



ROMU *news*

Issue 1

January 2016

Message from Leadership Group

A Brief History of ROMU

September 2014 – We started trying to find some MacEwan retirees who would work to establish a MacEwan retiree group. After some effort, we had a list of 6 retirees (3 staff and 3 faculty members) who agreed to meet to discuss starting a group. This initial meeting of the Seed group took place on November 27, 2014. At this initial meeting, we discussed and tentatively agreed to a broad statement of the goals, the intended structure, and the types of specific events and/or services we should consider.

January 20, 2015 – Our Seed members met with Margo Baptista (the University Secretary, Board Office) who had the only database of the retirees of MacEwan. Thanks for Margo for her assistance and support.

January 20, 2015 – Learn of the existence of President's Group to develop better links with retirees

February 12, 2015 – Jointly the Seed Group and the Board Secretary construct a policy for the University to engage with retirees. The policy is supported by the Board of Governors.

May 28, 2015 – The Board of Governors approves the name "Retirees of MacEwan University" (ROMU).

June 23, 2015 – ROMU Focus workshop (with 13 members present) outlines what they envision for their organization.

November 4, 2015 – MacEwan presents a musical production and a delightful reception and buffet. Thanks to Dr. David Atkinson for his support of the group (49 retirees and 39 guests attended).

December 7, 2015 – ROMU conducts an on-line survey of all members and all other retirees of MacEwan. Thank you to Alan Vladicka for exceptional leadership with this project. This should serve us well with Program Planning for 2016-2017.

The Future for ROMU

Our Leadership Group is looking to move ahead on several key courses of action.

You will be aware of our very successful survey of ROMU members for their ideas for the direction of our efforts to serve our retirees. We have had a very high response rate (84%). We would like to thank all those members who took the time to give us their ideas. We will incorporate those ideas into our event planning for next year.

Our Program committee of Mary O'Neill and Doreen Haskell are moving forward with the 2016- 2017 Program Plan. They are, of course, looking for additional assistance to complete that task.

Another significant endeavour is the first edition of this ROMU newsletter. We expect this will be a critical source by and for members for current information. Thanks to Rick Lewis, Doreen Haskell and Pati Russell for their effort on this project.

The Leadership Group and key operational units of the University are anxiously awaiting the big system changes which will provide our members with the services that we envisioned in our initial discussions. Retirees are desirous of having access to their email address, a shared website and library privileges. This will happen.

Stay tuned in to our future.

Joe Sombach and the Leadership Group

Upcoming Events

Winter Coffee Social, February 3, 2016
10:30-12:30, 11350 104 Avenue
Lounge Room in The Abbey Condominium Complex
RSVP by January 22 (details in email invitation)

Armchair Travel Presentation
Tentatively set for late May/early June

ROMU Member Profiles

Sharon Schnell

I was at MacEwan for 38 years. My last position was the Manager (Coordinator) of Administration in the School of Business. I transferred to the Business Division about 1984 and remained with the School of Business until retirement in the summer of 2009.

I had many opportunities at MacEwan for learning and taking on new responsibilities. The highlight for me was receiving the MacEwan Medallion in 1992.

After retirement, I think it takes about a year to find one's new rhythm. The transition was easier when I became involved with groups and volunteering. The best part of retirement is the freedom to design your own schedule. This year I am treasurer for three groups, a board member on E4C, and I travel to Airdrie to play with my granddaughters. Family and friend gatherings are very important to me.

In my future I want to continue with my volunteer work and to play with my granddaughters.

I am thankful for the knowledge and skills I gained in my career with MacEwan. My MacEwan work has helped me in my volunteer work, in giving to the community.



Rick Lewis



I started at MacEwan in 1987 when MacEwan introduced its 2+2 Bachelor of Science Transfer program – initially hired as a biology faculty member and over time also assumed the position of Chair of Biology and then the Chair of the B.Sc. Transfer program. In 2008 I moved to the position of Director of MacEwan International and remained in that position until retiring in 2014. While serving as Director I also continued to teach for the Department of Biological Sciences.

Receiving the MacEwan Medallion would certainly be a highlight of my time at MacEwan. However, my greatest highlight would have been my involvement in the Tropical Rainforest Ecology course offered by the Department of Biological Sciences. This course included a field excursion to the Amazonian rainforest of eastern Ecuador, and in some of the years a visit to the Galapagos Islands. Between 2012 and 2015 over 150 biology students were taken to Ecuador and gained a unique “once in a lifetime” international learning experience in perhaps the most biologically diverse ecosystem in the world.

This transition into retirement has been exceptionally satisfying. Much of the time has been dedicated to undertaking long overdue “projects” at home. A very pleasant coincidence was having a first grandchild born only two months after retiring. A priority is now helping to look after granddaughter Lucy as her mother resumes taking university classes. Although I do not miss meetings and daily emails, I do miss interacting with my former colleagues in both MacEwan International and Biological Sciences.

Additional retirement activities include volunteering with the new ROMU organizational group, continuing to be a member of MacEwan's Global Education Fund volunteer committee, family trips to Europe (2014) and California (2015), playing hockey 3-4 times a week in winter, and catching up on some reading.

Future plans include babysitting granddaughter, continuing with house projects, and a Caribbean cruise this coming February which will also afford an opportunity to re-connect with a fellow University of New Brunswick undergraduate student. For those who know me and my family, it goes without saying that a trip to Disneyland or Disney World with the granddaughter will have to occur sometime in the upcoming year or two.

Retirement has been a time of what it should be – more time with family and the opportunity to have more time for what I enjoy doing, but lacked the time to do when working full time. Life still seems to be go-go-go, but at a less demanding pace. Retiring at the earliest possible time was always the plan, and so far the plan is working superbly!

Our People

- Paul Ancel Margo and I are enjoying our retirement in Calgary now for 12 years. Have done considerable travelling and seen much of the world.
- Kathryn Arnold I moved to Vernon, BC September 2011. Since February 2012 I've been teaching certificate courses in Leadership and Supervision in the Continuing Studies Department at Okanagan College, Vernon, BC. I enjoy hiking, camping, canoeing, biking and visiting the many vineyards in the area
- Ian Armour I'm doing a bit of part-time teaching for the University of Exeter, but am otherwise enjoying retirement in a temperate climate.
- Chuck Day Our home is in Kelowna, BC, but we spend six months of the year in Sun Lakes, AZ. Reading, golfing, fishing, and spending time with friends and family keeps us busy.
- Barbara Heather I spent the summer after retirement catching up on projects that had sat around waiting for retirement. I'm writing or completing a couple of articles on past research, doing some new research, writing exams for OUP, and looking for more work. I'm exercising at the Kinsmen and at home.
- Karl Homann I am enjoying a snow-free winter on the banks of Lake Chapala, 50 km south of Guadalajara, where I have been living year-round for the past seven years. I speak Spanish all day long and eat papayas at 19 pesos a kilo. Soon, I will be off to Chile for the annual Latin Song Festival in Viña del Mar, then drive to Patagonia, visit the penguins and take a look at the Antarctic ice before it all melts.
- Susan Lieberman I am now a professional retiree with time for exercise classes, a great book club, visits with friends, and visits to see my daughters and their families in Calgary, Toronto, and Mount Vernon, New York. Last spring I attended ELLA at U of A and thoroughly enjoyed the classes, particularly Soapstone Carving. Also took Water Colour Painting at MacEwan which was fun too.
- Jack Phelan I'm heading to Green Valley, Arizona for the winter. Still teaching in the fall for the Child and Welfare Youth Care degree program.
- Gloria Swanson I still do a bit of singing at nursing homes. Spend part of the winter in Arizona.
- Deborah Taylor I retired from MacEwan University Sept 11, 2015 and was on a plane to India Sept 14, 2015 to start a new job. I am working for a Canadian company helping students from India come and study in Canada. I was in India for 2 1/2 months and am now in Canada until Feb 1, 2016 when I will return to India until mid July 2016. I am truly enjoying my experiences.
- Alan Vladicka Since leaving MacEwan in 2013, my wife Betty and I have set up a consulting company (Golden Sage Consulting Ltd.), through which we have done a variety of contract work in semi-retirement. I have done strategic planning, survey design and other research projects for post-secondary institutions and government agencies across Canada. I am also involved in volunteer activities as a board member of the Westend Seniors Activity Centre and the Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council. Betty and I have also been pursuing our love of travel (Spain, Mexico, Quebec, Jamaica), gardening, wine tasting and outdoor activities such as cycling, canoeing and snowshoeing, as well as spending time with our four grandchildren.

In Memorium



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