

RRC Heritage Group

Newsletter



Year of the Snake

March 2013

Hello everyone.

As your new editor I have some mighty shoes to fill with the retirement of Ron Blicq. Please let me know what you think of the newsletter.

In this newsletter you will find a bio of Ron. We wish him well in his ongoing endeavours.

This may look as if I am in sunny Florida unfortunately it is only our sun room with artificial plants!



Your new Editor



Did you spent some time in warmer climes this past winter? Share your experiences with the rest of us.



Change regarding Membership Fee

In the past our membership fee was matched dollar for dollar by the MSBI and transferred to our Endowment Fund. However, the rules have changed. Only donations qualify for MSBI matching amounts. Therefore, the annual membership fee has been changed to '**Annual Sustaining Donation**'. All donations of \$20.00 or more will receive a receipt for Income Tax purposes.

Attached is the revised form. Please review the form. The changes will be voted on at our annual meeting in April. If you have questions, please bring them to the meeting in April.

Heritage Group Executive

Your current executive has served you for three years. Please consider joining the executive. Job descriptions for the various roles will be distributed at the March meeting. Elections will take place at the Annual Meeting in April.



Heritage Group Members attending the Grand Opening of the Paterson GlobalFoods Institute, February 21, 2013

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Obituaries:

Guldeep Sing

It is with deep sadness that we note the sudden death of Library staff member Guldeep Singh on Wednesday, January 30, 2013. Born November 12, 1953 she overcame many challenges in life with determination and faith. Many of you will have known Guldeep as the friendly face at the NDC Library's Circulation desk in the evenings. Guldeep worked for RRC for almost 10 years and was counted on for her reliability and willingness to fill-in whenever asked. She was a kind and gentle soul who will be missed.

Sigmar Palmason

After a courageous battle with cancer, Sigmar died on February 1, 2013. Sigmar was born at Bissett, MB, on February 25, 1935, moving to Winnipeg in 1951. Entering the plumbing trade in 1955 he subsequently became an instructor at RRC in the piping trades department. After retirement he became a member of the RRC Heritage Group. He was also a member of the Bissett and Area Historical Society. His activities included fishing, curling and watching women's curling on the Internet and TV.

Roy Malyon

Roy was a Chair in the Transportation department, in the '90s, and then moved to the Market Driven Training dept. He was responsible for creating RRC's partnership with Toyota and the T-TEP program. After Toyota discontinued their program across Canada, they continued to remain a strong supporter of RRC through vehicle donations. Roy was also instrumental in founding partnerships with Boeing and Standard Aero that continue to this day. He was very highly respected by all that worked with him and was a great ambassador for the college. Roy died on February 13, 2013.

Judi Lidstone

It is with great sadness we note the passing of Judi after a courageous battle with cancer on February 11, 2013 at age 61. An instructor in the Med. Rad. Program she was an inspiration to her students and colleagues. Judi will be remembered as always being upbeat in the face of adversity.

Golf was Judi's down-time passion whose crowning achievement was her induction into the Manitoba Golf Hall of Fame.

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Published by:

Red River College

2055 Notre Dame Ave., Winnipeg, MB, R3H 0J9

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The following article was provided by Horace Hackett who some of you might remember was a Communications Instructor at RRC.



THE TROUBLE WITH PROFILING

My wife and I were recently part of a wonderful tour of Australia and New Zealand (South Island) and would recommend it highly. One of the features of the NZ leg was dinner and a performance by native Maori dancers (we were told). Part of the program would have them do the Haka, a war dance intended to intimidate their enemy and now made famous by their world champion All Blacks rugby team.

After a very entertaining performance we got to meet the two women and three men who did the show. The men were big burly three hundred pounders who fitted my picture of a typical Maori. One of the men caught our accent and asked where we were from. My wife is from Jamaica and I am from Trinidad. What part of NZ are you from, we asked? His reply was a complete surprise.

“I am from St Vincent in the West Indies”.

His parents had emigrated to NZ from St Vincent when he was a youngster.

Flag of Trinidad & Tobago:



Horace Hackett

Horace Hackett was born in Trinidad and Tobago and migrated to Canada in 1959. He obtained a Diploma in Mechanical Engineering Technology from RRC, and a BSc. from U of Manitoba. He worked in the oil industry for four years, then went on to teach Technical Communication to Diploma, and Trades students at RRC from 1976 - 1998.



Rugby scrum



Horace's favourite game:

Cricket

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About Our Previous Editor...

Because of his presence as editor of the *Newsletter* over the past four years, we all know who Ron Blicq is, and most of us are aware that, for 23 years, he taught technical communication at RRC. But how many of us know anything else about him, and the unusual life he has experienced?

So, for one of my first “articles” in the *Newsletter*, I thought I should interview him and ask some questions. Here’s what I learned.

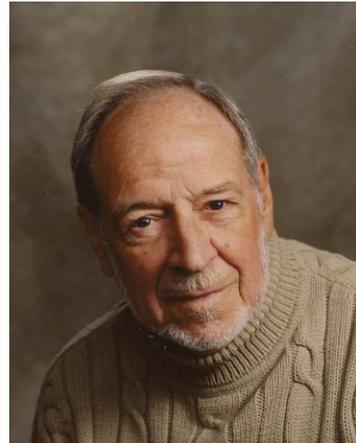
Ron was born in May 1925 on the British Island of Guernsey, one of the Channel Isles in the English Channel close to the coast of France, where to this day most of the roads and house names are still in French, and the patois *Guernseiaise* still exists.

“It was an idyllic place to live,” he said, “an equable climate, 26 square miles of lush countryside, and miles and miles of sandy beaches.”

But he and his two younger brothers lived there only until 20th June, 1940, when Germany marched through Western Europe and was about to occupy the nearby islands. So, with less than 24 hours notice, 95% of the island’s children were thrust onto old cargo boats and shipped to mainland England with their schools. Over the next couple of days, as many adults as possible also were evacuated, including Ron’s parents. Later the same year the family were evacuated to Winnipeg, where Ron entered Grade 11 at Kelvin High School.

On his 18th birthday he joined the RCAF, with a wonderful vision: he would become a Spitfire

pilot and join the airborne battle going on over Europe.



Ron Blicq

“But it didn’t work out like that,” he explained. “The air force needed radio-navigators to fly in Mosquito intruder bombers, and that’s the direction in which I went.”

Shortly after the war ended, he transferred to the British air force (the RAF) so he could continue flying (on the famed Lancaster bombers). Or that is what he said at the time. “The real reason,” he admits now, with a grin, “is that I had met a young woman in England and didn’t want to be shipped back to Canada and risk losing her.” (Yes, he married her and they had two sons. When Ron’s military career ended in 1957, he returned to Winnipeg with them.)

With the RAF he served in Europe, North Africa and Australia, and flew as navigator on the route between Brisbane and London several times between 1949 and 1951. “In those days, with piston-engine bombers, it took seven 8-10 hour flying days!”

From 1957 to 1967 he was a technical editor

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with CAE Industries in Winnipeg, writing and editing documents evolving from the company's contracts for maintenance of the Pinetree and Mid-Canada defence lines. Then in 1967 he joined the College. "Strangely," he says now, "although my main task was to teach technical communication for the technologies and trades, I also spent 12 years teaching observation writing to Early Child Education students." He admits now that those classes were a highlight of his teaching experience.

When he "retired" in 1990, he started teaching writing workshops in industry, and does so to this day. "It keeps me on my toes!" he says.

"So, what else did you do with your retirement?" I asked.

"Hmmm, quite a bit really."

He explained that in 1997 he joined the Winnipeg Gliding Club and over the next three summers trained to be a glider pilot. At age 75 he earned his Transport Canada Glider Pilots License, which he still holds. Then 14 years ago he starting writing biographical novels (four published to date) and stage plays, seven of which have been produced in the UK and five at the Winnipeg Fringe Festival.

This year—and he says it's one of the reasons he has had to step down as editor, is that a major play he wrote in 2005 is to be produced by United Players in Vancouver, and by another company the following year in Hamilton, Ontario. "It's called *Closure*, and it's about a man brought up by a single-parent mother who is searching for his father; but when he finds him the father refuses to admit he even knew his mother." He said it has been

produced by a regional theatre in the UK and in the US, but this will be the first production in Canada. A Winnipeg Drama Group also is considering producing the play in a year or two – so we may yet see it!

After talking with Ron, I did a little more research online, where I learned he is a Senior Life Member of the IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers), a Fellow of both the ISTC in the UK and the STC in the US (STC = Society for Technical Communication), and was awarded an Honorary Diploma by RRC in 1996. He has three children, who live successful lives in Edmonton (Ian), Gimli (Andy), and East Selkirk (Ali). He also has the dubious honour of being a single parent (male) with young children twice in his life!



On January 15, 1950, the RAF crew of a Lincoln bomber (a larger version of the Lancaster) pauses before take off at Kalgoorlie, Western Australia, as they prepare for an overnight research flight (9 hours) to Amberley, Queensland.

The question: which crew member is Ron?

Who will be the first to let me know by email?

Heritage Group Award Endowment Fund
Open to Former Employees of the Red River College

Project: Endowment Fund - to provide annual awards to RRC students in need of financial assistance.

*In order to sustain the Award Endowment Fund, the Heritage Group suggests that annual contributions be made by membership of the Heritage Group. All donations are matched dollar for dollar by MSBI . Donations **of \$20.00 or more** will automatically be **receipted for Income tax purposes**. Upon request, receipts will be issued for donations of \$10.00.*

Annual Sustaining Donation \$10.00 (Please make cheques payable to Red River College)

Donation Amount: _____ **\$10.00** _____ **\$20.00** _____ **Other**

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Postal Code: _____

Telephone Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Please return form with payment to Heritage Group
 Red River College
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NOTE: *This replaces your annual membership fee*