

ASSOCIATION OF DALHOUSIE RETIREES AND PENSIONERS

THE NEWSLETTER

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To all ADRP members, we are sending our September Newsletter, the third of this year. We hope to have the fourth to you in December. We have several reports to present to you together with some other items of interest.

President's Report – Philip Welch

A major concern of Dalhousie pensioners continues to be the shortfall in the indexation of their pensions of about 7%, while the Retirees Trust Fund (RTF), from which Dalhousie pensions are paid, sits on a growing surplus, now approaching \$40 million. The monies in the RTF can be used only, and exclusively, for the benefit of Dalhousie pensioners and their beneficiaries, and a mere \$10-11 million would serve to make good the entire missing indexation.

Your association is fighting hard to change this situation and for the missing indexation to be made up. To this end we have met with the Provincial Superintendent of Pensions, and engaged in an ongoing dialogue. The DFA has also launched a grievance on this matter with the University. We have written to the new University Vice President of Finance and Administration, Mr. Ken Burt, and subsequently met with him to voice our concerns. This correspondence and dialogue is continuing.

The second major concern of the ADRP is the maintenance of good health care coverage, including the protection of those retirees who are members of the Dalhousie Blue Cross Plan.

I am sorry to report that a salient feature of this Plan, the provision of potential financial assistance with Nursing Home care, has just been quietly deleted from the Plan by the University (see Benefits report). The ADRP was not privy to the discussion on this matter by the University Benefits Committee (on which we have been denied representation).

The potential provision of some financial assistance with the costs of Nursing Home care has been a feature of the Dalhousie Blue Cross Plan for over a decade, and its existence has been actively promoted by the ADRP, especially to groups of impending retirees at University-sponsored pre-retirement seminars, yet there have never been any claims submitted by any Blue Cross members. (There have been a number of claims submitted, and paid, to help with expenses related to the provision of nursing assistance for a person in the member's home. Does this say something about members' desire to avoid Nursing Home care? Anyway, the University's actuarial consultant in this matter (who may never have been informed that the Nursing Home provision has been in the plan for over a decade, with no claims made during that time) has estimated that the 300 or so retiree Blue Cross members will claim about \$63,000/year from Blue Cross if this Nursing Home provision is maintained.

The Acting Chair of the EBC, Mr. Mike Roughneen, claims that “there is no basis on which the EBC can adjudicate a claim for “accommodation costs” under the terms of the Major Medical Insurance Plan. Perhaps he had not noticed that the current Blue Cross Plan will cover 100% of the **accommodation costs** for a semi-private room if a member is admitted to an approved general hospital. (Or will the University take aim next to remove this provision from the Dalhousie Plan?)

To strike a final cheerful note on a more successful matter, a hard working committee of the ADRP Board has just now moved to officially establish a Seniors’ College (see related newsletter article). This has been greeted with enormous enthusiasm by a number of community groups and I commend it to your attention.

Our members, outside community groups, and governmental organizations with an interest in seniors, recognize the value of the ADRP’s activities, and are demonstrably appreciative.

Now, if we can only infect the Dalhousie University Administration with this same sense of recognition and appreciation

Benefits Committee Report - Om Kamra and John Anderson, Co-Chairs

Nursing Home Care Axed By the University

Nursing Home Care will no longer be provided under the Dalhousie Blue Cross Plan. At the June, 2007 meeting of the Employees Benefit Committee (EBC), the University decided to delete the Nursing Home Care provisions that had been in the Plan but had not been publicized. You may recall that ADRP has not been given membership on this important University Committee, although we have repeatedly sought membership status, in order to serve our retirees. Last year, we met with the University EBC, not only to request retention of Nursing Home Care Benefits, but also to publicize its availability to members in the Plan by rewriting the "Blue Sheet". We have now been told that the University does not intend to inform members of the plan about this deletion, since it was never mentioned in the first place as a benefit in the "Blue Sheet". This may not be the last word on this important issue. The DFA, along with the ADRP, intend to challenge the legal validity of changing the Plan without informing the members, and we are also exploring the justification for this important negative decision. Stay tuned for further developments.

The ADRP Benefits Committee has looked into Nursing Home Care provisions of Plans offered by CARP (Canadian Association of Retired Persons) and the CAA (Canadian Automobile Association). Our impression is that these plans are very complex, with high premiums and, in the case of CARP, there are numerous medical exclusions, so that only very healthy seniors could enter the plan. These plans may be studied in detail on both the CARP and CAA websites.

The ADRP is anxious to find out how many retirees are presently residing in a Nursing

Home. If you are aware of any, regardless of whether they are ADRP members or not, please call John Anderson at 823-2676 with details.

Congratulations to –

J. Gordon Duff, who is one of 100 pharmacists across Canada recognized and thanked by the Canadian Pharmacists Association for their contributions to the profession. This is part of the Association's Centennial Celebrations. Gordon has been a member of the ADRP since 2000.

Communications Committee Report – Barbara Prime-Walker, Chair

The colorful new ADRP Web Page is up and running. Webmaster, Randy Barkhouse, welcomes feedback from the Board and general membership. He may be reached via the ADRP office or by e-mail: randy.barkhouse@dal.ca or carandy.barkhouse@dal.ca.

The Caring and Sharing Sub-Committee has sent a total of six (6) acknowledgement cards during the summer months. One home visit was made to deliver a get-well basket. Please contact Carol Smillie or myself if we can further assist you on behalf of the ADRP.

Seniors' College Report – Bob Rodger

Colleagues: I met on September 13th with Valerie White(CEO, NS Seniors Secretariat, 424-6322 whitevj@gov.ns.ca) and Jeannine Jessome (Senior Policy Analyst, 424-4735, jessomjl@gov.ns.ca) on the 4th floor of the Dennis Building, 1740 Granville Street, Halifax, NS B3J 2Z1(also P.O. Box 2065 at that address; one can always find a 'real' person on the phone at 1-800-670-0065 or 424-0065).

They were quite enthusiastic about the proposal for a Seniors' College in HRM. I told them we'd like to see it develop both in HRM and elsewhere in the Province. I gave them copies of our brochure, poster and press release.

They said that what we are doing will be mentioned in their quarterly Newsletter (next issue in December). If we can prepare a statement about the College (ASAP) they'd try to get it into their annual publication (for 2008) - 75,000 of those are printed for circulation.

They also intend to hand out copies of our brochure, etc. at the next monthly meeting of their Group of IX (now apparently a Group of VIII); so the Seniors' College will be brought to the attention of that group's members throughout the Province.

They are considering what other contacts the Seniors' College might make, apart from MCCE and the universities. They gave me their list of senior citizen councils, clubs, centres and associations across the Province.

They will also think about the Seniors' College need for more space for future classes, both in HRM and elsewhere in the Province, and see what to suggest.

They drew my attention to the Government of Canada (Social Development) "New Horizons for Seniors Program". This provides grants up to \$25,000. A call for applications is made once or twice a year at Social Development's web site www.sdc.gc.ca (1-800-277-9914). That web page says:

The program's objectives are to:

- encourage seniors to contribute their skills, experience and wisdom in support of social well-being in their communities; and -
- promote the ongoing involvement of seniors in their communities to reduce their risk of social isolation.

They fund only over a 12-month period (not continuously); pay for renting facilities; pay professionals such as coordinators, facilitators; pay for supplies, materials, equipment; pay for printing and publications. Many grants were made in NS for 2006/07 ranging from \$3,000 to \$25,000. Details can be seen on the web page.

The program can be contacted at 1-800-277-9914. Valerie White serves on the Grant Review Committee.

This was a very positive meeting.

Lecture Series Report – Norman Horrocks

Dr Davi Ravindra, ADRP Member and Dalhousie Professor Emeritus, spoke 20 June 2007, in the Lecture Series arranged by the ADRP Social Committee. Dr Ravindra received his BS and Master of Technology from the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, M.Sc. and Ph.D. in Physics from the University of Toronto and a MA in Philosophy from Dalhousie. Prior to his retirement he was Professor and Chair of Comparative Religion, Professor of International Development Studies and Adjunct Professor of Physics at Dalhousie.

Dr Ravindra talked of "Aging and Spiritual Traditions of the World", starting with the life of Buddha. The Buddha was a wealthy Prince for whom the sight of an old man, a diseased man and a dead man, led to a revolution in his thinking. Aging, decay and death are all subject to time. Next year 120 million people will die. We cannot avoid aging – we can prolong life but death is inevitable. Studying philosophy is a preparation for death. Religions are concerned with eternal life. All religions say death of the body is not the death of the person, rather theirs is the notion of an everlasting immortal soul. Hence what we do in our life has an influence on our immortal soul. He ended his talk by discussing the views on death expressed by Socrates as presented in the writings of Plato.

Upcoming Lecture –

- An invitation from Fazley Siddiq, Director, School of Public Administration, has been

extended to ADRP members to attend a lecture on “Dying with Dignity: A Contemporary Challenge in End-of-Life Care and Perceptions of Canadians”, given by Dr. Harvey M. Chochinov, Canada Research Chair in Palliative Care, and Professor of Psychiatry and Family Medicine, University of Manitoba. Dr. Chochinov will address how terminally ill patients understand the notion of dignity and the influences that undermine or maintain their sense of dignity. Three panelists will comment on the legal, spiritual and public policy issues: Mr. Brian Flemming, C.M., Rev. Cathy Simpson and Dr. Fiona Bergin.

To register for the October 24th lecture, please e-mail PublicAdmin.lectures@dal.ca. Seating is limited so please register early. For further information call Dolene La Pointe at (902)494-3742.

That’s it for September. We will have our next Newsletter out before the New Year.

Emerson Moffitt, Editor
Jan Scott, Associate Editor

IN MEMORIAM

We cannot escape our mortality and, on occasion, some of our members leave us during the days which have elapsed since the last Newsletter. Some readers will have read of the passing of old friends and colleagues, however, we also endeavour to honour their contributions and achievements in our Newsletter; and our thoughts and sympathies go out to the families and friends that they left.

Warwick Charles Kimmins, age 66 of Halifax, passed away peacefully at home on August 5, 2007.

Warwick was born in London, England, son of the late Charles Horace Kimmins and is survived by his mother Eileen May Kimmins of Hounslow Middlesex, London, England, his wife Ruth Kimmins, children Eliot and Sarah and grandson Eric.

Warwick was a dedicated scientist and academic who graduated with a Ph.D. in Biology from the University of London in 1965. He was appointed as a professor of Biology at Dalhousie University the same year. As a professor, he is remembered for his enthusiasm, humor and ability to motivate students in areas of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. From 1981 until 1990, he served as Chair of the Biology Department, then as Dean of the Faculty of Science from 1995 until 2000 and as Acting Vice-President from 1997-1998. After leaving Dalhousie University, Warwick became a co-founder in the successful Halifax Biotechnology company Immunovaccine Technologies (IVT) for which he served as President and CEO from 2001-2006, then recently as Chairman of the Board of Directors.

Alexander Hamilton Leighton passed away quietly on August 11th, 2007, at his home in Joggins Bridge shortly after his 99th birthday. Born in Philadelphia, he came to Nova Scotia with his parents for the first time in 1916, at the age of eight. This began a rich and enduring

relationship with Nova Scotia and its people. In his adopted Province, Alec Leighton made a lasting contribution to medical research and public health, he explored its landscapes and wrote about its natural beauty, and he recorded and documented its life and history.

Dr. Leighton had an extraordinary breadth of interest and an equally exceptional depth of understanding in the many aspects of his multi-faceted career as a psychiatrist, anthropologist, and sociologist.

He studied biology at Princeton University, with an emphasis on animal behaviour. He then studied medicine and psychiatry at Cambridge University and John's Hopkins University where he trained under Dr. Adolf Meyer of John's Hopkins who also trained Dr. Robert O. Jones, the first head of Dalhousie's Department of Psychiatry.

In 1966, Alec Leighton moved from Cornell to the Harvard School of Public Health where he was recruited to found a new Department of Behavioral Sciences. On retiring from Harvard in 1975, he received a National Health Scientist Award from the Government of Canada and was appointed Professor of Psychiatry and of Community Health and Epidemiology in the Faculty of Medicine of Dalhousie. He received numerous awards as well as honorary degrees from Acadia and Laval Universities.

Alec Leighton is survived by his wife, Jane M. Murphy, Ph.D, who currently holds the appointment of Adjunct Professor of Psychiatry in the Dalhousie Department of Psychiatry, daughter Doreen, son Ted and 5 grandchildren.

Norman Harding Morse passed away August 13th at the age of 86. He obtained a B.A. (1940) from Acadia University and a M.A. (1942) from the University of Toronto. He joined the RCAF and was a co-pilot on night patrol over the North Atlantic. After active duty he returned to the University of Toronto to complete his Ph.D. (1952).

From 1945 to 1964 he was Professor of Economics at Acadia, becoming Head of the Department of Economics and Sociology, and Acting Dean of Arts from 1964 to 1965. From 1965 to 1984 he was Professor of Economics at Dalhousie, serving as Chairman of the Department of Economics from 1968 to 1972.

His pioneering work in growing grapes established the basis for a new industry in Nova Scotia.

Helen Leona Gorman passed away September 3rd at the age of 79. She was known as Leona to family and Helen to friends. After her 4 children were grown, she worked at Dalhousie as Business Administrator for the Dalhousie Review. Later she attended Dalhousie on a part-time basis and completed her Bachelor of Arts degree over a 12 year period, graduating in 1984. Helen was one of the original members of the ADRP and volunteered on many community and charitable committees and with many groups. Always smiling and ever ready to offer her advice or assistance, she made many friends over the years and enjoyed each and every one. She was predeceased by Howie, her husband of 40 years.