As mentioned above in the President’s Report, the ARF executive has established a list of priority items to be recommended to YUFA for inclusion in its bargaining package. These items have been based to a large degree on member concerns communicated to the executive.

There are a few items worth mentioning that were not included in Alex Murray’s report. One such issue is pay equity for female retirees. Another issue raised at the last AGM is

improvements to the dental plan and implementation of coverage for auditory devices and eyeglasses, the costs of which might be covered by the YUFA Trust.

Catastrophic health insurance, which protects patients against charges in excess of annual coverage limits, is another issue raised at the last AGM. ARF does not intend to pursue this issue at this moment principally because of restrictive eligibility based on age. Individuals of 65 and older are not eligible to enrol in any such plan and in some cases coverage ends at 70. Critical illness plans provide lump sum payments to subscribers suffering from one of a list of eligible illnesses, but these have similar or more stringent age restrictions and in any event are very expensive.

There is still time for members to make their concerns known. Please send them to chesters@yorku.ca. □



5. News and Notables

Editor

FROM time to time the *Newsletter* informs readers of honours, publications, exhibitions or performances, or news items of members (you might wish to promote your own—give details, please). If you have any items to add about yourself or another Retiree, please drop a line to the *Newsletter* Editor at chesters@yorku.ca. Here is a piece on York Retirees and Outer Space.

5a. York Retirees and Outer Space

Retired York professors **Alan Carswell**, **Gordon Shepherd** and **Ralph Nicholls** continue to make major contributions to Canadian and international space endeavours. These include participation in PHOENIX, the NASA Mars project scheduled for launching in 2007 (Carswell), continuing studies of the upper atmosphere with the aid of orbiting instruments (Shepherd) and theoretical and experimental spectroscopy with applications to various areas of space and upper atmospheric

research (Nicholls).

York scientists are playing a lead role in a Canadian proposal that was one of five projects selected for PHOENIX from a list of 25 submissions. The PHOENIX lander will be deposited at the edge of the northern Martian polar icecap just inside the arctic circle soon after the onset of spring and the retreat of the winter ice. Its mandate is to study the history of water in all its forms over the last 100,000 years, to search for evidence of a zone where life can be supported and to assess the biological potential of regions of the terrain where ice and soil meet. Although conditions on Mars may seem extreme, life on Earth has been found in comparably extreme environments - deep in Antarctic ice, inside solid rocks and in the immediate vicinity of toxic, superheated vents at the bottom of oceans.

Evidence for past or present life will be sought both on land and in the atmosphere. A robotic arm will obtain samples at different depths in the local soil/ice layers, which will be analysed for the presence of elements essential to life. Such samples will also be used to characterize local chemistry and mineralogy.

Allan Carswell's contribution will be an instrument package designed by his company Optech Incorporated in collaboration with MD Robotics, a Mississauga company that manufactures and services the Canadarm, and the Canadian Space Agency. Its purpose will be to determine current climatic conditions on Mars near the northern polar ice cap where evidence exists that the terrain is made up largely of water ice overlain by a thin coating of dust. A principal component of the instrumental package will be a probe based on a laser optical technique known as lidar. Alan Carswell is among the leading lidar experts in the world.

Lidar measurements will characterize the Martian atmosphere up to heights of 20 kilometres. These measurements combined with data from temperature and pressure sensors mounted on

the lander will permit scientists to characterize current climatic conditions at the landing site. When combined with data from the experiments mentioned above, this information will help to establish past climates, especially the occurrence of wet episodes.

In October, 2005 Alan Carswell was installed as a Member of the Order of Canada by the Governor-General.

Gordon Shepherd was presented the John H. Chapman Award of Excellence by the Canadian Space Agency in 2003 for his many contributions to the Canadian space programme extending over a decades long career. He is currently Principal Investigator for WINDII, a joint France-Canada instrument that has been in orbit since 1991 and has yielded an enormous amount of information on the dynamics of the upper atmosphere, extending from heights of 80 to 300 km. WINDII makes use of optical emissions that originate naturally in the upper atmosphere as a result of interactions between solar radiation and atmospheric molecules and atoms. An important example of such an emission is green light emitted by oxygen atoms, which is a principal component of the airglow that can be seen shortly after sunset high in the sky. Aurorae provide additional useful emissions. Data gathered by WINDII and by ground based stations are converted into images of emission, wind and temperature distributions of the upper atmosphere. The conclusion of WINDII and its 14 years of successful operation were marked on December 16, 2005 in a special event held at York University.

Currently, the Shepherd group at York is developing instrumental packages to allow deeper probing of the atmosphere by exploiting infrared atmospheric emissions. Eventually Shepherd hopes to place a probe in orbit that will establish atmospheric dynamics at elevations as low as 20 km. This should help uncover possible links between the circulation patterns of the upper and lower atmospheres and improve our understanding of the general circulation of

the atmosphere.

Gordon Shepherd is the current director of CRESS, the Centre for Research in Experimental Space Science, which is both a research centre and a post-graduate programme.

Ralph Nicholls is continuing to pursue his decades long interests in the spectroscopy of molecular species of particular interest to atmospheric and astrophysical scientists. Nicholls' most recent work has included international projects such as the HIRES solar rocket experiment in support of SOHO (Solar Heliospheric Observatory), MAPS (Masurement of Atmospheric Pollution by Satellites) and MICROMAPS. □



5b. Lee Lorch is 90!

Lee Lorch passed his 90th birthday in 2005. This landmark has not slowed him down. He still comes to York on a regular basis by TTC and he still keeps carrying on his scholarly pursuits in mathematics.

Lee was born in New York City in 1915, graduated from Cornell 20 years later and completed his doctoral studies at the University of Cincinnati in 1941. Following contributions to the war effort during WWII, he found a position at the City College of New York. This was followed by appointments at Pennsylvania State University, Fisk University, Philander Smith College and the University of Alberta, before he finally settled in York University in 1968.

Lee has had a distinguished career as a mathematician spanning 60 years and a comparably long and distinguished career as a social rights activist. It was very typical of him not to compromise his dedication to social justice for all people even at the cost of his career. He was fired from CCNY for his efforts to end segregation in his apartment bloc in New York City in the late 40s and again from Penn State for allowing a black family to occupy his empty

flat in New York. In 1955, he was fired by Fisk University for refusing to testify before HUAC and blacklisted. In 1959 he moved to Canada with his family. Following a 9 year stay at the University of Alberta, he moved to York in 1968 retiring officially in 1985.

So HAPPY 90th, Lee. □



6. More on the Shadow Pension

Through a personal contact in ARF the Executive has asked a consulting actuary whether or not the existing York University Pension Plan supports the concept of the "shadow pension". In his opinion it would have to be part of the plan text to be valid. He points out that the Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement paid by the Federal Government are tied to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) but have a provision that if the CPI reduces, the pension does not. Furthermore, there is no such thing as a "shadow pension" in these plans. He also confirms that the university administration does not have the right to reduce our pension benefits retroactively. □



7. Scholars' Portal

Vivienne Monty

Scholars' Portal provides access to scholarly resources through a set of tools that allow the networked scholars to search, save and integrate resources with their teaching and research thereby fostering greater learning opportunities. The Ontario Council of University Libraries (OCUL) enhances the Portal continually. There are a number of components to Scholars' Portal.

First and foremost is the **Illumina Search Engine** that provides a single searching platform with cross links to other services. More than 50 major databases are available with more than 23 million references.

There is an easy connection to **Refworks**, which is a web-based bibliographical management service that permits the creation of personal databases of references in any desirable style and manipulates these easily as needed.

Another component is **Rapid Access to collections via Electronic Requesting**, or **Racer**. This is essentially a rapid Inter Library Loan within the OCUL library service.

The **SFX link server** offers libraries a proven solution for linking their diverse, ever-increasing set of electronic resources. Users can use a single click (find it at York button) from a comprehensive menu of options for that reference.

A tutorial session is being arranged for interested ARF members to be held on April 4th, 2006. The time and venue will be determined to suit the majority of participants, but a minimum number of participants is required for the tutorial to be viable.

Please send an e-mail to Vivienne Monty at vmonty@yorku.ca or contact her by phone at 416 736 2100, ext. 88268, if you are interested in this tutorial. Please provide details of your availability. □



The ARF Newsletter is published by the Association of Retired Faculty and Librarians of York University (ARF). ARF is an independent organization of retired faculty and librarians of York University, and of pre-retirees who pay membership fees. Members of ARF are Associate members of YUFA and YUFA has recognized ARF as "the representative organization for retired members" of YUFA. ARF is a member of CURAC (College and University Retirees Association of Canada).



At the Annual General Meeting of October 2005, the following slate of officers was returned, including those subsequently nominated to the Executive to extend its base and representation, as the meeting agreed.



EXECUTIVE

President

Alex Murray

amurray@yorku.ca

Vice-President

Allan Stauffer

stauffer@yorku.ca

Past-President

Morton Abramson

abramson@mathstat.yorku.ca

Secretary

Martin Muldoon

muldoon@yorku.ca

Treasurer

Barry Loughton

loughton@yorku.ca

Editor of Newsletter

Chester Sadowski

chesters@yorku.ca

Pre-Retiree Member

Stan Jeffers

stanj@yorku.ca

Members-at-Large

Sylvie Arend

sarend@glendon.yorku.ca

Ted Bieler

tbieler@yorku.ca

Cynthia Dent

cdent@yorku.ca

Peter Harries-Jones

peterhj@yorku.ca

Nicole Keating

nkeating@glendon.yorku.ca

Tiit Kodar

tkodar@yorku.ca

The Editor of the Newsletter welcomes comment, letters, or items of interest to other ARF members, but reserves the right to edit any submissions. Please send them by e-mail (chesters@yorku.ca) or by post to ARF, c/o YUFA, 261 Health, Nursing & Env. Studies, York University, 4700 Keele Street, Toronto ON M3J

ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED FACULTY AND LIBRARIANS

**DUES FOR 2005/06 ARE RECEIVABLE.
THIRD NOTICE
PLEASE CONTINUE TO SUPPORT ARF WITH YOUR
MEMBERSHIP**

Please mail to:

Association of Retired Faculty and Librarians, c/o YUFA
261 Health, Nursing, and Environmental Studies
York University
4700 Keele Street
Toronto, ON M3J 1P3

- I wish to join ARF, to receive its mailings and support its activities
- I wish to renew my membership in ARF
- I am willing to undertake occasional work for ARF
- I am not yet a retiree, but I want to become an Associate Member of ARF

Enclosed is my cheque for the period 1 July, 2005 to 30 June, 2006.

- \$25 Regular Membership
 - \$10 Associate Membership (available for pre-retirees)
- Plus \$_____ as an additional contribution to help ARF
in its continuing work on behalf of York's retired Faculty and Librarians.

NAME(please print) _____ (05-06 Dues)

HOME ADDRESS

Street _____

City _____ Province _____

Postal Code _____ Country _____

Home Phone _____ Campus Phone _____

E-Mail _____ Fax _____



**ASSOCIATION DES PROFESSEURS ET BIBLIOTHÉCAIRES RETRAITÉS
DE L'UNIVERSITÉ YORK (APBR)**

**COTISATIONS 2005-2006
TROISIÈME APPEL
DEVENEZ MEMBRE DE L'APBR OU RENOUVELEZ VOTRE ADHÉSION
VOTRE SOUTIEN EST INDISPENSABLE**

Veillez envoyer votre cotisation à : Association of Retired Faculty and Librarians,
a/s YUFA
261 Health, Nursing, and Environmental Studies
Université York
4700, rue Keele
Toronto, ON M3J 1P3

- Je désire devenir membre de l'APBR, recevoir ses bulletins et soutenir ses activités
- Je désire renouveler mon adhésion à l'APBR
- Je suis prêt(e) à participer à l'occasion aux travaux de l'APBR
- Je ne suis pas encore à la retraite, mais je veux devenir membre associé de l'APBR

Veillez trouver ci-joint mon chèque pour la période du 1er juillet 2005 au 30 juin 2006, au nom de ARF.

- 25 \$ membre titulaire
- 10 \$ membre associé

Plus _____\$ de contribution supplémentaire pour aider l'APBR à poursuivre ses travaux au nom des professeurs et bibliothécaires retraités de l'Université York.

NOM (en majuscules) _____ 05/06

ADRESSE À LA MAISON

Rue _____

Ville _____ Province _____

Code postal _____ Pays _____

Téléphone (maison) _____ Téléphone (campus) _____

Courriel _____ Télécopieur _____