

ARF Newsletter

Association of Retired Faculty and Librarians of York University

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1. From the President

Morton Abramson

Dear Colleagues in Retirement,

FROM the August 2005 *York Pension Newsletter* we learn that for the first six months of 2005 the York Pension Fund had a gross return of 5.5%. Should the gross return for the remaining six months of 2005 be equal to 6.7%, then the total net return for the whole of 2005 would be approximately 12%. If the net return was in fact 12%, then as noted in the last *Newsletter*, pension payments in 2006 would increase by 0% using a "shadow pension" and increase by 1.5809% if a shadow pension is not assumed. Should the gross return for the remaining six months of 2005 be equal to 21.7% (very unlikely), then the total net

return for the whole of 2005 would be approximately 27%. If the net return was in fact 28%, then pension payments in 2006 would increase by approximately 1.05% using a "shadow pension" and increase by approximately 4.82% if a shadow pension is not assumed.

The issue of whether a "shadow pension" is in effect according to the York Pension Plan, as the administration claims, or, as YUFA claims, the concept of a shadow pension is not contained in the plan, is still before The Financial Services Commission of Ontario for a decision.

We now have the necessary documents establishing that the York University Retired Faculty & Librarian Benefit Trust fund is not subject to income tax on any income earned by it. This is "provided that the fund restricts its benefits to medical and dental expenses or any other benefits as described in the 'Benefit Plan.'" The income tax savings from the trust fund will be used to enhance current benefits.

On a personal note, I want to thank all the members of the Executive who have worked towards improving ARF. Issues seem to move along slowly but the end results are certainly worth the wait. Hopefully as ARF grows with more members, our needs will be acted upon more speedily. □



2. News from CURAC / ARUCC

CURAC is the Colleges and Universities Retiree Associations of Canada / Associations de retraités des universités et collèges du Canada, the national organization which brings together for an annual conference and general meeting at the Congress of Learned Societies delegates from the retiree associations at colleges and

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

October 20

12-2:30 p.m

Lunch provided

Founders Senior Common Room

305 Founders

On the Agenda:

- Election of Officers: a slate with nominations from the floor
- Shadow Pension update
- Report on developments from CURAC Conference

ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE ANNUELLE

le 20 octobre

de midi à 14h30

Un déjeuner sera servi

Founders Senior Common Room

305 Founders

À l'ordre du jour :

- L'élection des membres du Conseil exécutif avec la présentation d'une ardoise et les nominations de l'Assemblée
- Des nouvelles de la «shadow pension»
- Un compte-rendu des événements de la conférence de CURAC/ARUCC

universities across Canada. CURAC's mandate "includes, but extend beyond, immediate concerns with retiree pensions and benefits to encompass ongoing participation



in teaching and research, community service, and enhancing opportunities for personal development in retirement." It is a forum for communication, it provides information to member associations and performs a watchdog function, it lobbies on behalf of retirees interests and needs, and supports research and discussion concerning these interests and needs. After its recent Conference in May, 2005 in Vancouver, a number of matters have come forward that will be of interest. While they are available on the Web (www.curac.ca/index.htm), we wish to highlight several of them here. □



(a) Two BC Presidents on Retirees' Roles in Canadian Universities: A Question for York

At the CURAC Conference at UBC in May, greetings were brought from the presidents of the University of British Columbia (Martha Piper) and Simon Fraser (Michael Stevenson, formerly Vice-President at York). Both addressed the issue of retirees' continued involvement in the university. Martha Piper spoke of the need for retirees to remain actively involved in the life of the institutions they had served for so many years and of the need these institutions had for the experience, wisdom and expertise of their retired members in dealing with the complexities of the modern post-secondary education environment. She expressed the hope that this pool of talent could be utilized more effectively than it may have been in the past. Michael Stevenson agreed with what Martha Piper had said about the need to make better use of the "energy, vitality and institutional memory" of retirees and spoke of the need to find ways to engage retirees more actively in the life of the university community. He also agreed that intellectual work does not necessarily stop at a certain age and that universities must find ways to "facilitate the continuation of research and mentorship that retired colleagues can so well provide."

Peter Russell, the president of CURAC, thanked both presidents for expressing such a commitment, noting however that the hard work of getting such measures implemented fell largely on the shoulders of faculty associations who at most institutions remained the principal instruments through which the situation of retirees could be promoted.

[At York, the "hard work" falls on the shoulders of YUFA and YURA: ARF is STILL not a recognized body here, though we are nationally.

Despite some strong support from some deans and chairs, retirees at York are largely unappreciated, undervalued, and underused, as we know from recent surveys, and part of that neglect of an important university resource lies with York's Administration. What can YUFA, ARF, and the Administration do to improve this state of affairs?—Ed] □



(b) CURAC Announces a New National Health Plan

CURAC has distributed to all member organizations an information kit concerning the recently announced CAUT health benefits plan, "FollowMe." It might be of some interest to York retirees, so please read the following information carefully. To join the plan you have to join CAUT (at \$25 per annum). If you want more information, please see the details about the plan at <http://www.curac.ca/cautplan.htm>

In an accompanying letter Doug Creelman, Peter Russell and Howard Fink wrote about the plan:

We wish to bring to your attention a new health plan that CAUT (Canadian Association of University Teachers) has negotiated with Manulife. This plan is called **FollowMe**. It was designed for persons at institutions that terminate health benefits for some or all of their employees at the time of retirement. It will be available to faculty and staff at the time of retirement, as well as to faculty and staff who are already retired. What makes **FollowMe** particularly attractive is that it is being offered to those members who are already retired, and who may not have had coverage for some time—without a medical examination, during a 60 day application window this fall [Oct.1 to Nov 30, 2005]. While **FollowMe** is a CAUT plan, not a CURAC/ARUCC plan, CURAC/ ARUCC encouraged CAUT to develop such a plan for

university and college retirees, including staff retirees.

Members of CURAC/ARUCC's Health Benefits Committee have examined the details of **FollowMe**, and have concluded (and the CURAC Board agrees) that in terms of coverage and premium costs it compares well with other plans on the market For persons who are retiring, the 60-day window [for joining the Plan without a medical] begins at the time they retire and leave any group plan they may have had as employees. For persons who took early retirement but remained under a university or college health plan until the date of normal retirement, the 60-day window begins when they leave the institutional group plan.

[The ARF Executive thinks York Retirees might do better with either RTIP or RTO, but please check the websites if you are interested]



(c) Dates for next year's CURAC meeting

CURAC Meeting next year, 24–26 May at University of Guelph at the Congress of Learned Societies. Please mark your calendars.



3. Mandatory Retirement: Views of CURAC and YUFA

PETER Russell, the Chair of CURAC made a submission to the Ontario Ministry of Labour on Sept. 27, 2004, concerning the position of CURAC on mandatory Retirement. Ontarians do not yet know when the legislation might become effective, or whether universities might be excepted:

CURAC/ARUCC is a Canada-wide federation of associations organized by retired faculty and staff at 28 Canadian post-secondary institutions, including twelve Ontario universities. On behalf of CURAC/ARUCC I would like to make the following points concerning mandatory retirement.

1. Although we represent persons who have already retired, many did not choose retirement but were forced to retire at age 65 because of mandatory retirement policies that prevail at many Canadian universities including those in Ontario. These victims of forced retirement were teaching, researching, publishing and doing university administration at a high level of excellence at the time their employment was terminated. Their

forced retirement represents a tremendous loss of knowledge, experience and talent to Ontario's university system. They, as well as a great many of us who were ready to retire at age 65 or earlier, very much support restoring flexibility and freedom of choice to university and college careers.

2. We appreciate the fear of many Ontario workers that the abolition of mandatory retirement could erode existing rights in collective agreements to retire with full pension and benefits at 65 or an earlier age. Therefore we fully endorse the Government's commitment to achieve its objective of giving Ontario workers the right to choose when to retire in a manner that will not undermine existing retirement entitlements to benefits and pensions. This is a very important commitment for faculty and staff at Ontario colleges and universities.

3. One of the principal objectives of our organization is to foster ways and means whereby faculty and staff who wish to continue their university or college based activities after retirement can do so. Many who do retire would like to continue – on a phased down scale – research, teaching and other professional activities. These senior scholars and staff represent a valuable resource to post-secondary institutions and to the community. Through the efforts of our member organizations university administrators are being made aware of this possibility. We are urging them to establish consistent best practices for the support of retired faculty and staff who wish to carry on academic activities or to serve their institutions in other ways. At the University of Toronto consideration is now being given to establishing a Senior Scholar or Emeritus College similar to those that have blossomed on American campuses since the abolition of mandatory retirement at US universities ten years ago. When good programs and facilities are in place for supporting post-retirement activities, retirement is a less traumatic experience and there is less incentive to hang on and postpone retirement.

4. Even though, as a matter of stated policy, retirement is mandatory for faculty and staff at Ontario universities, in practice it is not mandatory for all. We are aware of situations at a number of institutions where university administrators make special arrangements that enable a select few to continue their appointment

on a salaried basis past age 65. University administrators also re-hire retired faculty, on a discretionary basis, paying a stipend that is only a small fraction of previous salaries. These practices not only result in inequities and take advantage of enthusiastic teachers by re-hiring them on the cheap, but they also threaten academic freedom by making post-age 65 academic opportunities depend entirely on the discretion of administrators. The abolition of mandatory retirement would put an end to these ad hoc and unfair practices.

(<http://www.curac.ca/submit1.doc>)



YUFA President Arthur Hilliker issued the following Statement to YUFA Members on Mandatory Retirement on October 18, 2004:

The Ontario Government proposes to eliminate mandatory retirement by amendment to the Ontario Human Rights Code. YUFA has always supported the elimination of mandatory retirement. Our last statement outlining our position was a letter sent by YUFA President Penni Stewart to the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

One concern is that it may be argued that universities be exempted from the ending of mandatory retirement (i.e., universities could negotiate collective agreements with their faculty associations which do allow for mandatory retirement.) There are four reasons to oppose such an exemption.

First, if the ending of mandatory retirement becomes a human right embedded within the Ontario Human Rights Code it would be completely unfair to exclude university faculty members. This would deny them a human right given to all other Ontarians. I am reminded of a quotation from George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others."

Second, university faculty members are able to continue effective employment beyond age 65. For supporting documentation see: www.ocufa.on.ca/retirement, an Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA) website.

Third, although it has been argued by some that ending mandatory retirement would impede the progression of young Canadians into faculty ranks, the reality is that there would likely be no such effect. It has been estimated that Ontario Universities will be filling thousands of new faculty positions in the near future, far

beyond the pool of qualified Canadians. Indeed, ending mandatory retirement will allow us to retain much needed productive faculty members.

Fourth, although it has been argued that ending mandatory retirement will result in highly significant costs to the employer, the economic costs are relatively small. Documentation of this point can be found at www.ocufa.on.ca/retirement.

[signed] Arthur J. Hilliker



4. Travel Money for Conferences and Professional Associations?

by the Editor

WITH the shrinking pool of money available from Deans and through Chairs for travel to professional conferences and other kinds of scholarly travel, it is important to search for all sources that are available. Although ARF has heard that some money is available from SSHRC and NSERC, we have been unable to determine the accuracy of that information. Retirees with research projects that need funding, or who are giving papers at national / international conferences, should seek advice from the Office of Research and Innovation.

A search of the York Research Web page, however (http://research.yorku.ca/securehome/research_service_s/index.html) indicates that four of the most sought-after research grants are not open to Retirees: York AdHoc Research Fund for Conferences held at York; York Conference Travel Grants; SSHRC Conference Travel Grant; SSHRC Small Grants Program. But read on.



5. The Collective Agreement on Senior Scholars and Research

AMONG other things, Article 14.04 includes the following statement:

Senior Scholars are eligible to apply for conference travel funds on the same basis as full-time faculty.

Further, Article 14.11 reads as follows:

The parties agree that the Vice-President Academic and the Associate Vice-President (Research) will work in concert along with one YUFA representative to provide funding to promote the research and scholarly activities of Senior Scholars through the Office of Research Administration.

ARF wonders exactly how these clauses are being implemented. It appears that Senior Scholars can apply for YUFA travel funds administered by faculties and departments, though those funds have been reduced recently. What, then, does this provision mean? And what

results has Article 14.11 produced? ARF's Executive is discussing retiree's rights to offices and research facilities and professional space. □



6. 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



Professor Clara Thomas at the Archives named in her honour

the *Newsletter* Editor. To inaugurate this new column, here are three items that have recently come to our attention. Two are edited from *Y-File*, York's information digest.

Earlier in the Spring, York's archives were re-named the Clara Thomas Archives to honour one of York's pioneer teachers, distinguished researchers, and long-time ARF member. **Clara Thomas** was born in Strathroy, Ontario in 1919, and studied at the University of Western Ontario and the University of Toronto before becoming a member of the York faculty in English at the original campus at Glendon in 1961. She retired in 1984, but has continued her research, along with building up the York archives. She has published nine books, mostly on Canadian writers and educators, and numerous articles and chapters. Elected to the prestigious Royal Society of Canada as a Fellow in 1983, she was awarded the International Canadian Studies Prize in 1989, and has been granted several honorary degrees including Doctor of Literature at York in 1986 and Trent University in 1991 and Doctor of Laws at Brock University in 1992. "We are paying appropriate tribute to an extraordinary person," said Lorna R. Marsden, York's president and

vice-chancellor, "someone who has mentored generations of students, has advanced the intellectual knowledge of the University and, indeed, all universities and the Canadian and academic literary and scholarly regime. She has made untold contributions to the lives of students and people in our world in this country and elsewhere."

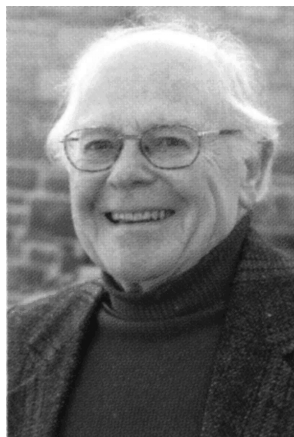
At a recent Convocation, York honoured another distinguished colleague and ARF member, **Daphne Schiff**, with an honorary doctor of laws in recognition of her life's work as an educator and for her humanitarian work. She taught in York's Division of Natural Science. Her annual landing of her plane on York's south fields for her "science of flight" course captured the attention of the entire University community. Her love of flying led her to membership in "the ninety-nines," Amelia Earhart's prestigious international women's flying sorority, spending 25 years as a competitive flyer. In 1996, Schiff and her flying partner, Adele Fogle, competed in the first 26,000 kilometre Race of the Americas. Since 2000, the pair has volunteered with Air Solidarité to fly annual missions to deliver medical and teaching supplies to Africa. She cautioned graduates of the danger of computer screens and instant messaging which she described as "faceless encounters" and advised students to be visible. "Visibility is the key. I've tried visibility ever since I became a lecturer at York. As you've heard, for the science of flight course,



Dr. Schiff and York Chancellor, Peter Cory

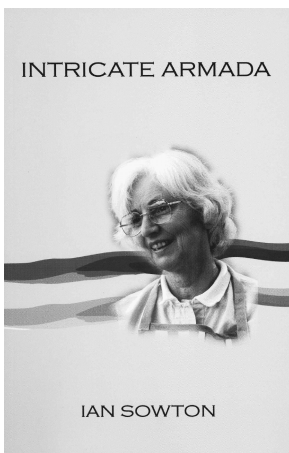
I landed a [Cessna] 172 here at York, it was a bumpy ride but it was visible."

Third, **Ian Sowton**, for many years a professor in Atkinson's Department of English (after teaching at the University of Alberta), and formerly Director of York's



Professor Ian Sowton

Graduate Programme in English has published a new book of poetry, *Intricate Armada* (with a fine portrait of Fran Sowton on the cover), which includes “a considerable range of voices and moods: celebratory, exasperated, ironic, whimsical, contemplative; and a number of political kinds such as ballads, political satires, elegies, and “psalms.” Ian hopes that “readers will find enough that’s put interestingly and perceptively enough to support poetry’s age-old assertion that an it is good for you.” For further information about purchasing a copy, write to Ian at isowton@yorku.ca or at Merle Books, 21 Chudleigh Ave, Toronto, M4R 1T1. □



Ian Sowton’s new book of poetry

7. New PER Requirements

AS readers know, Senior Scholars are eligible for Professional Expense Reimbursements. Some questions have been raised to ARF about the administration of PER accounts for Senior Scholars and the ARF Executive is pursuing that matter. Meanwhile, new Regulations, effective from July 1, 2005, require that “Senior Scholars affiliated with a research centre should submit their PER claims to the Director of the centre, and Senior Scholars not affiliated with a research centre should submit their PER claims to the office of the Associate Vice-President, Research, YOrk University, York Lanes, 2nd Floor.” For access to further electronic information and the modified forms, please see:

www.yorku.ca/finweb/ofc_comptroller/research/index.htm □

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 2004, 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

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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 (wwhitla@yorku.ca) or by post to ARF, c/o YUFA, 261 Health, Nursing & Env. Studies, York University, 4700 Keele Street, Toronto ON M3J 1P3. Other members of the Executive may be reached by post at the same address or by e-mail.

**ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED FACULTY AND LIBRARIANS
OF YORK UNIVERSITY**

**DUES FOR 2005/06 ARE NOW RECEIVABLE.
SECOND 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
DEUXIÈME 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, avenue 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 _____