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# Epilogue

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## Editor's note

With September, ARAS comes to life again. This issue of *Epilogue* contains the Fall term schedule for the Lunch With ... events; and for the annual AGM in October, the list of nominees for election to the ARAS Executive Committee is presented. Alas the list of names in the In Memoriam box is long; thirteen have left us this summer. For your entertainment, however, I've included an account of one of my adventures in Brazil back in the mid-1980s; and an old Mousing Around column by the late Keith Smillie, providing a series of mathematics jokes. Here's hoping that we enjoy a Fall season as long and as pleasant as last year; and by next year all of the construction projects creating obstacle courses around campus *are finally over*.

*Ruth Gruhn*

## Notices

The Fall term dates for Lunch With ... events are **25 September, 23 October, and 27 November**. On 25 September, the year will open with a presentation by Jeremy Spurgeon, Organist for the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra and Director of Music at All Saints' Cathedral in Edmonton. He will reflect on 44 years as a musician in the city. The October event is the annual AGM, probably to be held by Zoom. In November, Florence Glanfield, former Chair of the Department of Secondary Education and currently Vice-Provost (Indigenous Programming and Research), will speak on a topic TBA.

Aside from the October AGM, Lunch With ... events in Fall 2024 will be held in classroom 1-38 in the University Terrace building. The meals will continue to be catered by the restaurant Upper Crust; and at \$20 per person, will feature soup, sandwiches, and dessert squares. So that we know how many meals to order, please indicate your plan to attend at least two days in advance to [emirhse@ualberta.ca](mailto:emirhse@ualberta.ca).

The traditional **Christmas Brunch** will be held at the University Club on **Saturday 14 December**.

## Reports

### **A Change in our Office staff**

At the end of May, our very efficient Office Assistant David Raagas graduated and found full time employment in Calgary. We wish him well. Unfortunately our choice for his replacement had to withdraw for reasons of health, but a new Office Assistant has been hired and will be at the office desk starting this Fall. Her name is Damdini Nanayakkara.

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

At its meeting on August 28, 2024, the ARAS Executive provisionally approved the following Slate of Candidates for a two- year term for three candidates and a one year term for the person nominated for President. 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 2024-2025 President: Walter Allegretto  
For the term 2024-2026 Secretary: Don Carmichael  
Member at Large: Beverley O'Brien  
Member at Large: Linda Ogilvie

For your information:

Executive members whose current term will expire in 2025:

Vice-President: Walter Archer  
Treasurer: David Cooper  
Member-at-Large: Vivien Bosley  
Member-at-Large: Ken Roy  
Member-at-Large: Richard Young  
President's Appointment: Ruth Gruhn (Editor, *Epilogue*)  
Past President (ex-officio): Gordon Rostoker

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the ARAS nominations committee,

*Jan Murie, Nominations Chair*

## Stories

### **A Travel Adventure in Brazil**

In the mid-1980s, my late husband Alan Bryan and I carried out archaeological survey and excavations in caves and rockshelters in a large limestone bloc in the central

region of the northeastern Brazilian state of Bahía. We spent months at a time in Rio de Janeiro, analyzing our artifact collection at the Museu Nacional. When it was time to go back to the field, we reclaimed our field vehicle, a Volkswagen jeep, from the physicist friend who kept it for us; and set out on the drive north to Bahía.

On one occasion we were late getting out of Rio; and decided that we would have to end the day in Campos, a small city located about 200 km northeast of Rio. When we pulled into the enclosed parking lot of the hotel recommended by the Brazilian travel guide *Quatro Rodas*, however, an employee rushed out to tell us that the hotel was *completo* (full up). We found out that there was a big conference being held in the city that week, and all the hotels were full. It was too late to drive on. What to do?

Inspiration! We would try one of the “motels” on the edge of town. With our extensive travels in South America, we knew what those motels were for: providing a private room for a man to meet with his mistress. We would have the opportunity to find out what these places were like.

When we drove up to the entrance of the best-looking one (*Quatro Rodas* doesn't list these establishments), the clerk looked askance at us; but with a shrug he assigned us a room. Adjacent to our room there was a garage for our car, and a large curtain to conceal it. No windows in the room, of course. The room was dominated by a large circular-shaped bed, its cover decorated with prints of red hearts. It was a good bed; but in case you are wondering, we were too tired to use it for the motel's intended purpose. There was a small bathroom adjoining, with toilet, sink, and shower. The clerk had given us a dinner menu; with our choice indicated, we deposited it in a small service box in the wall. Soon the dinner ordered appeared within the box. In the morning, at the hour we had requested, the *café de manhã* (buns, fruit, and coffee) was in the service box; and afterward we departed north for Bahía.

An interesting establishment, we thought; and comfortable enough, plus total privacy, security, and meal service. Still, we looked forward to our favourite stopover, the beautiful *pousada* (inn) in the lovely little town of Lençóis, Bahia.

*Ruth Gruhn*

### **In Memoriam**

<b>Carlos Basualdo</b>	Cardiology
<b>Graham Chambers</b>	Mathematics
<b>Pierre Flor-Henry</b>	Psychiatry
<b>Gordon Freeman</b>	Chemistry

<b>Tim Hartnagel</b>	Sociology
<b>Ken Hutchison</b>	Cardiovascular Physiology
<b>Frank Jones</b>	Law School
<b>Faqir Khanna</b>	Physics
<b>Anne Lambert</b>	Human Ecology
<b>Pat McCormack</b>	Native Studies
<b>Doug Parker</b>	Education
<b>Helmy Sayed-Ahmed Sherif</b>	Physics
<b>Jo-Ann Wallace</b>	English and Film Studies

## **Mousing Around**

*Keith Smillie*

### **71. Some More Mathematical Humour**

In a couple of previous columns I have drawn on *Comic Sections: The Book of Mathematical Jokes, Humour, Wit and Wisdom* by Desmond MacHale, Professor of Mathematics at the University of Cork and biographer of the nineteenth-century British logician George Boole. The present column contains a few more excerpts from this book, which I found when I was browsing in it during a dreary winter's weekend last year. All of them are new except the first three, which I thought were worth repeating; and none contains any mathematical symbolism.

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.

Having ordered a pizza, an Irishman was asked whether he wanted it cut into four or eight pieces. “Better make it four,” he replied, “I don't think I could ever manage to eat eight pieces.”

Teacher: “Why are you scratching your head all the time?”

Student: “ I have arithmetics in my hair.”

Teacher: “Why do you call them arithmetics?”

Student: “Because they add to my misery, subtract from my pleasure, divide my attention, and multiply like mad.”

Some students of mathematics are now so tense they can hardly go to sleep during lectures.

Don't talk to me about mathematics. I've come to the conclusion I can live without it. - *Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.*

The good Christian should be aware of mathematicians who make empty prophesy. The danger already exists that mathematicians have made a covenant with the devil to darken the spirit and

confine man within the bowels of hell. - *St. Augustine*

Mathematics: that was one of my mistakes. I made it too difficult. – *God [alias George Burns]*

Teacher: Can you find the cube root of 1000?

Student: I didn't even know it was lost.

There can be no question, however, that prolonged commitment to mathematical exercises in economics can be damaging. IT leads to atrophy of judgment and intuition, - *J. K. Galbraith*

There are three kinds of mathematicians – those who can count and those who can't.

I had been to school and could say the multiplication table up to 6 times 7 is 35 and I don't reckon I could ever get any further than that if I were to live forever. I don't take no stock in mathematics anyway. – *Huckleberry Finn*

The binary system is fun  
And with it odd things can be done.  
For two, as you know,  
Is a one and an oh,  
And five is a hundred and one.

An Irishman once visited a physics laboratory and saw an inverted image of himself in a convex mirror. His explanation was that the mirror had been hung upside down.

Samuel Johnson's definition of a network is noteworthy: Anything reticulated or decussated, at equal distances, with interstices between the intersections.

A philosopher was once asked if he believed in predestination or free will. "We have to believe in free will," he replied, "We have no choice in the matter".

A little boy told his mother that he wasn't going to school any more because his teacher told lies, "What do you mean?" asked his mother. "Well," explained the little fellow, "yesterday he told us that two and two make four, and today he said that it was three and one,"

The first date in English history is 55 B.C. Julius Caesar was compelled to invade Britain again the following year (54 B.C., not 56, owing to the peculiar Roman method of counting). – *W. C. Sellar and R. J. Yeatman*

There is a nice story, possibly apocryphal, of a Scottish mathematician who wrote a paper on number theory in Scots Gaelic using the Gaelic version of his name. The paper was sent to him to be refereed in the English version of his name, as he was the only expert in number theory fluent in Scots Gaelic. He reported that the paper was an excellent one (which undoubtedly it was) and he strongly recommended publication. Naturally, the paper was accepted.

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