



ANNUAL REPORT (2022-23)

The Board of the McGill University Retiree Association (MURA) is pleased to submit this annual report to the members of our association. The report covers the period since the last AGM from June 2022 to June 2023.

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1. Nominating Committee Report

As per the MURA bylaws, a Nominating Committee was formed in Fall 2022 by the Past-President, Ginette Lamontagne, to provide a list of nominees for three vacancies on the MURA Board - Robert Huot (SEU), Debbie Mercier (MUNSASA), and Eduardo Pereira (MUNACA). The fourth potential vacancy, Saul Ticktin, agreed to serve for a second three-year term.

The committee consisted of Kate Maguire (Chair), Leo Kerklaan, Trevor Garland, Special Advisor, John Gradwell, and Chuck Adler. The nominees chosen by the Committee were Mercedes Delacroix (MUNASA), Richard London (MUNASA), and Carlette Walker (SEU). A letter was sent to each nominee, and they all accepted to be a candidate.

A call for nominations to the membership at large was launched on March 1st. If additional candidates were proposed by members at large by the April 1st deadline, an election would have been held. Since no nominations were submitted by the members at large, their candidacy will be acclaimed, and the new Board will be ratified at the upcoming Annual General Meeting on June 14th, 2023.

MURA-ARUM 2023-2024 Executive and Board

President	Ante L. Padjen	(2021-24)
Past-President	Ginette Lamontagne	(2021-24)
Vice-President (Internal)	Rosemary Cooke	(2022-25)
Vice-President (External)	John B. Gradwell	(2021-24)
Treasurer	Robert Stanley	(2016-19) (2019-22) (2022-25)
Directors	Mercedes Delacroix	(2023-26)
	Pat Forbes	(2021-24)
	David Kalant	(2018-21) (2021-24)
	Richard London	(2023-26)
	Pamela Miller	(2021-24)
	Lawrence Mysak	(2021-24)
	Saul Ticktin	(2020-23) (2023-26)
	Carlette Walker	(2023-26)

2. Membership Breakdown

Faculty MAUT	200	33.3%
Faculty (non-MAUT)	45	7.5%
MUNASA	141	23.5%
MUNACA	147	24.5%
SEU	13	2.2%
Other*	54	9.0%
TOTAL	600	
*Admin (non-MUNASA), Affiliated, AMUSE and AMURE		

3. Liaison with Employee Associations

Outreach

Partnership agreements between MURA and four major employee associations/unions: SEU Trades – Downtown, MAUT, MUNACA, MUNASA, ensure financial contributions to provide MURA with stable, ongoing revenues in exchange for free MURA membership for all future eligible retirees. Through its monthly Communiqués, annual Newsletter and maintenance of an up-to-date Website, MURA keeps the associations/unions' Executive/Boards informed, connected, and aware of the benefits of MURA membership in retirement. With its Annual Report, MURA engages with these employee groups to apprise them of its achievements and the broad range of Events and Activities, Information Sessions, Speaker Presentations, Conferences, etc. that their retirees enjoy. By maintaining continuous contact with these groups, a seamless transition from active employment to active participation in MURA in retirement is facilitated.

Pre-Retirement Sessions

The key to successful retirement is early preparation. In addition to the retirement sessions offered by HR, in collaboration with MUNASA, MUNACA and SEU – Trades (Downtown), Pre-Retirement Sessions (PRS) are offered to active McGill employees who are near retirement or to those who want to plan-ahead that focus on the socio/psychological aspects of retirement with a component on finances. A session was held for MUNASA on October 20, 2022, and arrangements are being made for MUNACA, and SEU for 2023/2024.

4. Events

With the Pandemic winding down, we were able to return to in person events. All information about MURA events is located on the Events page of our website: www.mcgill.ca/mura-arum

Social Events

Walking Tours

MURA offers guided walking tours each spring and fall of neighbourhoods in the Montreal area.

Spring - Wednesday, June 8, 2022 - Seventeen members attended a tour of the Quartier des spectacles, followed by lunch at the 3 Brasseurs restaurant.

Fall - Monday, September 12, 2022 - Eighteen members enjoyed a Walking Tour of the Mile End neighbourhood, followed by a lunch at the Siboire Microbrewery on St. Laurent.

The next tours will be of the Jeanne Mance neighbourhood on June 12, and 16 with registration maximums fully attained for both tours.

Principal's Reception for New Retirees

Wednesday, May 3, 2023 - This annual event was held in the Billiard Room at the Faculty Club after a 2-year hiatus. Sixty-eight retirees for the years 2019-2022 were honoured. Ante L. Padjen, President provided information about MURA and invited new retirees to join. Other members from the MURA board were present and answered questions about MURA.

MURA Snow Day

Wednesday, March 8, 2023, McGill Morgan Arboretum

Sixteen MURA hearty souls attended MURA's first winter visit to the Morgan Arboretum that turned a winter day to a wonderful fun day. Under the guidance of Don Pavlasek, a group skied the beautiful trails. Frank Ferrie led another group on a 3K warm walk, and others snowshoed with Rosemary Cook for 3K through the forest.

Virtual Happy Hours

Wednesday, January 18, 2023 - many of the new members who joined this virtual event were delighted to connect with others.

Holiday Lunch

Thursday, December 8, 2022 - We were finally able to meet and celebrate the holidays in person. Sixty members enjoyed a gourmet meal and reconnecting with colleagues at the restaurant located at Ecole des métiers restauration et du tourisme de Montréal.

Virtual Gourmet Cooking Class

We were unable this year to hold a cooking class due to the increased cost.

MURA Reception for New Members

Tuesday, November 8, 2022, Faculty Club, Billiard Room

The energy and camaraderie were truly flowing among the 45 attendees at this reception for new members.

Trivia Nights

Professor David Harpp had organized Trivia Nights at the Faculty Club as a Centraide fundraiser for many years. Since the pandemic, Trivia Nights moved online via Zoom. The MURA team, that joined in August 2021, and appropriately called the *MURA Freebirds*, has thoroughly enjoyed these fun-packed evenings where we always learn something new. We attended sessions on October 2022, January, March and April, and May 2023, and we remained part of the top 10. We invite members to create additional teams and partake in this fun activity. Hopefully these fun nights will return to the

Faculty Club in the fall. Send us an email if you wish to join: mura-arum.association@mcgill.ca

Cultural Events

Centaur Theatre

April 2, 2023 - Sixteen members attended the matinee of the provocative play, *King Dave - An Immigrant's Story in Montreal*.

Fireside Chat with The Right Honourable David L. Johnston, Governor General 2010-2017

Friday, October 21, 2022, Le Nouvel Hotel

Over forty members had the pleasure of attending a cozy fireside chat with The Right Honourable David L. Johnston, that was arranged by Debbie Mercier in collaboration with MCLL. This was a chance to renew acquaintances with Mr. Johnson who served as Principal of McGill from 1979 to 1994, and currently serves as Chair of the Rideau Hall Foundation. Ginette Lamontagne moderated the event, and Michael C. Kiefer, McGill's first VP Advancement, engaged in a relaxed exchange with the former principal, posing questions submitted by MURA members. After the chat, Mr. Johnston stayed for a signing session of his latest book, *Trust: Twenty Ways to Build a Better Country*.

Visit to the Frida Kahlo Exhibit

Thursday, July 14, 2022 - Thirty-five members attended Frida Kahlo, The Life of an Icon exhibit at the Arsenal art contemporain Montreal followed by lunch at the Lord William Pub.

Lectures

In collaboration with the McGill Community for Lifelong Learning (MCLL), MURA offered a series of five virtual lectures on Fridays at 10 a.m. that began on February 3rd and ended on March 17th.

February 3 – Global Mental Health and the WHO's View of it.

February 10 – Can we Prevent Cognitive Decline Associated with Aging?

February 17 – Suicide and Suicidal Behaviours

February 24 – Whole Person Care, Relationship, and Iceberg Metaphor

March 17 – The Future of Medicine and Psychiatry

5. Activities

Throughout 2022 and 2023 MURA activities have gradually moved back from Zoom into in person meetings. In Summer 2022 cycling and golf groups met on their regular weekly schedules. The Downtown Book Club held its June 2022 meeting as an in-person afternoon tea and had several in person monthly meetings over the 2022-2023 year, though moved back to zoom for the winter months. The restaurant group began its monthly gatherings again in July 2022 and its visits were well attended through 2022-23. The Pickleball group began weekly meetings in Fall 2022 and continued until April 2023. It expects to resume in the Fall.

Below is a list of ongoing activities. [Please use this link for complete information about MURA activities.](#)

- Book Clubs
 - Downtown Book Club
 - Cercle de lecture (en français)
 - West Island Book Club
- Cycling Group
- Golf Group
- Pickleball
- Restaurant Group

6. Communications

MURA communicates with its members in a variety of ways, through its website, regular Communiqués, Facebook page and annual Newsletter.

Website: Launched on March 17, 2022, it is now part of the McGill Website Management System (WMS). Kate Maguire, MURA Communications Coordinator, assisted by David Brown, maintains this up-to-date bilingual website, writing text and finding creative designs while Ginette Lamontagne edits the English text and translates it into French. Events, activities, and news are featured as they occur. Once completed, a brief report is given on the highlights of the events and the number of participants. [Link to the website](#)

Communiqués: Upcoming events, activities, information sessions and other news from MURA appear in the regular Communiqués. Also included in the Communiqués are cultural, educational, and informative announcements from other sources that may be of interest to our members. These bulletins are sent to all members as well as to the leadership of our partner associations and unions, and McGill's senior administration. [Link to the current MURA's Communiqué.](#)

Facebook: 122 members have joined MURA's Facebook group. It is a forum for members to report on their experiences and offer feedback as participants in the various MURA activities. The MURA Facebook page entitled "McGill Retiree Association" is a

private-group page, that can be viewed by anyone with a Facebook account, but only members can comment and post. Members are welcome to join and post their comments and stories in English or in French. [Facebook link](#).

Newsletter: We are delighted that Debbie Mercier, former board member, will continue to edit MURA's Annual Newsletter highlights stories of members in retirement, their travels, their experiences, their engagement in the community, and their reflections on the past and the future. The newsletter also provides information on such relevant topics as seniors' discounts, financial planning etc. [Link to the MURA Newsletter](#).

Email: Through the MURA email address mura-arum.association@mcgill.ca, members can communicate with the association, ask questions, and register to confirm their attendance at events. Kate Maguire acknowledges all emails and refers them to the appropriate volunteer for a full response, if appropriate.

7. McGill Community Engagement

Part-time Employment – Collaboration with HR

Faculties and departments are often in need of expertise to fill gaps between hires, when employees are on temporary leave, or for brief project assignments. MURA is pleased to support HR by facilitating the process of finding suitable temporary replacements as it provides opportunities for retirees to contribute their skills, earn a little extra revenue, and help the institution. Kate Maguire announces these part-time positions by sending out the postings, inviting MURA members to apply.

McGill Communities Council (MCC)

Initiated in 2013 by Ken Hastings as MAUT's response to social unrest on campus, the MCC is a valuable gathering of all members of the McGill community. Represented by David Kalant, MURA is pleased to be a member of MCC, as we appreciate keeping up to date with campus issues affecting students, staff, and faculty.

We actively contribute to the monthly meetings through our participation in discussions on topics that affect the wider McGill community. Some issues in the past year are:

- Several unions and associations in contract negotiations. Some still dealing with past disputes.
- Discussions on academic freedom;
 - who really has it
 - “loyalty to employer” provision removed.
- New principal invited to meet with employee groups and MCC. No response yet.
- The Secretary General agreed with request to send out more complete info on options for whistle blowing at McGill.
- Still some issues with Workday software.

8. Wider Community Engagement

College and University Retiree Associations of Canada (CURAC)

MURA is an active member of CURAC that advocates policies to improve the welfare of seniors in matters of healthcare and financial issues across Canada. Through CURAC, virtual lectures organized by MURA are announced to their 40 member associations, representing approximately 20,000 university retirees across the country. MURA is an active participant in CURAC's activities.

We are pleased to report that the CURAC Annual Conference for 2023 was held in person in Saskatoon, May 31 - June 2, 2023. MURA sent three representatives, Ante Padjen, Kate Maguire and Rosemary Cooke. Ginette Lamontagne attended as Chair of the Conference Committee and Board Member of CURAC.

Over the three days of the conference, 11 speakers challenged us on numerous topics that ranged from changes in Higher Education, Teaching in an AI environment, Security in the computer age, Political Schisms or Rhythms and the impact to Canada, Food Development and Plant Proteins, Rare Earth Development, Small Modular Reactors, Health Services and VIDO (Vaccine and Infections Disease Organization) and the impact of immunisation. All of the presentations highlighted cutting edge research.

To mark the 20th Anniversary milestone, a special afternoon was moderated by Ginette Lamontagne on behalf of the Conference Committee. A fireside chat with the Honourable Roy Romanow former Premier of Saskatchewan and key actor on the Canadian scene, gave participants a backstage view on politics at the provincial and federal levels. A 7-minute video was shown of the founding president, Peter H. Russell, who spoke of the aspirational beginnings of CURAC. Prof. Ron Cospser highlighted CURAC's accomplishments from its founding congress at the University of Dalhousie to present days. This was followed by a Brainstorming Session on CURAC's priorities for the next decade. MURA attendees moderated five group discussions. The brainstorming reports will be shared with member associations across Canada. Complete information about the conference is contained in the report prepared by MURA attendees sent to members for the AGM.

9. Perspectives for the Future

As we come out of the pandemic and move more freely into a more normal environment MURA is looking forward to greater in-person participation and engagement with our members and our community.

10. Conclusion

In closing, we are pleased to conclude that MURA has continued, unabated, its volunteer commitments to retired McGill employees. MURA's Executive, Board, and activity chairs ensure that McGill retirees remain active, engaged, healthy, and connected to their former colleagues and to the stellar institution where we all worked. MURA members are proud to have contributed to McGill's success over the course of our careers.

THANK YOU for your support of an intellectually, physically, and socially enriched phase of our lives. We look forward to being able to welcome McGill employees from all employee groups - SEU Trades (Downtown), MAUT, MUNACA, and MUNASA - as they move from active employment into retirement and become future MURA members.

*MURA/ARUM Board of Directors
June 14, 2023*