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Epilogue

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Editor's Note

This first issue of the new academic term begins with a detailed description of our Lunch With ... events, with the schedule for the upcoming year. In preparation for the AGM in October, there is the report of the Nominations Committee for the election of members of the ARAS Executive Board. Following the **In Memoriam** box is the usual reprint of one of Keith Smillie's old columns, *Mousing Around*, this one guaranteeing laughs.

It has been a long time now since I have received an adventure story from an ARAS member. An *adventure* can entail dramatic events in exotic places, but also frustration in dealing with a bureaucracy, or struggling with a computer. I hope to receive such a story for the December issue.

Ruth Gruhn

Notices

The phrase "Lunch with..." has figured in ARAS's vocabulary for many years now as the name for its midday speaker series. Even members who have yet to attend any "Lunch with..." events will recognize the term from reports of its activities in *Epilogue*, although, in this issue, the focus is not on the past but on what's coming up next.

There will be five "Lunch with..." sessions during the 25/26 academic year, on the following dates with the following speakers. Exact titles and content are TBA, but here's the general plan. On **September 24** the year begins with Geoffrey Rockwell (Philosophy and Digital Humanities) who will explore some of the works and wonders of AI. He will be followed on **November 12** by Josephine van Lier (Musician and Director, Early Music Alberta), whose interests lie more in the cultural legacy of the past than along the uncertain path of modern technology. Speakers at the three remaining sessions of "Lunch with..." in early 2026 will all focus on Canadian topics. For **January 28**, Rod MacLeod (History), author of a history of the RCMP and of the University of Alberta, will speak on a topic related to Western Canada. On **February 25**, Alison Criscitiello (Earth and Atmospheric Sciences; Director, Canadian Ice Core Lab; mountaineer) will talk about her work as an ice core scientist, including fieldwork on a high arctic ice cap.

Lastly, on **March 25**, Geoff Holroyd (Canadian Wildlife Service; Co-founder and current Chair, Beaverhill Bird Observatory) will bring it all home to roost, so to speak, by drawing on his wealth of experience and knowledge about birds in Alberta and abroad. Look for more details about these talks, as well as their time and place, in ARAS's weekly newsletter as the date for each of them approaches.

Although the speakers are the stars of "Lunch with...", the events are not just about them. Their talks are informal, with ample opportunity to meet them and chat. Above all, "Lunch with..." is a social occasion, an opportunity for members of ARAS to meet fellow retirees, not just former colleagues from their own Department or Faculty, but new acquaintances from different sectors of the university community. Make a note of the dates above, come along and find out what it's all about, and participate in ARAS to help sustain it as a live and active association.

The first Lunch with... of the 2025-26 academic year will be held on Wednesday, September 24, in University Terrace (8303 - 112 Street), Room 1-38).

The speaker for this occasion is Dr. Geoffrey Rockwell, Professor of Philosophy and Digital Humanities at the University of Alberta, and present holder of a Canada CIFAR AI Chair at the Alberta Machine Intelligence Institute. He will speak on the topic: *Caring for Safe Artificial Intelligence*. How can we ensure that AI is deployed in a safe and trustworthy manner? A review of some of the concerns regarding AI and its rapid deployment, followed by consideration of what we as citizens should expect when it comes to AI safety.

Lunch (sandwich, soup, dessert squares, and coffee), catered by The Upper Crust Café, is available by 11:30 and costs \$25 per person (payable in person or, preferably, by Interac transfer to ARAS at emirhse@ualberta.ca). Note that the price has increased this year, in response to the increased cost of catering and the need for Lunch With ... to break even.

Richard Young

Reports

REPORT OF THE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED ACADEMIC STAFF

At its meeting on September 3, 2025, the ARAS Executive provisionally approved the following Slate of Candidates for a two-year term. No further nominations have been received from the membership at large. ARAS bylaws state that no nominations from the membership shall be received at the AGM unless the Nominating Committee fails to secure a candidate for that office.

Nominated are the following for the term 2025-2027:

President: Beverly O'Brien

Vice- President Walter Archer
Secretary: Gordon Rostoker
Treasurer: Walter Allegretto
Member at Large Vivien Bosley
Member at Large Ken Roy
Member at Large Peter Blenis

For your information:

Executive member whose current term will expire in 2026:

Member-at-Large: Linda Ogilvie

Continuing member by Presidential Appointment: Ruth Gruhn (Editor: *Epilogue*)

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the ARAS Nominations Committee,

Gordon Rostoker, Nominations Chair

In Memoriam

Allan Ballah	Modern Languages
Andrew Cave	Family Medicine
Judith Hibberd	Nursing
Jutta Hinrichs	Occupational Therapy
Nancy Kerr	Home Economics
Jill Konkin	Family Medicine
David Lubell	Anthropology
Robert Merrett	English
Gerald Stemke	Biological Sciences
Ronald Torgerson	Physics and Computing Sciences

Mousing Around

Keith Smillie

53. More Mathematical Humour

This column was supposed to be on Public Key Encryption but I decided that we might give prime numbers and cryptology a rest for one issue of *Epilogue*. Instead, I would like to introduce some lighter fare taken from Desmond MacHale's *Comic Sections. The Book of Mathematical Jokes, Humour, Wit and Wisdom*, a book I used in a much earlier column for the same purpose. I hope you enjoy them. Incidentally MacHale is Professor of Mathematics at the University of Cork, and the two jokes about Irishmen given below have been taken from a chapter containing only Irish jokes.

A Japanese author is reputed to have written the following in a letter to the editor of a journal: "Please thank the referees for their many suggestions. I would like to execute them."

Just because I have a Ph.D. in mathematics doesn't mean I'm stupid."

"Can you do addition?" asked the White Queen. "What is one and one and one and one and one and one and one and one and one and one and one?" "I don't know," said Alice, "I lost count."

One Irishman was complaining to another that he had gone on an expensive fishing trip and caught only one fish. "That fish," he told him, "cost me £500." "Weren't you lucky," said the friend, "that you didn't catch two."

True incident in a bookshop:

Student: "Could I have some log tables, please?"

Assistant: "Sorry, we don't stock furniture!"

A statistician was about to undergo a serious operation and asked the surgeon what his chances of survival were. "Your chances are excellent," said the surgeon. "Nine people out of ten die from this operation, and the last nine patients I've operated on have died."

A mathematician asked his little girl what she was doing in school mathematics at the moment.

"We are doing gozintas at the moment," she told him.

"Gozintas?" he asked her. "What in earth are they?"

"You know," she said, "three gozinta six, five gozinta ten."

After Bertrand Russell's first child was born, he was asked by a friend if it was a boy or a girl. He replied, "Yes."

The famous wit Sydney Smith was out walking one day when he heard two women screaming abuse at each other from upstairs windows on opposite sides of a narrow street.

“Those two will never agree,” he remarked, “because they are arguing from different premises.”

The following “almost limerick” was recited by schoolchildren over fifty years ago:

Multiplication is vexation,
Division’s just as bad.
The rule of three
Perplexes me,
And practice drives me mad.

Which is the oddest prime number? Two, because it’s the only even prime number.

What does a retired mathematician call his house? Aftermath.

Some very good mathematics students become actuaries. An actuary is someone who can’t stand the excitement of chartered accountancy.

The generation of random numbers is too important to be left to chance.

An Irishman travelling on the London Tube late one evening saw a notice saying
DOGS MUST BE CARRIED ON THE TUBE

“Where am I going to get a dog at this hour of the night?” he moaned.

What sort of computer did Newton use? An Apple.

Two statisticians, one very fat and the other very thin, fell off the top of a high building. Which one hit the ground first? Who cares, so long as they are both statisticians.

Those who consider mathematicians eccentric might like to reflect on the fact that a well-known American physicist is said to have cleaned one of his most expensive optical instruments by pushing his cat through it.

Finally, here are a few howlers that the author maintains have been taken from some of his examination papers:

Parallel lines never meet unless you bend one or both of them.
Parallel lines do not meet although produced to eternity.
A circle is a round line with no kinks in it joined up at the end so as not to show where the beginning is.
A circle is a round straight line with a hole in the middle.
If one angle of a triangle is more than 90 degrees, the triangle is obscene.
