NEXUS

Le bulletin de l'APRUO
The APRUO Newsletter

Spring/Summer 2026 Edition

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Reflections: Continuing the Conversation

Board Members: Who Are We ?

We represent the Association of Retired Professors of the University of Ottawa (APRUO). We are a dynamic and interconnected group of retired professors at the University of Ottawa. We seek to inspire collaboration, dedication, and transformation amongst ourselves and the larger community of retirees at the University of Ottawa.

If you are a retired professor or librarian and wish to become a member of the Board, please contact us at**:** **apruo@uottawa.ca.**

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The 2026 Annual General Meeting

The 2026 Annual General Meeting of the APRUO took place on the afternoon of May 27th. Thirty-eight members were in attendance, plus guest Claude Dufresne, representing our sister association ASRA (Administrative Staff Retirees Association). seven tuned in online to listen to the proceedings.

The AGM was historic in that, for the first time in the history of the APRUO, the President of the University of Ottawa, Dr Marie-Ève Sylvestre attended the meeting and addressed those present, confirming the importance of retirees as a part of the university community, and answering questions from the audience. To hear the President's remarks and responses to members' questions, click **here.** (We apologize for the quality of the sound in the first two minutes.) .

At the meeting members were introduced to two new members of the Board of Directors – Steph Chitpin and Eda Kranakis, replacing Doug Angus (deceased) and Denis Nadeau, who stepped down because of other commitments.

The new Board of Directors. From left to right, Douglas Clayton, Leslie Laczko, Eda Kranakis, Dany Laveault, Stéphanie Chitpin, Sylvie Lauzon, André Lapierre, Richard Clément, and Christina De Simone. Two members are not in the photo: Andrée Durieux-Smith, Raymond Leblanc, and also outgoing member Denis Nadeau.

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APRUO President's Report

Being president of an association such as ours means constantly listening and continually expressing gratitude. First and foremost, I would like to thank our past president, Sylvie Lauzon, whose attention to detail, kindness and dedication have made her an exemplary chair and colleague. Sylvie was awarded the ARUCC "Tribute" Award for her leadership and exceptional work on behalf of the Association. I would also like to acknowledge Richard Clément, our treasurer, who has always been ready to lend a hand and on whom I can always rely for wise and well-considered advice. My thanks go to all the members of the Council: André Lapierre, Leslie Laczko, Christina De Simone, Raymond Leblanc, Andrée Durieux-Smith, Dany Laveau and Denis Nadeau. Denis unfortunately had to step down from the Council due to an excessive workload. I shall miss him. Replacing Doug Angus and Denis Nadeau, we have two new members on the Council – Stephanie Chitpin and Eda Kranakis.

On becoming President of the APRUO, I reflected on the priorities to be pursued. Here are the objectives that emerged:

1. Recognition of retirees, their place and their contribution within the university community. This was already a goal of Sylvie Lauzon who, together with Claude Dufresne from APAR, our sister association, has done important work with the IT department to improve communication with retirees and keep them informed of new developments. The presence of the President of the University at our AGM was an important step in having our Association recognized as an important member of the university community.

2. The need to maintain good relations with our partners:

a) With the APUO, which represents us in negotiations for a new collective agreement.

According to Article 4 of the APUO's constitution, all our members are life members of the APUO (without being members of the bargaining unit). The President of the APRUO is automatically a voting member of the APUO's Board of Directors. Negotiations between the University and the APUO regarding a new collective agreement, likely covering the period 2026–2028, have now begun. As a member of the APUO Board of Directors, I tabled a motion to include the needs of retirees in the negotiating committee's mandate. It was adopted unanimously. I have diligently attended APUO Board meetings, representing you through my presence. I also invited Colin Montpetit, the APUO President, to an APRUO Board meeting.

Our demands regarding our members' benefits are as follows:

- An increase in the annual HCSA/CDSS allowance from $1,350 to $1,720, to reflect the erosion caused by inflation since the date of its last increase (2017).
- The removal of the clause preventing members who retired before July 1st, 2001 from benefiting from the HCSA.
- Access to all library services for all retirees, not just emeritus professors.
- Modifying life insurance to allow for reduced cover. The premiums paid by the University for this insurance are taxable and have become a burden for members hired before July 1st, 1976.

b) With the President's office

The fact that the APRUO was not invited to attend the new President's inauguration was a major blow. I took it upon myself to rectify the situation. Fortunately, our executive was subsequently able to meet with the President and Vice-Chancellor Dr Marie-Ève Sylvestre, and she eventually attended our AGM on May 27th, where she spoke about the role of the APRUO and her vision for the University's future and answered members' questions. Our Vice-President, Denis Nadeau, played a crucial role as a liaison with the President's Office. Following the President's attendance at the AGM – a first in the Association's history – we can say that relations between our association and the President's Office have been fully restored.

c) With Human Resources

We remain in contact with HR regarding all non-financial matters, such as information on new retirees, deaths and ID cards – a topical issue due to the introduction of a new smart-card system controlling access to university buildings. I continue to insist that the card should indicate whether the member is a professor emeritus.

3. Another priority: Communication and engagement with members and increasing membership numbers

- Nexus – the huge improvement in our newsletter under Christina De Simone's and André Lapierre's leadership is greatly appreciated by members.
- Website and communication-- a big thank you to Dany Laveault, who has been very effective in disseminating messages to members and is updating the website.
  Events calendar – thanks to the efforts of Andrée Durieux-Smith and Raymond Leblanc, the range of activities on offer to members has been expanded.

  We are always interested in receiving suggestions for activities.

4. The national dimension: CURAC

André Lapierre has completed his term on the CURAC Board of Directors. However, he continues, alongside Sylvie Lauzon, to contribute to the transformation of CURAC into a fully bilingual national association of retired professors. André has made an exceptional contribution to this. Thanks also to Maurice Taylor, who liaised with the CURAC Committee on Life Long Learning.

5. Challenging issues

Among these is the loss of members after a certain number of years. We understand that, in an increasingly technological world, it is becoming more and more difficult for some to navigate even online payments. During our first meeting with the President, we raised the possibility of automatically deducting APRUO membership fees from pensions. We are awaiting the outcome of this request, which would greatly facilitate our treasurer's work and eliminate the need for our members to renew their membership. Pending the outcome of our request, if you are having difficulty paying, please do not hesitate to write to us at this address: **APRUO@uottawa.ca.** We will always find a way to help you. Our main objective is to be there for you when you encounter problems.

I wish you all a wonderful summer, in good health and peace!

Douglas Clayton

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APRUO Community Connections & Beyond

There is something about summer that softens the edges of daily life. It encourages us to step outside, to pause, to notice. The longer days and warmer light seem to invite a slower, more reflective rhythm—one in which simple pleasures come more easily into view. Conversations feel a little easier, laughter a little freer, and time a little more generous. There is space to linger over a thought, a walk, or a shared moment.

In this season, we are reminded—perhaps more than at any other time of year—that life is not only something to organize and accomplish, but also something to experience, to savour, and to share.

In that spirit of reflection and connection, we are pleased to share this latest issue of our newsletter, with contributions that invite you to continue engaging, learning, and staying connected with our community.

Note to Readers. To further establish our connection with each other, we thought you would appreciate reading our colleagues' submissions in the language(s) in which they were written. Therefore, for the **section beginning with ARTS through the section on GASTRONOMY members' contributions have not been translated**.

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ARTS

Literature

By: Irene (Irena) R. Makaryk, PhD, FRSC
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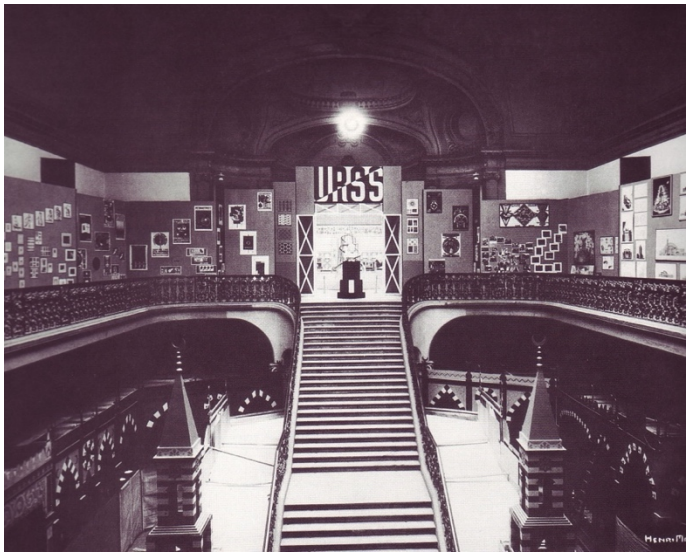
"Before the World Wide Web: Theater Arts at the 1925 Paris Expo."



This short article based on my book, *April in Paris: Theatricality, Modernism, and Politics at the 1925 Art Deco Expo* (2018), was an invited contribution to the *Chicago Art Deco Magazine* edited by Lara Allison. The Fall/Winter issue in which it appears celebrates the centenary of the 1925 *Exposition internationale des arts décoratifs et industriels,* arguably the most influential artistic event of the 20th Century. Among its many notable features, the Paris show marked a major departure from all previous world's fairs by focusing on a single theme: the nexus of Modernism and modernity in all areas of design: architecture, furniture, fashion, arts of the street, gardens, education, and, for the first time ever, theater arts.

Nearly two dozen countries took part. The most conspicuous presence besides France was that of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, newly created in 1922, which eagerly pounced on this special opportunity. Neither Konstantin Melnikov's austere USSR pavilion nor the, eventually equally famous, Workers' Club created by Alexander Rodchenko were completed by the start of the expo on April 28. From opening day, the many thousands of daily visitors curious to learn something about the Soviet state had their first impressions formed by the Soviets' vast Theater Arts display in the Grand Palais. By common consensus of the press, this was the most impressive, radical, and successful area of the whole fair—enjoying the largest media coverage and greatest influence of all the participating countries' displays. The consequences of the theater arts exhibits were immediate, tangible, and wide-ranging, not just in Europe but in the USA and around the globe, thus confirming the international exhibition as a potent form for disseminating exciting new ideas.

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By: Walter Burgess, Ph.D.
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A Translation Project

I would like to mention an unusual endeavour taken up in my retirement years; what could be called a folly of old age. I should say that in all my years at the UO, and for a long time after, I was, and still am, a mathematician. That is why one of the things that now take up a considerable amount of my time may seem unusual, especially since I have, at best, a nodding

acquaintance with the Hungarian language. I am one half of a team that translates contemporary Hungarian short stories into English.

You might well ask what I bring to the enterprise. The other half of the team, Marietta Morry, is a native speaker of Hungarian and she has spent many years with various translation projects. What is my expertise? There are two things: one, I can touch type, a skill I learned while still in high school, and, two, I am a native speaker of English, Canadian style. Back in palaeolithic times, I did my undergraduate at UBC in English Literature and Mathematics. This was possible since, oddly, at UBC mathematics is in the arts faculty (as it is at Queen's). Marietta and I translate six authors, all quite different from each other in style and temperament.

You can sample some of these translations at: **https://sites.google.com/view/walterburgess**

N.B: It will be necessary to scroll past the mathematical publications (I haven't yet learned how to make two columns). Some are available for free online, just follow the links. I hope there are some items to your taste.

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By: Walter Burgess, Ph.D.
Professor Emeritus, Department of Mathematics and Statistics
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Un projet de traduction

Je voudrais vous parler d'une activité qui occupe beaucoup de mon temps, On dirait une lubie de la vieillesse. Avant de prendre ma retraite j'étais professeur au Département de mathématiques De fait, je suis toujours mathématicien. C'est pourquoi le passe-temps que j'ai adopté pourrait paraître bizarre : je constitue la moitié d'une équipe qui traduit des contes hongrois contemporains en anglais. Ma connaissance de la langue hongroise est – soyons indulgents – minime.

Donc on peut se demander ce que j'apporte au processus. L'autre membre de l'équipe est Marietta Morry dont la langue maternelle est l'hongrois, et en plus elle est bien expérimentée comme traductrice. De ma part, j'ai deux talents : je sais taper à l'aveugle, une compétence que j'ai acquise

en école secondaire, et deuxièmement ma langue maternelle c'est l'anglais canadien. En fait, à l'époque paléolithique, j'ai fait mes études de premier cycle à l'université de C.-B. en littérature anglaise et en mathématiques ; cela a été possible parce que là-bas le département de mathématiques se trouve dans la Faculté des Arts (tout comme à l'université Queen's). Marietta et moi traduisons six auteurs, dont chacun possède son propre style et tempérament.

La liste de nos traductions se trouve à **https://sites.google.com/view/walterburgess**

N.B. Il faut passer au delà des publications mathématiques (je suis incapable jusqu'ici d'en faire deux colonnes). Il y en a qui sont librement disponibles. J'espère qu'il y a des contes à vos goûts.

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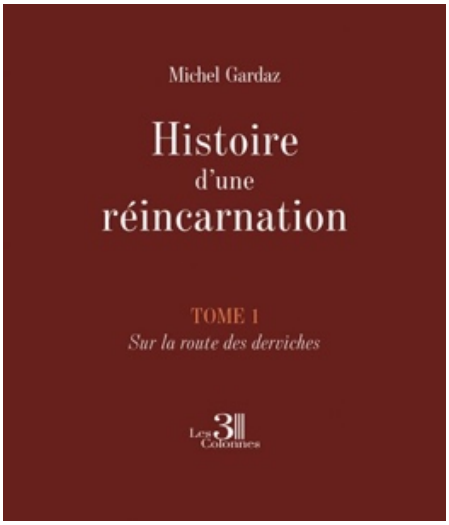

Histoire d'une réincarnation – Tome 1

Nous sommes sur une trajectoire de collision avec notre destin, il y a nul endroit où se cacher. Au cœur du XIVe siècle ravagé par la peste et la guerre, Histoire d'une réincarnation entraîne le lecteur dans un Orient incandescent. Daniel Simon, jeune médecin européen, et Maria Zaccaria, héritière génoise, voient leurs destins brisés par la conquête de Tamerlan. Réduits en captivité à Samarcande, ils affrontent la cruauté d'un empire en plein essor, où la beauté peut devenir un fardeau et la foi, une arme. Dans la tourmente des passions humaines, Daniel croise la route d'un derviche dont la sagesse bouleversera son existence. Entre érudition et souffle épique, le roman explore la frontière fragile entre la barbarie et la rédemption. Fresque historique et quête initiatique, il révèle la splendeur et la noirceur d'un monde révolu.

https://www.lestroiscolonnes.com/auteur/gardaz-michel/histoire-dune-reincarnation-tome-1

By: Denis Bachand
Faculty of Arts

L'énigme du carnet rouge

Avocat criminaliste, Jérôme Francœur voit son passé le rattraper lors d'un procès pour féminicide. Peu après, il apprend l'existence de cahiers secrets que son oncle Ernest, interné de longues années en psychiatrie, a légués à la famille à son décès. Intrigué, Jérôme plonge dans ces papiers, son intérêt tournant rapidement à l'obsession et le poussant à s'enliser dans l'alcoolisme.

Le hasard remet sur sa route deux amies d'enfance perdues de vue depuis quarante ans : Hélène, atteinte d'un cancer incurable, et Éva, bénévole auprès de personnes itinérantes, qui l'accompagneront, chacune à sa manière, dans l'exploration des écrits de son oncle et les dédales de la maladie mentale.

Après de vaines tentatives de désintoxication, Jérôme se tourne vers une thérapie expérimentale qui le confronte à des révélations inédites, bouleversant sa perception de lui-même et de sa famille.

Arrivera-t-il à percer le mystère d'Ernest ? Réussira-t-il à s'extirper du trou qui menace de l'engloutir à jamais ?

https://press.uottawa.ca/fr/9782760346406/lenigme-du-carnet-rouge/

Poésie

By: Raymond Leblanc, PhD, Professeur émérite, Faculté d'éducation
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Valeurs

J’attache de la valeur au temps qui reste

J’attache de la valeur à la conviction qu’il y a un temps pour chaque objectif

J’attache de la valeur à la soif d’idéal

J’attache de la valeur à se mettre dans la peau de tout ce qui existe

J’attache de la valeur à l’écoute de cimes

J’attache de la valeur à faire de la musique avec des amis

J’attache de la valeur à l’arbre de vie

J’attache de la valeur à la langue de chez nous

J’attache de la valeur à chanter la ballade des gens heureux

J’attache de la valeur à la francophonie ontarienne

J’attache de la valeur aux trous dans les nuages

J’attache de la valeur à la lenteur

J’attache de la valeur à manger des aliments « from scratch »

J’attache de la valeur aux chouettes souvenirs

J’attache de la valeur à parler de l’avenir

J’attache de la valeur à savoir qu’aucune personne est une île

J’attache de la valeur au pari que Dieu existe

J’attache de la valeur à vivre mes promesses

J’attache de la valeur à habiter poétiquement le monde

J’attache de la valeur à voyager, on the road again, tout comme

Jack Kerouac, Willy Nelson, Bernard Lavilliers, et Richard Séguin

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By: Tony Horava
Retired Associate University Librarian, Content and Access
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Failing Better

Could there be any better dopamine
Than the brain censor discovering
There was a purpose to this daily effort
This hope-infested hill I climbed
To tumble back down
Sisyphus-like again
The metaphysical power
To shrug it off
And learn more about the fine art of failing
- More than grace or a gritty smile -
To be able to look at ourselves in the mirror:
Then sashay through the rose-strewn path of failure
With no swings of thrashing emotion
But to nod and say yes
I am failing better and better

Each year the proverbial pill
Goes down a little easier
One day I will walk in the park
Laden with spring buds
Tight with expectation
Failing magnificently in whatever
I intended to accomplish
But seeing the birds winging off
Amid the vast poofy painterly clouds
The dogs yapping away to themselves
The human faces lined with every expression

An ordinary day

And it will be enough

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By: Seymour Mayne, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus/ Professeur émérite
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Ottawa dozes amidst its leafy trees

Ottawa dozes amidst its leafy trees,

gathers a green belt

around its waist,

sometimes breathes easy

and tolerates a headache

of glass towers.

Ottawa blinks into the Laurentian

night, urges its rivers

meeting on their ways--

Upon its stout bluff

bears

the Shield's burdens,

hunkers down and holds

its own in encircling

storm and snowdrift.

And in the dog days of August

even its canines

must observe the rules.

No one barks for long in Ottawa.

No one disturbs the haze

of daydreaming

with a piercing call or cry.

(Find its tongue on side streets.

Hear its whisper

shaped out of a dozen accents.)

Ottawa rests

laid-back

on its ridge of rock.

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Music

By: Patrick J. Walsh, PhD, FRSC, Retired Professor
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Is there still time to be a "Rockstar"?

When social media started to really explode, some fellow scientists (especially graduate students and pdfs) seemed to be putting more effort into curating their online brands than into their research. I recall a colleague at UBC warning her students that "science famous is not rockstar famous!" (My thought balloon was: "unless of course you're actually David Suzuki or Neil deGrasse Tyson"). But, in part what she really meant was: spend more time in the lab and let your science and publications speak for themselves.

I retired from the Biology Dept at uOttawa in 2015 and found that I needed something to replace that magical combination of creativity and technology that went into doing science. I started playing the guitar (mostly "by ear") at age 13, and over the years had been in numerous cover bands (where you play tunes by other artists), whenever my science career allowed. So I decided to try writing and recording my own tunes to fill the creative/technology void, perhaps wondering subconsciously if one could be "rockstar famous" later in life?

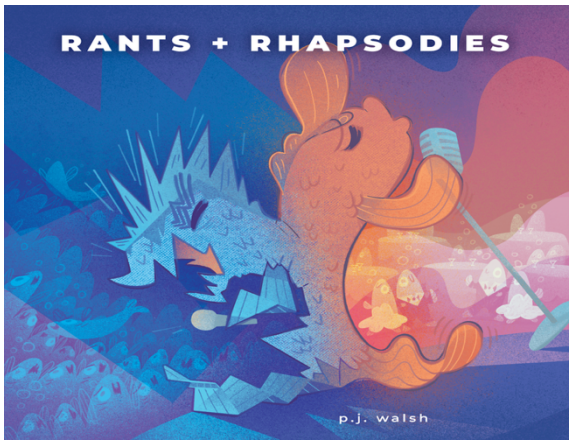
The short answer for me was "not really". Although one can get their music uploaded to virtually every site imaginable these days (for a mere $25 annual fee), in order to get millions of streams/plays/downloads you really need to check two boxes, at a minimum: to be both amazingly talented (me: not so much) and; work really hard at marketing/promotion (me: nope, I'm retired). And forget about making any side-hustle money (e.g., Spotify pays ~$0.003 per stream!). That said, over the last dozen or so years, through the process of writing, recording and releasing several original albums, I've been able to: grow as a singer/songwriter and as a musician by taking online lessons; keep the two hemispheres of my brain active and communicating with each other; develop collaborations with some awesome folks (many much younger) in both musical and technical

areas; and maintain a tenuous connection with my former passion in science, the piscine world, through an amazing artist who creates my album cover art. And about once a week, I'll get a notification that someone actually listened to one of my songs (sometimes from places as far away as Australia to Zambia).

If you're at all interested in my music, search 'p.j. walsh' or my latest album title 'Rants + Rhapsodies' wherever you consume your music. Or go to my bandcamp site:

pjwalsh.bandcamp.com

where you can play or download my music at no charge (and no requests for any of your info either!). The site has lyrics, the full credits for my collaborators, and the story behind each album. A colleague described my music as 'boomer eclectic', drawing on most of the music I've listened to/covered over the decades: rock/alt-rock, folk, pop, jazz, and even classical. So don't give up after listening to just one song!



cover art by Alba Francomb (albafrancomb.com)

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SCIENCE

Medicine/Health

By: François Tremblay, Ph.D.
Professeur émérite| Emeritus Professor

Faculté des sciences de la santé | Faculty of Health Sciences
Courriel | e-mail : francois.tremblay@uottawa.ca

Brain stimulation techniques: A personal perspective on Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation

The interest in non-invasive brain stimulation techniques (i.e., without open surgery) for experimental and therapeutic purposes is not new, with early attempts dating back in the mid-20th century. These attempts were quite limited in their applicability, however, for the passing of current through electrodes placed on the scalp was very painful, owing to the high resistance of bone, hair and skin. A renewed interest for brain stimulation arose in the early 80's, when Barker and Jealinous developed a new technique to overcome the limitations of electrical stimulation. Their approach was based on Faraday's principle and consisted of passing a brief intense current into a round-shaped magnetic coil held over the scalp. The passing of current through the coil induces a corresponding magnetic field, which can cross the scalp barrier easily, and in turn, induce a small current in the underlying tissue leading to excitation of brain cells. Hence the technique was called: Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS). With TMS, it was now possible to stimulate the brain non-invasively using a magnetic stimulator with almost no discomfort and virtually no pain. Decades later, TMS has become one of the most commonly used NIBS techniques.

Applications in Research and Clinics

At the Clinical Neuroscience lab at the Bruyere Research Institute, I have used TMS for more than 25 years to investigate the impact of age and disease on the brain. Our research with TMS focused on the motor areas of the brain since applying TMS where the motor area is located produced a twitch in the target muscles (e.g. hand or leg muscles), which can be recorded and monitored using surface electrodes. The characteristics of the TMS-evoked motor response in terms of amplitude and timing provide an index of the brain's excitability and of the integrity of motor pathways. For instance, one can determine whether the brain is more or less excitable depending on the amplitude of the evoked response. Similarly, an absent or delayed motor response can indicate an impaired transmission or a disruption in the integrity of the motor pathways following a stroke or a trauma. For instance, in patients with MS, we used TMS to investigate the effects of a novel experimental intervention based on stem cell injections aiming to repair neural pathways (Tremblay et al., 2022) . We used TMS to probe the changes over time, before and after the intervention, in the motor pathways involved in the control of hand and leg movements to detect signs of neural repair. TMS can also be used to assess specific neurotransmission systems in the brain. In my lab, we used a specific TMS-derived marker of cholinergic transmission, which is critical for cognitive functions, to examine the change associated with aging (Young-Bernier et al., 2011). We showed that this marker was reduced in healthy seniors, when compared to young adults, indicating an age-related decline in cholinergic transmission. Our results also revealed that this cholinergic deficit was correlated with poorer performance in tasks involving reaction times and to memory functions (Davidson et al, 2022). Such findings are important given the critical role of neurotransmission systems in the pathophysiology of dementia, like Alzheimer's disease.

Therapeutic potentials of rTMS applications

TMS protocols have also been developed over the years to explore the therapeutic potential of brain stimulation. Such paradigms have been based on the development of magnetic stimulators

capable of delivering trains of stimuli, repetitively, instead of just one single pulse by stimulation. With repetitive TMS (rTMS), trains of stimuli can be delivered at high (e.g., 5 Hz) or low (e.g., 1 Hz) frequency to a given brain area in an attempt to either depress or increase its excitability. Many studies have been conducted to investigate the benefits of using rTMS protocols for therapeutic purposes, for instance, after a stroke or in patients affected by Parkinson's disease. These studies have provided mixed results, which is expected, given the complexity of neurological diseases. However, for one particular condition, rTMS has proven to be quite effective at the therapeutic level. In fact, in patients affected by major depressive disorders who are unresponsive to medication, rTMS protocols have been shown to be quite effective in producing lasting remission of symptoms through rigorous testing. In such patients, rTMS at high frequency is typically applied on the prefrontal cortex every two-days for two weeks, aiming to induce a lasting enhancement in the excitability of this region; thereby helping in the resolution of symptoms. The therapeutic success of this approach has led to an FDA approval in 2008 for TMS applications in the treatment of drug-resistant major depression.

Controversies and challenges

One area where TMS applications remain highly controversial is for the enhancement of brain functions. The perspective of using TMS to counteract the impact of normal aging or to delay cognitive decline in cases of dementia is quite appealing (see Simko et al., 2022). However, while some studies have provided interesting results, there are still many unanswered questions with regards to the potential real benefits of TMS to delay or prevent cognitive declines. One lingering issue that has impeded the application of rTMS protocols to boost brain functions (and other applications) is the high variability of individual responses to stimulation. In fact, following the application of any given rTMS protocol aiming to modulate neural excitability (i.e., enhance or depress), about one-third of the participants will show either no-response or the opposite of the expected response. Different factors linked with individual variations at the anatomical (e.g., scalp thickness, cortical thinning) and physiological (biological sex) level can explain why a given participant will respond to TMS applications.

On a final note, one cannot avoid the issue of safety when discussing the applications of brain stimulation techniques. In the mind of many people, brain stimulation often refers to shocking images, such as the final scene in the movie 'One's flew over the Cuckoo's Nest'. As

mentioned earlier, the development of magnetic stimulators was a major breakthrough in the 80s to allow applications without inducing pain and discomfort. When applied in single-pulse protocols (i.e., one stimulus at a time), TMS is safe and secure with only minimal discomfort and, as emphasized earlier, virtually no pain. Some participants reported scalp tenderness after the application and sensations associated with motor evoked responses (i.e., muscle twitching in the extremities), but these side-effects are minimal and short-lasting. The application of trains of stimuli with rTMS is more challenging for the risk of inducing a seizure is greater, especially when using protocols aiming to raise excitability. However, the TMS research community has developed strict guidelines to minimize the risks. In fact, the risk of experiencing a major adverse event, such as seizures following rTMS applications, has been estimated to be less than 1% in the healthy population *(*Oberman et al., 2011). To further minimize the risks, TMS researchers have introduced health questionnaires to screen participants in whom TMS can be problematic. For instance, participants with antecedents of head trauma and diagnosed with epilepsy are systematically dismissed, along with pregnant women (just to be safe). From my 20 years of experience with testing participants across all ages (from 15-80+ years), I can ascertain that TMS (single and repetitive) is safe when applied following the guidelines.

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By: François Tremblay, Ph.D.
Professeur émérite| Emeritus Professor

Faculté des sciences de la santé | Faculty of Health Sciences
Courriel | E-mail : francois.tremblay@uottawa.ca

La stimulation du cerveau: une perspective personnelle à propos de la stimulation magnétique transcrânienne

L'intérêt pour les techniques de stimulation cérébrale non invasives (c'est-à-dire sans chirurgie ouverte) à des fins expérimentales ou thérapeutiques n'est pas nouveau, les premières tentatives remontant au milieu du XXe siècle. Ces essais étaient toutefois très limités, car le passage du courant à travers des

électrodes placées sur le crâne était très douloureux en raison de la forte résistance des tissus (os, peau, cheveux). Un regain d'intérêt pour cette approche est apparu au début des années 80, lorsque Barker et Jalinous ont mis au point une nouvelle technique pour surmonter les limites de la stimulation électrique. Leur approche, basée sur le principe de Faraday, consistait à faire passer un courant bref et intense dans une bobine magnétique de forme circulaire appliquée sur la tête. Le passage du courant dans la bobine induit un champ magnétique correspondant qui traverse facilement la barrière du cuir chevelu et celui-ci induit à son tour, un faible courant dans le tissu sous-jacent, menant à l'excitation des cellules nerveuses. C'est ainsi que la technique a été dénommée: **Stimulation Magnétique Transcrânienne (acronyme TMS en anglais)**. Grâce à la SMT, il était désormais possible de stimuler le cerveau de manière non invasive à l'aide d'un stimulateur magnétique, avec presque aucun inconfort et pratiquement aucune douleur. Des décennies plus tard, la SMT est devenue l'une des techniques de stimulation cérébrale non invasive les plus couramment utilisées en recherche et en médecine.

Applications cliniques et recherche

Au laboratoire de neurosciences cliniques de l'Institut de recherche Bruyère, j'ai utilisé la SMT pendant plus de 25 ans pour étudier l'impact de l'âge et de la maladie sur le cerveau. Nos recherches se sont concentrées sur les zones motrices du cerveau car l'application de la SMT sur l'aire motrice produit une contraction dans les muscles cibles (par exemple, les muscles de la main ou de la jambe), laquelle peut être enregistrée à l'aide d'électrodes de surface. Les caractéristiques de la réponse motrice ainsi évoquée, en termes d'amplitude et de latence, fournissent un indice de l'excitabilité du cerveau et de l'intégrité des voies motrices. Par exemple, on peut déterminer si le cerveau est plus ou moins excitable selon l'amplitude de la réponse évoquée. De même, une réponse motrice absente ou retardée peut indiquer une transmission altérée ou une rupture de l'intégrité des voies motrices à la suite d'un accident vasculaire cérébral (AVC) ou d'un traumatisme. Incidemment, chez les patients atteints de SP, nous avons utilisé la SMT pour étudier les effets d'une nouvelle intervention expérimentale basée sur des injections de cellules souches visant à réparer les voies neurales (Tremblay et al., 2022). La SMT peut également être utilisée pour évaluer des systèmes de neurotransmission spécifiques. Dans mon laboratoire, nous avons

utilisé un marqueur de la transmission cholinergique (essentielle aux fonctions cognitives) dérivé de la SMT pour examiner les changements associés au vieillissement (Young-Bernier et al., 2011). Nous avons démontré que ce marqueur était réduit chez les aînés en bonne santé par rapport aux jeunes adultes, indiquant un déclin de la transmission cholinergique lié à l'âge. Nos résultats ont également révélé que ce déficit était corrélé à de moins bonnes performances dans les tâches impliquant les temps de réaction et les fonctions mémorielles (Davidson et al., 2022).

Potentiel thérapeutique et SMT répétitive (SMTr)

Des protocoles de SMT ont également été élaborés au fil des ans pour explorer le potentiel thérapeutique de la stimulation cérébrale. Ces paradigmes reposent sur des stimulateurs capables de délivrer des trains de stimuli de manière répétitive, plutôt qu'une impulsion unique. Avec la SMT répétitive (SMTr), des trains de stimuli peuvent être délivrés à haute (ex: 5 Hz) ou basse (ex: 1 Hz) fréquence vers une zone cérébrale donnée afin de diminuer ou d'augmenter son excitabilité. Si les résultats sont parfois mitigés pour certaines maladies neurologiques complexes comme la maladie de Parkinson, la SMTr s'est avérée très efficace pour une condition particulière: la dépression majeure. Pour les patients résistants aux médicaments, la SMTr à haute fréquence appliquée sur le cortex préfrontal a démontré sa capacité à produire une rémission durable des symptômes. Ce succès thérapeutique a conduit à une approbation par la FDA en 2008 pour le traitement de la dépression majeure pharmacorésistante.

Défis et controverses

Un domaine où les applications de la SMT restent très controversées est celui de l'amélioration des fonctions cérébrales (neuro-amélioration). Bien que la perspective de contrer le vieillissement normal ou de retarder le déclin cognitif soit séduisante, de nombreuses questions restent sans réponse. Un problème persistant est la grande variabilité des réponses individuelles car environ un tiers des participants ne présentent aucune réponse ou une réponse opposée à celle

attendue, en raison de facteurs anatomiques (épaisseur du crâne) ou physiologiques (sexe biologique).

Enfin, on ne peut occulter la question de la sécurité en parlant de stimulation cérébrale. Pour beaucoup, la stimulation cérébrale évoque des images choquantes, comme la scène du film *« Vol au-dessus d'un nid de coucou »*. Pourtant, la SMT est sûre et sécuritaire. Pour les protocoles à impulsion simple, parfois les participants rapportent des effets secondaires mineurs telle **la** sensibilité du cuir chevelu ou de petits inconforts liés aux contractions musculaires, mais ces effets sont minimes et de courte durée. Bien que le risque soit légèrement plus élevé avec pour les protocoles impliquant des impulsions répétitives (SMTr), la communauté scientifique a établi des directives strictes pour la sécurité de sorte que Le risque d'événement indésirable majeur, par exemple induire une crise convulsive, est estimé à moins de 1 % dans la population saine (Oberman et al., 2011). D'après mes 20 ans d'expérience avec des participants de tous âges (de 15 à plus de 80 ans), je peux affirmer que la SMT (simple et répétitive) est sûre lorsqu'elle est appliquée selon les règles de l'art en adhérant aux lignes directrices.

Références et lectures suggérées/Suggested readings & references

Tremblay, F., Ansari, Y., Remaud, A., & Freedman, M. S. (2022). Neurophysiological outcomes following mesenchymal stem cell therapy in multiple sclerosis. *Clinical neurophysiology 136*, 69-81. doi:10.1016/j.clinph.2022.01.125

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Simko, P., Kent, J. A., & Rektorova, I. (2022). Is non-invasive brain stimulation effective for cognitive enhancement in Alzheimer's disease? An updated meta-analysis.*Clinical Neurophysiology, 144,* 23-40. doi:10.1016/j.clinph.2022.09.010z

Oberman, L., Edwards, D., Eldaief, M., & Pascual-Leone, A. (2011). Safety of theta burst transcranial magnetic stimulation: a systematic review of the literature. *Journal of Clinical Neurophysiology, 28*(1), 67-74. doi:10.1097/WNP.0b013e318205135f

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Agriculture

By: Barry Wellar, C.M., Professor Emeritus,
Geography, Environmental Studies and Geomatics
and President, Information Research Board
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URL: http://wellar.ca/informationresearch/

Agricultural Land Inventory Project

A current project of the Information Research Board (IRB) is investigating how combining triage principles and highest and best land use planning principles can contribute to the design of a decision model to protect Ontario's agricultural land inventory and. consequently. the province's long-term food security.

The project's research design is guided by the Universal Law of Location, and several sample surveys have already been undertaken of municipal governments to ascertain how they justify and track conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses.

Previous surveys of Ontario agricultural ministries revealed major shortcomings in the capability of provincial geographic information systems (GIS) to provide citizens free, easy, timely, and direct online access to provincial agricultural land geo-records. The research plan therefore includes surveys of experts on how the province should proceed to address GIS shortcomings to better support the implementation of the decision model.

Finally, case studies are incorporated in the empirical component, including the location of a radar site by the Department of National Defence, the location of a prison in Eastern Ontario by provincial government, and the location of a solar facility in the City of Ottawa, plus others as need be, all of which are located or are scheduled to be located on agricultural land.

Background reports can be viewed at: https://wellar.ca/informationresearch/

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HISTORY & CULTURE

By: M. Mark Stolarik,
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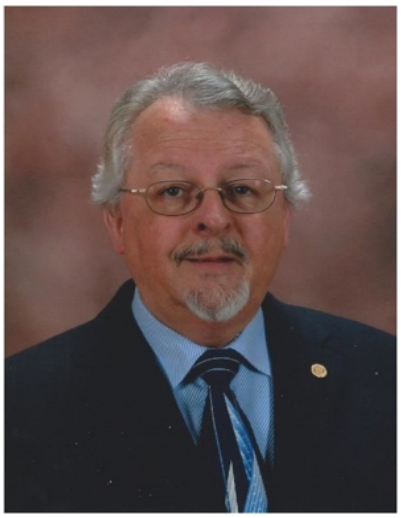

Why are there Culture Wars in the USA?

On Friday, February 20, 2026, Mark Stolarik presented a lecture on "Why are there Culture Wars in the USA?" to the Friday Luncheon Discussion club" at the YMCA on Argyle Avenue in Ottawa. The Friday Luncheon Discussion Club was founded by retired senior Civil Servants in 1920 and it features knowledgeable guest speakers each week.

This lecture was based on David Hackett Fischer, *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (New York, 1989).

Most Americans are unaware that their country was founded by four kinds of Englishmen, who came from four different parts of the United Kingdom, and who brought their cultures with them. These were the younger sons of the gentry of southern England who settled in Virginia, the bourgeois Puritans of northeast England who settled in New England, the Quakers of western England who settled in Pennsylvania, and the Scots-Irish of the borderlands between England and Scotland who settled in Appalachia. Each group brought its culture to the New World with it, and each such culture became the norm in its region. All subsequent immigrants to what became the United States of America would have to adjust to one of these cultures, as they spread westward across the continent. Since each of the four "charter" groups made a deep imprint upon American culture in general, they have been at war with each other since over such issues as religion, slavery, individualism versus community, law-and-order, gun control, universal health care, etc.

Reference/Référence

David Hackett Fischer, *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (New York, 1989).

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REFLECTIONS

By: N.U. Ahmed, Professor Emeritus
University of Ottawa, Department of EECS
E-mail /Courriel: nahmed@uottawa.ca

A brief history of my time after retiring from an inspiring, exciting and busy academic life

A teacher is someone who devotes their whole lifetime to learning and teaching. I present here a short history of my academic life. I enjoyed this life intensely, carrying on teaching and research even after retirement and communicating with colleagues.

Introduction: As a Student

In 1957, I started my graduate studies in Reactor School in the U.K with a Commonwealth Scholarship. I completed the programme in 1959 and returned to join the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission in Karachi. In 1960, I received a scholarship from the Department of Foreign Affairs and started my graduate studies in Electrical Engineering at the University of Ottawa, graduating with an M.Sc. in 1963. I continued my graduate studies in the same department, receiving my Ph.D. in 1965. In 1966, I then joined the Department of Electrical Engineering, University of Alberta, as a post-doctoral fellow and part-time lecturer.

As a Teacher and Researcher

In 1967, my former Ph.D. supervisor, Professor George Glinski, the director of the Department of EECS, University of Ottawa offered me a position as assistant professor, which I accepted. I was promoted to the position of associate professor after 3 years and after another 2 years to full professor. I earned a one-year sabbatical leave which I spent teaching at U.C Berkeley (EECA).

Subsequently, I spent two other sabbatical leaves at the University of New South Wales, Sydney and at the University of Western Australia and Curtain University. I took my retirement in 1999.

As Professor Emeritus and Full-time Researcher

After retirement, I kept working in the same department, teaching one or two courses and supervising 5 M.Sc. and 2 Ph.D. students. The 5 M.Sc. students had graduated by 2005, and the Ph.D. students graduated before the end of 2006-7. All of them were supported by NRC-Research grants.

As a Professor Emeritus

After 2008, I continued my research work in the same office with the same department as Professor Emeritus. Finally, I retired in 2018 and stopped going to office regularly.

Applications (beyond EECS)

(1) Artificial heart design (Civic Hospital); (2) Immunotherapy for Cancer treatment; (3) Atmospheric Pollution dynamics and Mitigation; (4) Great Lake pollution dynamics; (5) Dynamic Model of National Economy (sector by sector).

Publication History

A. Journal Publications 600+; (B) Conference Publications 250 +; (C) Book Publication 9.

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GASTRONOMY

By : Dany Laveault, professeur émérite, Faculté d'éducation
E-mail /Courriel : dany.laveault@uottawa.ca

À la table des futurs chefs!

Au cours des derniers mois, l'APRUO a organisé deux dîners gastronomiques au restaurant Lise Bourgeois au collège La Cité. Les deux activités ont connu beaucoup de succès auprès des membres, tant pour le côté culinaire que social de l'évènement.

Suite à cette première expérience dans un restaurant-école, j'ai voulu voir de quoi il en retournait à l'école hôtelière « La table des trois vallées » de la polyvalente Hormidas-Gamelin dans le secteur Buckingham de Gatineau. J'en avais fréquemment entendu vanter la table sans jamais faire l'effort de m'y rendre. Voilà.

Ma première expérience m'a enchanté et celles qui ont suivi m'ont permis de faire de merveilleuses découvertes gastronomiques. Le menu-dégustation des 10-11 décembre 2025 comportait huit services au coût dérisoire de 92$. Jugez par vous-mêmes : huitres, salade d'asperges, foie gras poêlé, ris de veau, granité, canard mariné et lustré, fromage, chocolat grand cru. Tout ça a duré trois heures – il fallait bien pendre le temps de digérer – et je n'ai eu qu'un seul regret : c'est de m'y être rendu seul. Homme de peu de foi! Je ne voulais pas prendre le risque de m'y rendre accompagné au cas où les plats ou service ne se seraient pas avérés à la hauteur.

Après plusieurs visites depuis, les plats sont au-delà de mes espérances. Chapeau aux futurs chefs et à tout le personnel. Bravo aussi à leurs enseignants. C'est sans réserves que je vous recommande ce restaurant école. Surtout, de grâce, soyez accompagné. C'est terrible de ne pas pouvoir partager un tel festin avec des amis pour animer les échanges entre les services.

Quelques précautions s'imposent cependant. Le restaurant n'est pas ouvert tous les jours et ne fonctionne que sur réservation. Les disponibilités sont affichées à chaque mois et elles s'envolent rapidement. Par exemple, les menus du mois d'avril 2026 sont offerts cinq jours seulement et ne se répètent pas. Les tables disponibles disparaissent rapidement. De plus, les horaires et la

disposition des tables peuvent varier selon le menu et le nombre de services. Les menus du dîner comportent généralement moins de services que ceux du soir.

Il faut compter 35 minutes en voiture pour s'y rendre à partir de l'Université d'Ottawa. Le stationnement est gratuit et facilement accessible en tout temps. Après tout, ce n'est pas situé au centre-ville d'Ottawa!

Pour réserver et voir les menus à venir, rendez vous sur le site d'Innovation-Outaouais. **https://www.innovation-outaouais.com/reservations**. Le restaurant est situé au 584 rue Maclaren Est, Gatineau (secteur Buckingham), soit à 32 minutes de voiture par l'autoroute 50 à partir de l'Université d'Ottawa. Plus de renseignements sont disponibles sur Google Maps. Vous y trouverez non seulement votre chemin, mais aussi les avis des clients satisfaits (en moyenne 4,6 sur 5) et des photos des réalisations des étudiants de cette école hôtelière.

Bon appétit!

LA TABLE DES 3 VALLÉES (École hôtelière de l'Outaouais)

584 Rue Maclaren Est, Gatineau, QC

+1 (819) 986-8514 x2

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Business News

Services for Retirees

Are You Getting Your CURAC Perks?

By Ron Champion, Chair, CURAC Affinity Marketing Committee and André Lapierre, APRUO delegate to CURAC

As a member of APRUO, you can take advantage of the products and services of CURAC's Affinity Partners.

More than 40 retiree associations, including APRUO, are members of the College and University Retiree Associations of Canada (CURAC), which negotiates partnership agreements with companies and organizations on behalf of its association members and the tens of thousands of retirees they represent.

> *It's a simple and mutually beneficial arrangement: we retirees travel, buy various kinds of insurance, and probably need glasses and (maybe – according to our partners) hearing aids. CURAC works with organizations that provide those services or products – and discounts.*

When you purchase a product or service from a CURAC partner, you help yourself, your retiree association, and CURAC. Some partners pay a rebate to CURAC, which is shared with member associations. All partners have discounts or special offers. Everyone wins. Our association has benefited from substantial rebates from CURAC over the years, from $46.24 in 2019 to $ 909.76 in 2024.

Read on for a summary of current offers. For more information about the partners and their offers, visit the **CURAC website, <<Member Benefits>>**.

Travel

collette	• Travel • Guided tours	• Save $100 /person • Plus 5% loyalty bonus • **Details at CURAC**
trip MERCHANT GIVES YOU MORE!	• Travel – book anything you see online! • Custom group trips	• Member Travel Savings | Up to 50% Off • Plus any third-party loyalty bonus • Plus TM's 2% loyalty bonus • Custom website for CURAC • Trip giveaways • **Details at CURAC**

Insurance

RTO ERO	• Extended health care *with travel insurance included* • Dental plan • Trip cancellation and travel interruption	• Mention CURAC and identify your retiree association • **Details at CURAC**
belairdirect. travel insurance belairdirect. car and home insurance	• Travel (formerly Johnson) • Car and home	• Mention CURAC and identify your retiree association • **Details at CURAC**

Health

Specsavers	• Eye exams, eyewear, contact lenses	• Two pairs of eyeglasses for $149 (with single-vision lenses, a scratch-resistant coating, and UV protection) • 60% off lens upgrades with proof of retiree association membership • **Details at CURAC**
HearingLife	• Hearing aids • Custom noise protection	• 10% discount for member, spouse, children, parents • **Details at CURAC**

Retirement Living

SCHLEGEL VILLAGES	• Independent living • Retirement apartments • Full-service retirement suites • Assisted care • Memory care • Long-term care	• Complimentary meeting space and more for CURAC retiree associations • Ontario, various cities • **Details at CURAC**

For legal and other reasons, products and services may not be available in your province or city. You may be asked to provide proof of your retirement or membership status. For more information, visit the CURAC website or search for "CURAC membership benefits."

What other affinity partnerships should CURAC explore? Send your suggestions or comments to CURAC, c/o Ron Champion, ron.champion@uwaterloo.ca or André Lapierre at andre_lapierre@uottawa.ca.

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Health Care Spending Account [HCSA]

A friendly reminder! Please remember to promptly use your 2026 HCSA credits if you have eligible medical and/or dental expenses. Detailed instructions on how to do this are on the APRUO website at**:** **https://apruo.ca/benefits/health-care-spending-account**.

As of July 2025, as in past years, a substantial number of credits [$332,816.05 to be precise] has been forfeited. There are several reasons for this. However, if one of the reasons is that you are having difficulty navigating the Canada Life website for submitting a claim, kindly contact us at **APRUO@uottawa.ca**. We would be more than happy to guide you through the process.

If you chose **not** to avail yourself of this benefit, we would be interested in knowing the reason why. It would be helpful if you sent your comments to **APRUO@uottawa.ca**.

N.B. *CanadaLife has created a separate option for those who wish to claim health insurance premiums. After logging in, you will be offered a choice—to reclaim reimbursement of itemized expenses or to be reimbursed for premiums paid for a supplemental insurance plan.*

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Renewal of APRUO Membership

The key to our effectiveness as an association lies in the financial support of our members. Membership does more than sustain the operations of APRUO. It supports advocacy on issues affecting retirees, scholarships for students, educational events, community-building activities, and the continued exchange of ideas among colleagues. We are grateful for the ongoing support of our members.

If your membership has expired, we contacted you as part of our annual membership renewal campaign. If you haven't already done so, we encourage you to register.

Renewing your membership is very simple:

• Click here **https://apruo.ca** and, under "Membership", follow the instructions for current members ["Renew my membership"] or for new members ["Become a member"].
OR
• Make an INTERAC e-Transfer of $25, $50 or $75 (1, 2 or 3 years) to the email address **treapruo@uottawa.ca**
OR

- Send a check made payable to APRUO, for the amount of your choice, to the following address:

Treasurer of APRUO, University of Ottawa
141 Louis-Pasteur Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6N5
For any questions regarding membership, please contact **Richard Clément**
at treapruo@uottawa.ca

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Updated Contact Information: Human Resources & IT

Please note that phone numbers and e-mail addresses may vary depending on your request.

You can contact **Human Resources Service Center at 613-562-5000, option #3** or **https://www.uottawa.ca/notre-universite/administration-services/ressources-humaines/rh-demander-laide** for the following requests:

1. **Change your address.** You can also do this directly in Workday. HR receives a report and sends it to RBC investor & Treasury Services, the pension plan trustee.
2. **Change your bank account.**
3. **Obtain information about life insurance and related T4A slips (taxable benefit).**
4. **Obtain your pension income tax slips (T4A/RL2).** You can also contact **RBC at 1-800-668-1320.**

Other Requests

5. **Group insurance plan** (coverage, health spending account, claims):
    - **Canada Life**
        - **Dedicated UOttawa hotline: 1-833-794-0225**
    - **Benefits Team**
        - **avantagesrh@uottawa.ca**
        - **613-562-5163**
6. **Pension Plans** (bank changes, address or personal information changes):
        - **pension@uottawa.ca**
        - **613-562-5375**

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Other News

APRUO Scholarships

By: Leslie Laczko, APRUO Scholarships Committee (Chairperson)

APRUO scholarships awarded for 2026

The APRUO has awarded four more scholarships for 2026, and the winning candidates' biographies are now available for viewing on **apruo.ca/scholarships**. This year's winners have impressive records.

The scholarship committee, composed this year of Leslie Laczko (chair), Andrée Durieux-Smith, and Raymond Leblanc, had the pleasant but challenging task of choosing only four winners among a talented group of 37 applicants. Our committee works in close collaboration with the University's Scholarship Office, which manages all administrative details.

Our scholarship is open to full time undergraduates who have strong academic records, who demonstrate financial need, and who are children or grandchildren of present or past University of Ottawa employees. In terms of their 'kinship' connection, scholarship recipients are drawn from the full range of university employee categories, full- and part-time, past and present, and from both academic and support staff.

The APRUO Scholarship Fund endowment account now has a value of over $ 200,000, thanks to all your donations since the award's inception. The yearly interest generated by this fund provides the bulk of the sum available for distribution. This year, we were able to fund four awards of $ 2000.

Beyond the financial assistance provided, these scholarships reflect APRUO's commitment to supporting future generations of students. Through the generosity of our members, the impact of the University community continues to extend well beyond retirement.

APRUO extends its heartfelt congratulations to this year's recipients and its deep appreciation to all who contribute to sustaining this important initiative.

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Invitation

To: Members of APRUO, ASRA, and invited guests

Event: The third Oganovic Lecture on ***Music and health in older adults:***
Improving wellbeing of older adults through community-based music programs

Time: Wednesday September 23rd 2026, from 1.00pm to 4.00pm.

Location: To be announced

Organizer: Andrée Durieux-Smith, APRUO Events

About our Speaker

Dr. Gilles Comeau is a full professor in the School of Music at the University of Ottawa, a member of the Royal Society of Canada and the founding director of the Research Institute in Music and Health at the University. Dr. Comeau's research interests include the impact of music on mental health. Here is a brief summary of his presentation.

Music and health in older adults
Improving wellbeing of older adults through community-based music programs

Considering the growing older adults population and the move towards a more holistic approach to health, music programs are seen as an alternative non-pharmacological approach to sustain or improve health and wellbeing of older adults affected by various aging conditions. A small but growing body of research has begun to shed light on the potential of music activities in transforming the onset of age-related ailments: reducing the risk of developing mental illness or reducing severity of conditions (depression and anxiety); preserving or increasing cognitive function (improving processing speed and working memory; lowering risk or later onset of dementia), and slowing physical decline (helping with gait and postural coordination; improving strength, flexibility, and motor ability).

N.B. The presentation will be in French but questions can be asked in both official languages.

Please join us for this thought-provoking presentation!

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In-Town Events

Perfect Bookstore holds weekly book launches. If you would like to attend, please go to **Perfectbooks.ca** for further information.

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Reflections: Continuing the Conversation

One of the privileges of retirement is the opportunity to choose how we spend our time. Freed from the schedules, deadlines, and responsibilities that shaped much of our professional lives, we gain the freedom to pursue interests that may once have been postponed by competing demands. Yet, as the articles in this edition of *Nexus* remind us, retirement is not simply about having more time. It is about what we choose to do with it.

The contributions in these pages reflect a remarkable range of interests and experiences. We have explored music and health, literature and culture, science and scholarship, community engagement and personal reflection. Some contributors have shared research and expertise developed over many years, while others have offered creative works, memories, and observations shaped by new experiences and perspectives. Together, they illustrate that intellectual curiosity and meaningful engagement do not retire when careers end.

What is particularly striking is the way in which learning continues to unfold throughout life. New questions emerge. Long-standing interests deepen. Unexpected opportunities arise. Whether through reading, travel, volunteer work, artistic pursuits, community involvement, or simply thoughtful conversation with friends and colleagues, many of us continue to discover new ways of engaging with the world around us.

Perhaps this is one of the enduring lessons of academic life. The pursuit of knowledge was never solely about our professions; it was also about cultivating habits of curiosity, reflection, and openness to new ideas. Those habits remain with us. They continue to shape how we understand ourselves, our communities, and the changing world around us.

As this edition of *Nexus* comes to a close, we hope you have enjoyed the many perspectives, experiences, and insights shared by our contributors. Perhaps the months ahead will bring a book worth recommending, a project worth pursuing, a place worth exploring, or an experience worth sharing. We look forward to continuing the conversation.

Christina and the Rest of the Team