



Photo/Mark Graesser

Your Voice

MUN Pensioners' Association (MUNPA) Newsletter • Vol. 17, No. 3, October 2019
Co-editors: Bernadette Power, Ann Ryan • Design and layout: Mark Graesser

Jackie Collins, New MUNPA Office Assistant

The MUNPA Board invites the MUNPA membership to meet Jackie Collins, Office Assistant, and current MUNPA member. Jackie's work history with MUN goes back to September of 1981 when she started work with the Henrietta Harvey Library (later moved to QE II). After that her career took her to the Thompson Student Centre in 1986, the Dean's Office with the Faculty of Business in 1992, and the Centre for Management Development in 1994. This later became the Gardiner Centre, from which she retired in February 2018.



Jackie Collins

As MUNPA's Office Assistant, Jackie will assist the Board of Directors, particularly the Executive, in managing the business of the Association. She will be the person greeting you when you call for information, or email with queries. In addition, Jackie will be responsible for keeping our database current, organizing events, room bookings and parking for MUNPA business, preparing correspondence and distributing information to the membership. She will attend monthly Board meetings and the Annual General Meeting. Jackie's position is part time (30 hrs. per month), so should you need to contact her and cannot connect at the time, she asks that you leave her a message and she will get back to you.

Commenting on her career at MUN, Jackie says, "I particularly enjoyed my role as Training Advisor at the Gardiner Centre. I

communicated on a daily basis with business owners, HR professionals, managers, and supervisors to help them determine the best professional development solutions for their staff. I also advised individuals who wanted to grow their skills to move forward with their careers." She also administered the Masters Certificate in Project Management for 16 years. In addition to her dedicated work at MUN, Jackie found time to volunteer, e.g. with the Campus Food Bank, 911 crisis line, and many events.

On a personal note, "I'm a Mom and a Nana, first and foremost (2 adorable granddaughters – yes, I'm biased!)." She is also a passionate and talented pool player, having played competitively in Canada and the US. "I'm pleased to say I've had a few top 3 finishes over the years, and I'm especially happy to have developed lasting friendships through this sport." Her other interests include reading, baking and crafting. "I'm also a diehard cat lover!"

Wow! Jackie is an incredible addition to the MUNPA team and we are very fortunate to have hired such a capable professional and someone who, as she says, "loves connecting with people". You can reach Jackie by email at munpa@mun.ca.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Writing the president's message is a new role for me. It has been a quiet summer, but I and also other members of the board are back at work. We keep a close watch on pensions and benefits, as well as a number of other questions, and try to act, as expeditiously as we can on other issues or problems that you raise with us. One thing that we learned is that pensioners can take advantage of the occasional blood collection clinics that HR operates on the St. John's campus. Another is that pensioners can apply for the rebate of tuition (not fees) for one academic credit course per semester. We will put more information about this on the MUNPA website soon.

Communication with members is always a problem. We know that most people don't want to be bombarded with too many e-mails and are trying to get as much information as we can onto the MUNPA website. Please check it regularly. Both the St. Johns Programme Committee and your Corner Brook representatives are developing their fall programmes and our focus and special interest groups are starting up. Taking part is a great way to stay connected.

Steve Wolinetz

MUNPA Contact Information

Office	Room 2003E, Signal Hill Campus
Office Assistant	Jackie Collins
Main e-mail	munpa@mun.ca
Phone	(709) 864-6979
Website	www.mun.ca/munpa
Your Voice	yourvoice@mun.ca
St. John's Programme Committee	
	munpaevents@mun.ca
Grenfell MUNPA Committee	Mary Sparkes
	msparkes@grenfell.mun.ca
	Lois Bateman
	lbateman@grenfell.mun.ca

EDITORIAL NOTE

Greetings to all fellow MUNPA members from **Your Voice** (YV) Editorial Team! We look forward to an exciting year with anticipation of a host of submissions in various categories from you, our readers. Let's truly make this a joint venture and get some energy going for our newsletter.

We are most grateful to those who agreed to write for our first issue this year. Have a read and see if these stories spark any memories or comments you'd like to share! Also, let us know if you have suggestions for new topics you would like YV to cover. Now, let your thoughts jump over the rocks and out to sea to find wonderful memories that can be shared through **Your Voice**!

Bernadette Power, Co-editor

Ann Ryan, Co-editor

Mark Graesser, Layout

Brian Power, Website Manager



MUNPA Activity Groups – Fall 2019

Most of the St. John's MUNPA groups have launched their fall season. New members are always welcome, including spouses/partners of MUNPA members. Each group runs its own member list. New members should email a group contact person to confirm their first attendance. For the latest detailed information about each of our groups, including contact names and meeting locations, see our website: http://www.mun.ca/munpa/activities/st_johns.

If you have an idea for a group that's not listed here, contact us at munpaevents@mun.ca and we would be happy to chat about it.

Bowling Group

- Meets monthly, third Tuesday, noon
- A non-competitive game at Holiday Lanes. Monthly signup is required to ensure enough lanes are booked.

Craft Group

- Meets weekly, Thursdays, 10:00am
- Members bring individual projects to most meetings, but on occasion group projects are undertaken. Members share their expertise in various areas so there are opportunities to learn new skills at any time.

Games Group

- Meets monthly, fourth Wednesday, 1:30pm
- A group for people who enjoy socializing over a fun board or card game.

Health and Aging Group

- Meets monthly, third Wednesday, 10:00am
- This is a discussion group, that on occasion draws on external resource persons for presentations. Past topics include dealing with doctors, memory, vision and hearing loss.

Music Group

- Starts Wednesday, October 2
- Meets weekly, Wednesdays, 1:00pm
- A group for new and experienced musicians. Members get together to jam and play some tunes.

Memoir Group

- Meets monthly, first Monday, noon, unless delayed by a Monday holiday
- The Group draws together MUNPA members to share their memories through readings, from their childhood up to last week. Members share their non-critical observations, often through memories that the reading has triggered. Bring your own lunch; tea and coffee are provided.

Outing Club

- Meets biweekly, Tuesdays, 2:00pm
- Next meeting October 8.
- The group plans walks, short hikes, and when weather allows, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.

Shutterbug Club

- Meets biweekly, normally Fridays at 2:00pm. Further fall dates are TBA
- MUNPA's photography group, open to any skill level. Occasional outings are planned to avail of photo opportunities.

Woodcarving Group

- Meets biweekly, Thursdays, 1:00pm
- A group for any skill level. Participants learn the skills of relief, figure, and driftwood carving. Starting tools are provided on loan.



St. John's Christmas Party

Thursday, December 5, 2019
Bally Haly Golf Club



Corner Brook Christmas Dinner

Thursday November 21, 2019
Cross-Country Ski Club

Activities

Upcoming events in St. John's

For all of our events, pre-registration at munpaevents@mun.ca is required. You can reply to our group events email and it will come directly MUNPA and not the full list.

Downtown St. John's Architecture

NLAA Walking Tour
Sunday, October 6, 2019
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

We asked the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Architects about having a tour of downtown architecture for our members. We were advised that a public event was already planned and our members were welcome to join in.

Meeting point - Georgestown Café, 73 Hayward Avenue.

Details are on the NLAA [website](#).

You do not need to register with MUNPA for this event.



Tour of Government House

Tuesday, October 22
2:30 - 3:30pm
Tour guide Dianne O' Mara.



MUN Maritime History Archive

Talk and Tour
Thursday, November 14
2:00 - 4:00pm

"Shipping and Trade in Newfoundland during the First World War" by Dr. Mike O'Brien, followed by tour with David Bradley, archivist.

Zipper Merges and Roundabouts

Defensive Driving Session
Wednesday, November 27
1:00 - 3:00pm

Instructed by Jim Brazil, Safety Services NL. The focus will be mainly on those two topics, so attendees at prior MUNPA sessions should not notice too much repetition.



Make a Christmas Centerpiece

Murray's Garden Centre
Thursday, December 12
3:30 - 5:30pm
DEADLINE to register is December 1

Cost: \$55 plus HST for each participant

Murray's will supply all the materials needed, but you are asked if possible to bring gardening gloves and pruners/secateurs.
In the works . . .



Emergency Preparedness session

No details as yet but we have contacted Red Cross for possible offerings.

Always check our [website](#) for further details about each event, including site information and parking. Some events have space limitations. Don't forget, you must register in advance if you wish to attend any of the above offerings: munpaevents@mun.ca

- St. John's Programme Committee

Six MUNPA Members Receive Sovereign's Medal for Volunteer Work on East Coast Trail



Front row, L to R: Pat Ryan, Ed Hayden, Howard Foote, Lt. Gov. Judy Foote, Randy Murphy, **Mark Graesser (Political Science)**. Back row: Peter Gard, **Pat Dabinett (Biology)**, Elke Dettmer, **Robby Hicks (Earth Sciences)**, **Gene Herzberg (Biochemistry)**, **Adrian Tanner (Anthropology)**, **Alan Stein (Chemistry)**, Barry MacKay, Bill Collins.

photo/Alick Tsui

Six MUNPA members, identified in the caption above, were awarded the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers at a ceremony in the Government House Garden on August 21. The medals were presented by Lt. Gov. Judy Foote on behalf of the Governor General of Canada.

A total of thirteen awards were given for outstanding volunteer work on behalf of the East Coast Trail. The Trail is marking the 25th anniversary of its founding this year. These volunteers were all involved in pioneering work on the trail, and many continue to serve

the trail organization in various capacities, ranging from wilderness route finding and trail maintenance to hike leading and governance roles.

The Sovereign's Medal honours volunteers who have made a significant and sustained contribution to their community, either in Canada or abroad. The awards to the East Coast Trail Association volunteers were the largest number of recipients for one group or organization in the history of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Family Coverage and Life Changes

By Glen Roberts

As a retiree of Memorial University, you may have opted to continue your group insurance benefits into retirement. Generally speaking, employees who have contributed to a retirement savings arrangement sponsored by the University may continue their health, travel health, dental and basic life insurance benefits into retirement, provided they meet certain conditions. These include immediate retirement following the end of employment and the maintenance of coverage under a provincial health care program in Canada (eg. MCP in Newfoundland and Labrador). The University's Employee Assistance Plan is also available to retirees and their spouses and dependent children. Here are some things to keep in mind.

Health and Dental Plans

Upon retirement, employees may continue to provide coverage for their spouses or partners, whether they be legally married or in a common-law relationship. An election to continue spousal coverage is usually made at the time of retirement, but a spouse can also be added after retirement. Normally, an application to add a spouse to the health and travel health plans is required when the spouse was not previously covered and the application would be subject to medical underwriting.

In the case of certain life events, however, coverage can be automatic. A spouse may be added immediately if application is made to do so within 45 days following either i) marriage or ii) 12 months of continuous co-habitation in a common-law relationship. A spouse may also be added immediately within 45 days of having lost their own employer provided health plan, subject to confirmation of termination of the former coverage. With respect to the dental plan, coverage for a spouse is automatic upon application, but, it is limited to a maximum of \$100 reimbursement in the first year.

In addition, retirees who become non-residents and had health and dental coverage prior to doing so, may have their benefits automatically re-instated upon return to Canada if application is made within 45 days of resumption of coverage under a provincial health care program.

Basic Life Insurance

As a retiree, you may continue your basic term life insurance coverage and it will be in force up to the date on which you turn 72. On retirement, basic life coverage converts to 1 x your annual pension (minimum of \$70,000 coverage) up to age 65 at which point coverage reduces to a flat \$7,000. At age 72, basic life coverage under Memorial's plan will end.

A conversion option is available to convert the reduction of coverage to a private plan upon application to Manulife Financial. Conversion rates tend to be rather expensive, however, as coverage is provided without the need for evidence of insurability.

It is important to ensure that you name a beneficiary for your life insurance, otherwise, the beneficiary will default to your estate. With respect to beneficiary designation, you may name your estate or any person or organization to receive the life insurance proceeds.

Pension

The Memorial University Pension Plan provides ongoing benefits to a retiree's principal beneficiary equal to 60% of the pension the retiree was receiving at the date of death. It is important to remember that beneficiaries cannot be named under the pension plan as they can for life insurance

Continued on next page

Always looking back

By Alice Collins

Faculty of Education

When I retired, my friend said “When I get up in the morning, I have nothing to do. By the time I go to bed, I only have half of it done.” Another said, “You’ll never look back!”

The first is true. Have I taken on too much? Duplicate bridge which includes study, lessons, playing 3-4 times a week, and recently full week tournaments in Ottawa and Moncton. More bridge to come.

Add to that five days of golf in summer (weather permitting), two days of curling in winter (despite the weather), and a book club that gets side tracked with talk of grandchildren and more precious grandchildren. I don’t discuss recipes and those of you who know me know why! Btw, there’s still no equal for Ian McEwan, so I’m still a tad intransigent!

To the second friend, I say “you’re dead wrong”.

I’m an alumna and a Memorial retiree. Every day at Memorial was exhilarating and I relish the memories which I happily revisit. In his book, *As Near to Heaven by Sea*, Kevin Major reminds us that the most important post Confederation institution was Memorial University.

From every part of this Province students flocked to MUN and returned to their communities transforming the educational system. Memorial boldly expanded its degree offerings in multiple disciplines and at all levels. Its graduates had profound social, cultural, economic and political impact on this province and beyond.

To have been part of that is humbling and moving. I’m happy to belong to the “Always looking back” club.

Then and now . . .

What were you doing before you retired?

What are you doing now?

I used to negotiate labour contracts and resolve grievances. Now I am a facilitator in a cardiac rehabilitation program.

Jack Strawbridge

More submissions welcome!

Your Voice readers would also like to know...

Where do you call home now?

What are your favourite memories of living in NL?

What book has had an impact on you?

What activities do you enjoy?

What music are you listening to?

What movies would you recommend?

Where have you travelled lately?

Who has memories of the beginnings of MUNPA?

Benefits, continued

or other financial assets. By legislation, the principal beneficiary is defined to be either a legally married spouse or a cohabiting partner. A principal beneficiary who is receiving a pension from the Plan and who was previously covered as a dependent under the health and dental plans is eligible to continue this insurance with single coverage.

For more information on retiree group insurance benefits, please visit: <https://www.mun.ca/hr/retirees/notices.php>

Indigenous Education

by Evan Simpson



Evan Simpson, Bernadette Power, and Alice Collins Nain, 2002

After my (first) retirement back in 2005 I had the stimulating task of chairing a presidential task force on aboriginal affairs. The experience gave me a continuing interest in what Memorial's academic strengths have to offer the province's growing indigenous population.

For example, during Convocation this spring I had the pleasure of attending graduation celebrations for almost a dozen students in a special Inuit Bachelor of Education program sponsored by the Nunatsiavut government. The graduating class represents one contribution of our Faculty of Education to a new generation of Inuit teachers who will be part of their school system in Labrador.

This year's celebrations evoked fond memories of an earlier event. In 2002 during my five-year term as Vice-President (Academic), I had the opportunity of joining then dean, Alice Collins, and her Coordinator of Aboriginal Education programs, Bernadette Power, in Nain for the awarding of diplomas in Native and Northern

Education to graduates of the Teacher Education Program in Labrador (TEPL). I was impressed by their strong sense of community, the beauty of the town, and harbor ice in June as well as the drama of the trip in a tiny plane. (Gravel runways were new to me, as was being taken to the airport in the back of a pickup truck.) I still treasure a picture of Alice, Bernadette and me on the steps of the local Moravian church and a written note from George Hamilton IV, who was performing there that evening.

My only regret is that these were only temporary adventures. TEPL no longer exists and the B. Ed. Program I mentioned was limited to a single cohort. Both the Labrador Inuit and Innu could benefit from having more indigenous programs and their own teachers, but budgetary cutbacks make staffing new classes unlikely. I hope that in future MUN's commitment to outreach will convince the university to continue its experiments in progressive programming.

Magazines

by Mark Graesser

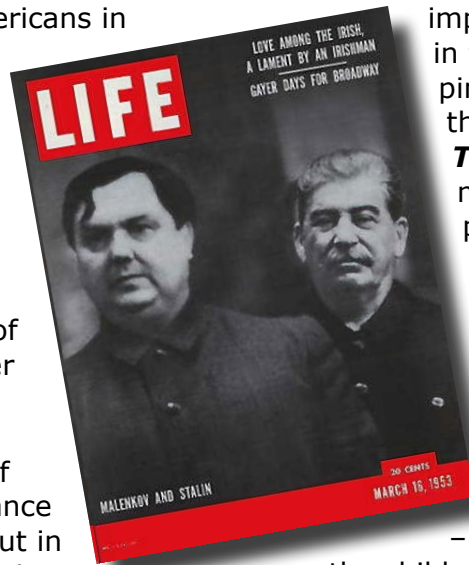
Last year or so, I was given pause while watching a couple of movies. One was a documentary on the Battle of Chosen Reservoir, a grim episode in the Korean War. In the early stages of that conflict, American Marines operating under auspices of the UN had imprudently charged north virtually to the Chinese border. The Red Chinese and North Koreans retaliated in great numbers, and surrounded the hapless Americans in bitter winter conditions. The breakout and retreat was an epic episode of survival. This happened in 1950, when I was seven years old. What struck me as I watched the events re-created on film was a sense of déjà vu. I remembered this battle, particularly the imagery of freezing, shocked Marines, rather well.

The other film was "The Death of Stalin," a satirical take on the dance of musical chairs which played out in Moscow, 1953, when I was ten. The film portrays the cast of conniving characters who manoeuvred to emerge standing, and not shot in the back of the head, in the wake of the Great Stalin's demise. Again, to me this was a rather familiar gallery of rogues – Molotov, Malenkov, Khrushchev, and nastiest of all, Beria, head of the KGV.

So, how could I have had this sense of personal familiarity with these historical events, considering that I lived at the time in a tiny village in the mountains of Montana? There was no television; the only newspaper was a weekly gossip sheet from the county seat 50 miles away. There was one radio station, and my parents seemed to be avid followers of the network news broadcasts. But my recollections of these events are quite visual: blackened, gangrenous fingers and toes, and haunted looks on the faces of the surviving soldiers; the weekly shifting tableau of Soviet supremos

lined up on the parapet of the Kremlin, always subject to being airbrushed out of existence.

The answer, I think – my window to the wider world – was magazines. My parents, were faithful subscribers to numerous magazines, many of which arrived weekly at our remote outpost. For purposes of the events just described, I'm sure the most important of these was **Life**, which in the 1940's and 50's stood at the pinnacle of photo journalism. Then there was **Newsweek** (never **Time**). It seems to me that I and my brother, three years older, poured through these journals as soon as they arrived, discussing the images, but not neglecting the text.



Beyond the "current events" realm were **The Saturday Evening Post**, **The Ladies Home Journal** (no kidding – my mother would discuss with us the child rearing advice offered by that esteemed organ!), and **The Farm Journal**. (Although my father was a government forest ranger, our heritage and circumstances were deeply rural.)

My brother and I subscribed to **Popular Mechanics**, a monthly semi-technical digest of the fascinating world of automobiles, airplanes, and ships far beyond our direct experience. For some reason, this magazine also carried advertisements from dealers in affordable, collectable stamps, fostering another window to the world. From my nascent collection, I recall being particularly fascinated by some enormous stamps from Azerbaijan featuring images of oil wells.

In short, who needed television, or school, for that matter, to become a well informed resident of the globe in the golden age of magazines?

Shutterbug Gallery

Sometimes photographers “get lucky” and find themselves in the right place at the right time for a great shot. More often, some planning and perseverance is required. This year, when the Canada Day fireworks were ignited near Quidi Vidi Lake two days late, Mike Wilkshire and Grant Gardner had positioned themselves in pre-determined locations on the White Hills to capture the dramatic images displayed here.



/Mike Wilkshire



/Mike Wilkshire



/Grant Gardner



/Grant Gardner