



Northern Flicker /Gene Herzberg

# Your Voice

MUN Pensioners' Association (MUNPA) Newsletter • Vol. 19, No. 4, October 2021  
Editor: Bernadette Power • Design and layout: Mark Graesser

## From the Editor

*Welcome back to Your Voice for another year of engagement with our MUNPA members. We are still battling COVID which may remain a worldwide challenge for some time. Despite that, I think we are doing our best to keep functioning with ed safety precautions.*

*I wish to acknowledge Canada's first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation held on September 30, 2021 It was proposed by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as one of its 94 Calls to Action! This annual commemoration is held to honour the children who died while attending residential schools and the survivors, families and communities still affected by the legacy of the residential school system. I hope we all make it a point to reach out to Indigenous people and learn about the history and culture of this diverse population in our province. MUNPA's President mentions holding a minute of silence at the MUNPA event on September 30. Our members were invited to reflect on how we might collectively and individually contribute to the reconciliation process. Please consider what events we may hold to engage more with Indigenous people and learn from them directly about their history and culture. Let's all be part of the solution.*



*I invite you now to read the stories in this October edition of Your Voice. Marilyn tells us about her first jobs in academia and how she came to Memorial, Roberta tells the tale of her babysitting days... glad she didn't babysit for me, and, Lisa Browne, Vice-President (Advancement and External Relations) introduces herself to MUNPA members and asks for thoughts on celebrating Memorial's 100th anniversary.*

*Thanks to all for your contributions and I look forward to many more to come!*

**Bernadette**

### Inside this issue

<b>President's Message</b> . . . . .	<b>2</b>
<b>Lisa Browne's Memorial Journey</b> . . . . .	<b>3</b>
<b>My First (real) Job</b> . . . . .	<b>4</b>
<b>Memorial in Motion</b> . . . . .	<b>5</b>
<b>Babysitting</b> . . . . .	<b>6</b>
<b>Fall gatherings</b> . . . . .	<b>7-8</b>

## President's Message

Welcome to another year of activities by the Memorial University Pensioners' Association. MUNPA works year-round to represent the interests of MUN retirees and has an active programme committee planning events of interest from September through June, when we hold our AGM. Some of our interest groups have already started up, and we held our first social event of the current year, a BBQ and Social at Murray's Pond attended by about 100 of our members on September 30. It was wonderful to see so many people in person, albeit masked and doing their best to socially distance when not eating or drinking. There was a great feeling in the room and a constant buzz of conversation. That buzz was interrupted by a more solemn note. The date of our BBQ was also the first National Day of Truth and Reconciliation, and we held a minute of silence to reflect on the historic and current injustices faced by indigenous peoples and on how we might collectively and individually contribute to the reconciliation process. The Board and program committee will be looking at ways in which MUNPA can continue to engage its members in indigenous issues.

We are still, of course, working under COVID protocols. While vaccinations have allowed us to return closer to normal, especially with our smaller interest groups, we will still rely on virtual meetings for many events. One plus from that reliance is that those events are then accessible to members who would not be able to attend in person. We are also beginning to hear more about virtual presentations by retiree

associations of other universities and will look at ways to make those more available to our members.

Unfortunately, over the summer Chris Dennis, who was elected President of MUNPA at our AGM in June, had to step down from that position for personal reasons. As per our By-Laws, I then assumed the role of President. Fortunately for me (and you), it is a role I have held before, so the learning curve isn't as steep as might otherwise have been the case. Even more fortunately, your Board of Directors and those other volunteers who do so much to help with MUNPA's activities are committed and dedicated to working on your behalf, so the change in Presidency should be pretty much transparent. I am sorry, however, that Chris will not have the opportunity of fulfilling his term; I was looking forward to working with him.

All retirees of the university are members of MUNPA; I and the Board look forward to working on your behalf in the coming year. If you are a new retiree (or an old hand, for that matter) you can keep track of our activities, and of our various interest groups, via our web site ([www.mun.ca/munpa/](http://www.mun.ca/munpa/)) and this newsletter. I also invite you to contact us with program ideas, concerns, or comments at any time via [munpa@mun.ca](mailto:munpa@mun.ca).

**Grant Gardner**

### MUNPA Contact Information

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

### Nominations for MUNPA's 2021 Tribute Awards

Each year MUNPA awards up to three Tribute Awards to recognize the ongoing contributions that Memorial retirees make to the university or the community. Nominations for this year's Tribute Awards have been extended. You can find criteria for eligibility and selection and nomination forms on the MUNPA website at [www.mun.ca/munpa/about/tribute\\_awards/](http://www.mun.ca/munpa/about/tribute_awards/). Please consider submitting a worthy nominee for this Award. The time you will use to write up a submission is time well spent!

# My Journey through Memorial University

Lisa Browne

On August 9, I left my house and walked to the Arts and Administration building to start my new role as the first Vice-President, Advancement and External Relations, at Memorial University. It is an incredible privilege to be in this position. While I was preparing for the interview process, I reflected on my grandfather as a member of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment, and the responsibility that Memorial has to honour the sacrifices of those who fought in wars on our behalf and to make them proud of the impact that we have on the leaders of tomorrow and the province as a whole. To be in a leadership role at this institution is not a role that I will take lightly. I recall, in fact, as the Operations Manager of Memorial's Opportunity Fund campaign back in the late '90s thinking that the university needed a VP of Advancement type of position and that it was a position I would love to have.

Since then I have worked in the arts in Toronto, health care in both Clarenville and St. John's, with my last role as CEO of Stella's Circle in St. John's.

This new VP role has leadership responsibility for marketing and communications, development and public engagement. There is a lot on the agenda, not the least of which is the upcoming 100th anniversary of the university. I welcome your thoughts and ideas of how to mark the establishment of our university. MUNPA has contributed a great deal as employees and retirees, and I'm sure you will have lots of ideas to share.

As part of my research for the position, I was inspired by our President's comments around a university reflecting the world we want, versus the world we have. I was also struck by the words of the Rt. Honourable Roy Thomson at his installation address as Chancellor when he said, "We live in a world of mighty doubt and mighty hope." Those words from 1961 are as true today as they were then. I'm looking forward to meeting the challenge. No doubt throughout your careers, you have witnessed many changes and many reasons for both despair and hope. I'm grateful for your past and continued contributions to the university and want to build on



**Lisa Browne, first day as a Memorial student, 1987, and first day as a Memorial V.P. 2021**

them. I note that I have had many interactions with many of you, as colleagues or as a student. I appreciate the notes of support many of you have sent to me.

My best wishes to you as we launch forth into another year, bound by our journey through Memorial University.

---

Lisa Browne, BA '91, MBA '93, is VP (Advancement and External Relations) and can be reached at [lisa.browne@mun.ca](mailto:lisa.browne@mun.ca).



---

# ***My First (real) Job***

***Marilyn Porter***

I had a newly minted Ph.D. and I needed a proper job. I applied to Manchester University Sociology Dept for a one-year position, and, to my surprise, was asked for an interview. When I arrived, I was immediately taken for lunch at the Faculty Club. There were three faculty members, all terrifyingly well known in Sociological specialties... I had no idea about. Fortunately it didn't matter as the conversation revolved around topics equally unknown to me – like a passionate debate about which was the better bagel shop in Montreal – St Viateur or the Fairmount Bakery. I was lost in the bagel debate, but they liked my Ph.D. Thesis. Anyway, they needed more women, so I was hired on the spot.

When I got there, I rapidly discovered that the Sociology Department was divided into distinct “tribes”, closely aligned to the three full Professors. These three – Bryan Roberts, Peter Worsley and Teodor Shanin – did no actual teaching but roamed around the world, speaking at conferences, and collecting potential Graduate students that they left the rest of us to sort out how to teach them.

Back to the “tribes”. Peter Worsley was the best known of the three professors and had several text books to his name and a somewhat traditional approach to Sociology. My favourite memory of him was herding a bunch of women en route to Greenham Common thru the men's toilets in a motorway gas stop. He was also instrumental in getting me a one year position at Memorial some years later. Bryan Roberts did Community Sociology and left for University of Texas, where he is now Emeritus. Teodor Shanin specialized in the Russian peasantry and was the resident Marxist. I was rapidly adopted into his “tribe” and left in no doubt about his expectations that I would deliver a proper Marxist analysis to my first year students – 200 of them – mostly in the Accountancy program. At my interview they had quizzed me about my ability to face up to all those young men in ties with conservative views, but I had said my father was an accountant and I knew the type and they weren't going to faze me. They didn't either

and seemed quite open to my mad ideas about socialism and equality.

Teodor Shanin was a Russian Jew and had spent time in the Russian army. He had gone into Academia because his Jewish mother wouldn't let him do “manual” labour. He had a shaved, bullet head and a powerful body. He was also fierce with the vodka of which he had many bottles. He insisted on drinking it Russian style: small glasses, neat, in one gulp, accompanied by various exotic gherkins and other savoury nibbles. We will draw a veil over how I managed to get home after one of those evenings.

There were three feminists in the Department when I joined – Liz Stanley who was pioneering Lesbian theories (and practice) of feminism; Alison Kelly, who taught statistics and was conventionally “Liberal” and me, the token Marxist. We taught the first Feminism in Sociology course together, where we disagreed openly and energetically. It may have confused the students, but we had a great time disagreeing and challenging each other. There were also several men in the Department who were supportive of feminist ideas – and practice. I remember stopping in shock to find a note on David Morgan's door to the effect that he was working from home because one of his children was ill and he could be reached by phone. In those days no woman would have dared to acknowledge that they even had children, let alone that they might have had to put them ahead of their work duties.

Regular and formal exams were an important part of the process of getting a degree in those days. There were formal exams at the end of Year 1 – to establish whether the student could proceed, and much more formidable ones at the end of Year 3 to establish the grade of degree awarded (1<sup>st</sup>, 2.1, 2.2. pass and fail. They were very narrow bands – pass was 50% and 1<sup>st</sup> was 65% and over. I forget the exact cut off points for 2.1 and 2.2, though it was where most student grades fell. The exam procedure was formal – classroom desks, spaced in large 19<sup>th</sup> century halls, no prompt aids, exam questions

*Continued next page*

printed on a single sheet of paper, three hours in silence. Some students thrived on this atmosphere; some broke down altogether.

Then came the marking, around which there were a host of rules, both formal and informal. All papers had to be double marked by the course instructor and by another faculty member selected at random and the timeline was very short – so long days and short nights and junk food for a few weeks. Among the informal rules were the ones agreed by co-markers around the order in which papers were marked – whether you get stricter or more lax as the process grinds on. Some people used different survival tactics. Some of us drank wine; David Morgan stopped once an hour for 15 minutes to play a Chopin Interlude.

When all the papers were graded the graders met to “agree the marks”. Surprisingly often examiners from very different areas of discipline would agree on the mark. If they disagreed, then the papers went to the external examiner. Finally, we had a full faculty meeting to discuss and agree all the marks and which final “class” the student was awarded. Sometimes there were full throated arguments about substantive or theoretical points. These examiners’ meetings were often the only time when we got an idea of what our colleagues were teaching - and we had very varied and sometimes diametrically opposite views of a particular social issue or theoretical perspective.

I learned an enormous amount during my time at Manchester and remain grateful for all they did – including finding me my first appointment at Memorial. But especially for introducing and training me in a much wider understanding of Sociology as both a discipline and a way of looking at the world – as well as launching me into Women’s Studies.

Postscript: Teodar Shanin and Peter Worsely have both died. Bryan Roberts is Emeritus at University of Texas at Austin.



East Coast Trail

/M. Graesser

## ***Memorial In Motion blazes the trail again***

The 2021 East Coast Trail Fundraiser fell short of its \$100,000 goal, getting only 2/3 of the way there. However, Memorial in Motion did its part, raising \$12,880 through 193 sponsors — \$2,500 more than last year. Six of the nine members raised more than \$1,000 each. I reached a personal best but finished third overall to a young man who reports having hiked the whole trail barefoot and to a trail activist who made a last-minute sprint.

The trail only exists thanks to volunteer activists. It is a monument to the individuals who have built and sustained what has become an international attraction for Newfoundland. Each year more than 150 people do trail maintenance, guide hikes and seek support from the communities the ECT runs through. Their efforts sustain a resource that is enjoyed by approximately 100,000 users every year.

Thank you to all who helped me and Memorial in Motion make a useful contribution to this enterprise.

**Evan Simpson**

---

# Babysitting

Roberta Buchanan

As a student, babysitting was a handy way to earn some much-needed money. At Keele, all students were required to be resident on campus, and houses were provided for the faculty, as well, so one didn't have far to go. I had no experience of babysitting, and absolutely no knowledge of babies, but my fellow-students assured me it was very easy. The children would be in bed asleep by the time you arrived. A bonus was that the parents were expected to leave a snack of some kind, a sandwich, cake or biscuits. And you could make yourself some tea or coffee. All you had to do was bring your books and spend the time studying until they came back and paid you your money. Sometimes they would give you a ride back to your residence, but the campus was quite small so no problem to walk back.

My first experience was a bit of a shock. The parents were a young Nigerian couple who were on a visit to Keele and were going out to dinner with one of the professors. The mother warned me that the baby had had some tummy trouble, and I would have to change his nappy. She showed me the baby's cot and all the nappy-changing paraphernalia. He was a plump, smiley sort of baby, not the whiny sort. When the baby had been "put down" [not the same connotations as pet animals] which meant that he was asleep in his cot, the parents left and I settled down to Plato's Republic, the banishment of poets as liars. After a few hours, I heard the baby crying so I issued forth to change the nappy. My only knowledge of babies was from the kind of baby ads you see in magazines, always a smiley baby in its clean nappy. I knew that you must be careful not to stick the two safety-pins into it. What was my horror when I unpinned the nappy and discovered it was totally soiled with diarrhea. I thought babies only peed, that they didn't do Number 2. What a mess! And I was the one who had to clean it up, put the soiled diaper into the covered pail provided for it, and put the clean nappy on, being careful with the safety-pins. Luckily he went back to sleep, and I poured myself a glass of my host's sherry to calm my nerves.

Looking back at it, I'm amazed that I was such a well-educated young woman, but knew nothing about babies. I knew how to translate Horace and Virgil from Latin to English; I had an acquaintance with geometry and algebra; I could parse a sentence and write a precis; but babies – nothing, despite that we were always being told that the true glory of womanhood was to become a mother. Nowadays I think teachers take a real, living baby into the classroom to teach child development. We only had a diagram of the female reproductive organs and a diagram of the male reproductive organs. That was it. We knew the plumbing, as it were, but not the end result: the baby.

After that I fought shy of babies, but luckily there were plenty of older children on campus, past the nappy stage. I was asked by my Moral Tutor, Dr Leech, to babysit his daughter while they went to a concert on campus. This was their treasured only child, and it was rare for the doting parents to have a night out to themselves. Little Amanda had a little cold and had been fussing; however, she was "put down" when I arrived and fast asleep upstairs. In case of any trouble I was to call him immediately, here was the phone number. I was deep into *Antony and Cleopatra* when I heard little Amanda coughing and then crying. Cripes! I had better go up and check on her. Perhaps say a few soothing words and offer her a drink of water. I opened her door cautiously. As soon as she saw me her crying escalated in volume. "Mummy and Daddy will be home soon," I said nervously and took a step towards her. At that she started screaming and went red in the face. I thought she was going to have a fit. I hastily retreated downstairs and dialed the number. The crying upstairs was not abating. Should I go upstairs again? The sight of me seemed to set her off. I was totally unnerved. Luckily Dr Leech soon rushed in, went upstairs and the racket upstairs gradually calmed down, and little Amanda was "put down" again. He had given her some cough medicine and half a child's aspirin. Some friends were bringing his

*Continued next page*



---

*Babysitting, continued*

wife home at the end of the concert. He paid me my ill-earned money and I went back to the residence.

I did have a few gigs after that. The worst was looking after two children while their parents went away for a few days. They were a boy and girl, about 6 and 7, and at school all day, and I only had to see they had their dinner at night and put them to bed, then see that they got breakfast in the morning. I thought them rather odd children, but perhaps all children are rather odd. The boy smeared dirt on the bathroom doorposts. Luckily, a cleaning woman came every day and cleaned everything up and did all the cooking. I was very well paid.

My ideal gig was at a Professor's house [head of department; given bigger houses detached rather than semi-detached]. They were an older couple, and their children were older and put themselves to bed upstairs. Her main concern was the dog, who, she explained, was in heat

and must not be let out. She – the dog – had her own couch covered with a white sheet on account of her bleeding. She was a very large dog, a yellow Labrador, but, luckily, of a placid nature. Some large dogs are snappy once their owners are out of the way. I tucked into a very large plate of sandwiches and the tea provided. And the dog was not one of those who when they see you eating want a piece of the action. She just dozed peacefully on her white sheet.

Apart from the last one, my babysitting experiences were not a success. I'm not one of those who drool over babies. And I don't really like children. I never know what to say to them. Whereas I can converse very well with dogs and cats, on a simple level. Perhaps if I had ever had children of my own, I would see them in a different light. I really only like them when they get to 16 and 17 – when they come to university in fact – when they start to have their own ideas about things. Babysitting? Not for me.

---

## ***The Strawberry Hill Gang***



**On Thursday, September 16, approximately 30 MUNPA members gathered for a lunchtime BBQ at Strawberry Hill in Little Rapids. This was the first time that West Coast members were able to come together for a meal in about 18 months! The food was good, but the conversation and camaraderie were even better! People were really happy to be able to get together again!**



---

## ***The Murray's Pond Mob***

**About 100 members turned out for an afternoon social and BBQ at the Murray's Pond Fishing Club on September 30. In addition to the conviviality, we marked the first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation with a pause and silent reflection.**

