



# **40 Years of Activism: Working for a Better Dalhousie**

*Celebrating DFA's 40<sup>th</sup> year as a certified bargaining agent*

1978  
2018

### **TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

We would like to begin by acknowledging that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People. This territory is covered by the "Treaties of Peace and Friendship" which Mi'kmaq and Maliseet people first signed with the British Crown in 1725. The treaties did not deal with surrender of lands and resources but in fact recognized Mi'kmaq and Maliseet title and established the rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship between nations.

### **SPECIAL THANKS**

Thank you to those who wrote articles: David Westwood, David Robinson, Robert Rodger, Ray Larkin, Dale Poel, Jane Fee, Pierre Stevens, Mandy Kay-Raining Bird, David Mensink, Debbie Mellish, Catrina Brown, Darren Abramson, Faye Woodman, and Julia M. Wright.

Thank you to our former Presidents who submitted their President Recollections: Sue Sherwin, Chris Axworthy, Marcia Ozier, David Lewis, David Tindall, Colin Stuttard, Jane Fee, Ian Flint, Kevin Grundy, Helen Powell, Jerome Singleton, David Mensink, Terry Mitchell, Carrie Dawson, Catrina Brown, and Laurene Rehman.

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Thank you to Catherine Wall, DFA Communications Officer, for editing and coordinating the production of this booklet.

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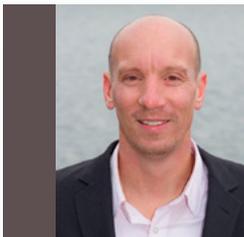
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## A history worth commemorating

**David A. Westwood, Ph.D.**

**Faculty of Health, School of  
Health & Human Performance**

**DFA President 2018-19**



It gives me great pleasure to write the introduction to this booklet commemorating the 40-year history of the Dalhousie Faculty Association as a bargaining agent at Dalhousie University. I came to Dalhousie in 2002 as a probationary tenure-track Assistant Professor, which gives me about 16 years of experience as a member of the DFA, but it is only during the past two years that I have been engaged with the business and operation of the Association as President-Elect and now President.

Like many faculty members new to Dalhousie, my knowledge of the DFA was minimal, extending to issues related to pay, benefits, and criteria for tenure and promotion. I was vaguely aware that there had been a rather lengthy strike in 2002 prior to my arrival, and when I mentioned that I was taking up a position at Dalhousie I would often hear comments alluding to a long history of strikes and job action at the University. I did not concern myself with such matters which surely would not impact my life or career, I thought.

While it remains true that we have not gone on strike during my tenure at the University, it has become increasingly obvious to me over the past four or five years that the DFA is extremely active behind the scenes helping to ensure that most members can carry out their duties without significant difficulty or disruption. Now that I am on the inside of the DFA, I have seen first-hand the amount of time, effort, and passion that is invested in defending the rights that we have gained through the past 40 years of collective bargaining. The DFA has benefitted from the professionalism and wisdom of a small but dedicated staff of employees

who keep the complex operation of the Association running smoothly and effectively. Each year there is a new corps of volunteer members that join and leave the Executive of the DFA, but our ability to maintain continuity and effectiveness hinges on the exceptional work of our loyal staff members.

In this booklet you will find a number of contributions on a range of topics drawn from our 40-year history as a bargaining agent. Some of you will have lived through the issues that are presented, and for others, like me, you might find it interesting to learn and think about these pivotal or poignant events in the context of your own work at Dalhousie University. It has been my privilege to have had several lengthy discussions with Dr. Robert (“Bob”) Sinclair Rodger during the preparations for our 40-year anniversary during which he painted a vivid picture of academic life both before and after the certification of the DFA. It is difficult for many of us to imagine working at a University where there is not a union to help defend our academic rights, but it was not a simple matter to convince a large and diverse group of faculty members that unionization was appropriate at that time. It is a credit to Bob Rodger and his persistence that the certification of the DFA was possible, and that is why we are pleased to create a lecture series in his name that will feature speakers on various topics related to the academic workplace.

As we take this opportunity to reflect upon our history, it is equally important to be mindful of the areas where further work is required and that the work of the DFA will never be complete. The emergence of the precarious worker threatens the

academic freedom and health of many individuals working at Dalhousie University, and it is an ongoing challenge for the DFA to provide support for members who hold limited-term appointments to ensure that they have the best working conditions possible, while also trying to find ways to achieve more permanent positions through collective bargaining. To be sure, the DFA has played an important role in the gains that have been made in the areas of equity and diversity at Dalhousie University but there is still more to be done particularly in terms of creating a workplace culture that helps people to feel welcome, supported, and included, so that they choose to pursue a long and satisfying career at the institution. Following from the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and the 94 calls to action, it is becoming increasingly clear that greater effort is required to make meaningful changes to recognize and value Indigenous knowledge, culture, governance, and traditions at Dalhousie, and, of course, across Canada. I hope that the DFA will be able to provide leadership and support in this area in the coming years.

I hope you enjoy this booklet, and that you will find some reasons to celebrate our 40th anniversary and perhaps take the opportunity to offer thanks to the individuals who have given of their time and energy to provide leadership during this time. Equally important, I hope that there might be something in this booklet that encourages you to step forward and become a future leader with the DFA on the path to our next anniversary celebration.

# DFA Presidents

Thank you to the following DFA Presidents for their commitment to protecting and enhancing the working conditions of our members, and for their passion in advancing the academic mission of Dalhousie University.

## 1977-78

Philip Welch, Ph.D.  
Paediatrics

## 1978-79

Bob Rodger, Ph.D.  
Psychology

## 1979-80

Susan Sherwin, Ph.D.  
Philosophy

## 1980-81

Edgar Friedenber, Ph.D.  
Education\*

## 1981-82

Chris Axworthy, Q.C.  
Law

## 1982-83

Om Kamra, Ph.D.  
Biology

## 1983-84

Patricia Burt  
Killam Library

## 1984-85

Sandy Young, Ph.D.  
Health & Human  
Performance

## 1985-86

John Rutherford, Ph.D.  
Anatomy &  
Neurobiology

## 1986-87

David Williams, Ph.D.  
Social Work  
&  
Marcia Ozier, Ph.D.  
Psychology

## 1987-88

David Lewis, Ph.D.  
Engineering

## 1988-89

David Williams, Ph.D.  
Social Work

## 1989-90

David Tindall, Ph.D.  
Physics &  
Atmospheric  
Sciences

## 1990-91

David Williams, Ph.D.  
Social Work

## 1991-92

Jennifer Bankier  
Law

## 1992-93

Tom Faulkner, Ph.D.  
Comparative Religion

## 1993-94

Colin Stuttard, Ph.D.  
Microbiology &  
Immunology

## 1994-95

Jennifer Bankier  
Law

## 1995-96

Andrew Wainwright,  
Ph.D.  
English

## 1996-97

Jane Fee, Ph.D.  
Human  
Communication  
Disorders

## 1997-98

Peter Schotch, Ph.D.  
Philosophy  
&  
Ismet Ugursal, Ph.D.  
Mechanical  
Engineering

## 1998-99

Ismet Ugursal, Ph.D.  
Mechanical  
Engineering

## 1999-2000

Carolyn Savoy, Ph.D.  
Health & Human  
Performance

## 2000-01

Tom Faulkner, Ph.D.  
Comparative Religion

## 2001-02

Andrew Wainwright,  
Ph.D.  
English

## 2002-03

Colin Stuttard, Ph.D.  
Microbiology &  
Immunology

## 2003-04

Ian Flint, Ph.D.  
Civil & Resource  
Engineering

## 2004-05

Kevin Grundy, Ph.D.  
Chemistry

## 2005-06

Helen Powell  
Sexton Design &  
Technology Library

## 2006-07

Jerome Singleton,  
Ph.D.  
Health & Human  
Performance

## 2007-08

Kevin Grundy, Ph.D.  
Chemistry

## 2008-09

David Mensink, Ph.D.  
Counselling &  
Psychological  
Services

## 2009-10

Terry Mitchell  
Dental Hygiene

## 2010-11

Carrie Dawson, Ph.D.  
Canadian Studies

## 2011-12

Anthony Stewart, Ph.D.  
English

## 2012-13

David Mensink, Ph.D.  
Counselling &  
Psychological Services

## 2013-14

Kevin Grundy, Ph.D.  
Chemistry

## 2014-15

Catrina Brown, Ph.D.  
Social Work

## 2015-16

David Mensink, Ph.D.  
Counselling &  
Psychological Services

## 2016-17

Laurene Rehman, Ph.D.  
Health & Human  
Performance

## 2017-18

Darren Abramson, Ph.D.  
Philosophy

## 2018-19

David Westwood, Ph.D.  
Health & Human  
Performance

\*Dalhousie closed its School of Education in 1995.

## IN MEMORIAM

### **Edgar Z. Friedenberg, Ph.D.** **DFA President 1980-81**

*died in 2000, age 79.* Born in New York, Edgar grew up in Louisiana where he earned a degree in chemistry at Centenary College. He completed a master's degree at Stanford, then served in the navy during World War II. After the war, he earned a Ph.D. in education at the University of Chicago, where he started his teaching career. He moved on to teach at Brooklyn College, University of California and the State University of New York. In the mid-1960s, Edgar regarded America's participation in the Vietnam War as an abomination and established himself as an important voice on what came to be called the "New Left." In 1970, he began teaching at Dalhousie, became professor emeritus in 1986 and continued in that position until his passing.

(Source: <https://mises.org/library/libertarian-outsider-edgar-z-friedenberg>)

### **Patricia Burt** **DFA President 1983-84**

*died in 2017, age 73.* Patricia (Paddy) was born in Scotland. After working as a Librarian at Dalhousie's Killam Library, she moved to Ontario where she pursued her Doctorate in Library and Information Sciences at University of Western Ontario (she completed the studies but not the thesis). She then went to New York and was a Professor at Columbia University in the Masters of Library and Information Sciences program. She went on to work at Algoma University and later at the University of the Fraser Valley. Finally she moved to Winnipeg where she was the Library Director at Red River College. Paddy was there for about 15 years and retired in 2016 shortly before her 72nd birthday. In her final year, she moved to Ottawa to be close to her son, and passed away in 2017 after a battle with cancer.

(Source: *Katherine Burt, Patricia's daughter*)

### **Alexander J. (Sandy) Young, Ph.D.** **DFA President 1984-85**

*died in 2000, age 62.* Born in New York, Sandy was educated in Pennsylvania and Maryland and taught at Dalhousie from 1970 until 1998. He was the director of the School of Health & Human Performance from 1989 to 1993, and helped establish Dalhousie's "Noon-time Ball" competition. He authored *Beyond Heroes: A Sport History of Nova Scotia*, examining the cultural and historical impact of sport in the province. He helped establish the Nova Scotia Sport Heritage Centre and co-hosted the Nova Scotia Sport Hall of Fame induction ceremonies for about 20 years. In 2000, Dalhousie renamed their athletics award the AJ Sandy Young Award, honouring recipients for their outstanding contribution to Nova Scotia sports. In 2002, Sandy was inducted posthumously to the Nova Scotia Sport Hall of Fame.

(Source: <https://dalspace.library.dal.ca/handle/10222/14425>)

### **David Williams, Ph.D.** **DFA President 1986-87, 1988-89, & 1990-91**

*died in 2017, age 83.* Born in Illinois, David got his Bachelor of Arts in Psychology at California State University Chico State, Masters of Social Work at the University of California, and Ph.D. at Brandeis University. David enjoyed a long career as a professor in Dalhousie's School of Social Work. He played a significant role in the formation of the School of Social Work at the University of Guyana and helped to develop the Social Studies Program at UPEI. He served as a Child Advocate Mediator, and hosted and tutored international students. He authored many scholarly publications and wrote several unpublished books. He became a poet at the age of 70, and was a member of the Poet's Club. David was with the United States Marine Corps and served in the Korean War.

(Source: *Newsletter of the Association of Dalhousie Retirees and Pensioners*)

## IN MEMORIAM

### **Tom Faulkner, Ph.D.**

#### **DFA President 1992-93 & 2000-01**

*died in 2010, age 64.* Tom was a lifelong scholar of religion. He began his teaching career at Dalhousie in 1975, and taught religion until 2004. He was President of St. Andrew's and St. Stephen's Universities from 2004-06, and completed his career as an Associate Professor of Church and Society, and as Director of the Ridd Institute for Religion and Global Policy at the University of Winnipeg. Tom played the guitar and banjo, and sang in several choirs. He loved his students and was an advocate for social justice. He was known for his intense glare, his passion for the world of academia, his brilliant mind, and his Tilley attire.

*(Source: Winnipeg Free Press, July 16, 2010)*

### **Carolyn Savoy, Ph.D.**

#### **DFA President 1999-2000**

*died in 2015, age 67.* Carolyn held a doctorate from the University of Tennessee in sports psychology. She coached the Dalhousie Tigers women's basketball team and won a record 858 games over three decades. Carolyn was inducted into the Nova Scotia Sport Hall of Fame in 2011, helped lead the Tigers to 11 Atlantic conference championships and was named Atlantic University Sport coach of the year five times. At the time of her death, she held the Canadian university record for most wins and held a 49-game regular season winning streak from 1979 to 1982. Savoy set high standards on the court and in the classroom - every student who played three to five years in her program graduated.

*(Source: Chronicle Herald, March 17, 2015)*

## Why have academic staff associations embraced unionization?

**David Robinson**  
**Executive Director**  
**Canadian Association of University Teachers**



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**Three DFA Members have served as president of CAUT:**

**James H. Aitchison (1960-61)**

**David Braybrooke (1975-76)**

**Alan Andrews (1992-94)**

*(Source: <https://www.caut.ca/about-us/presidents>)*

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The unionization of academic staff associations has a 50-year history in Canada. It is a history that, despite the fear and loathing of detractors, has shown that the certification of academic staff associations has not only improved terms and conditions of employment, but has also provided enhanced protections for professional rights like academic freedom while strengthening the voice of faculty in university governance.

Faculty associations had long existed in Canada, but prior to 1971 none were unionized. Associations at the time informally negotiated some terms and conditions of employment, but rather than fully-fledged collective bargaining this was an arrangement best described as “collective begging.” Policies were most often set unilaterally by the administration. Associations engaged in “consultations” with the administration to discuss salaries and benefits, but any changes depended entirely upon the goodwill and agreement of the Board of Governors. Faculty demands were frequently rebuffed, and without a right to strike or legal requirements for both parties to bargain in good faith there was little the association could do to put further pressure on the administration.

By the late 1960s, the limitations of this model finally began to show. The salaries and benefits of academics were falling compared to other professions, and professional rights were being weakened. For the first time, academic staff were openly debating and considering unionization.

## THE DFA: THE EARLY YEARS

Initially, however, most faculty associations and their members shunned the idea. Opponents felt that unionization would undermine collegiality, professionalism, and autonomy. It would transform academic staff into “mere employees”, and thereby undermine their claims to being a self-governing profession.

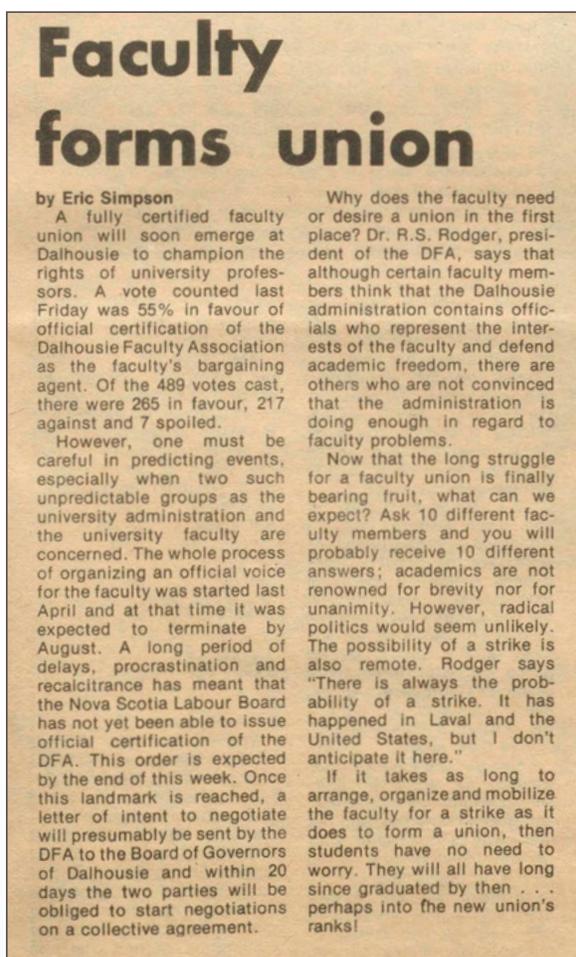
Proponents, on the other hand, argued that unionization would aid in improving working conditions and salaries, provide formalized grievance procedures to safeguard tenure and academic freedom, and solidify a faculty voice in institutional decision-making. Collective bargaining was seen as a way for academic staff to sit down as equals with the administration to shape not only their pay and benefits, but the nature of their institution as well. In the end, the slow but steady march toward unionization proved to be perfectly compatible with collegial governance, as evidenced by the growing faculty involvement in governance over this period. The proportion of Canadian university governing boards with faculty representation increased from 9% in 1955, to 92% by 1975.

Similarly, concerns that academic freedom would be sacrificed if faculty became “mere employees” proved to be misplaced. As the Harry Crowe case at United College demonstrated in 1951, academic freedom and tenure were far more precarious before unionization. Through legally enforceable collective agreements and grievance processes, unionized associations could more effectively defend principles of due process and academic freedom from administrative abuse.

While arguments in favour of unionization won the day in some cases, the actions of administrations were most often the decisive factor in bolstering the case for unionization. In this respect, the certification of the DFA is illustrative. In 1977, Dalhousie University refused to meet the DFA's request for binding arbitration on matters of salaries, benefits, grievances, recognition as sole bargaining agent, and sharing of information necessary for bargaining. Many DFA members who had been hesitant about unionization were taken aback by the employer's intransigence. In February of 1978, by a vote of 119-29, members approved the request for certification under the Nova Scotia Trade Union Act. In 1985, after 10 months of negotiations, the DFA undertook its first strike, lasting one day, over the issue of the University's withholding of pension contributions. As a result of the job action, the Administration backed down and pension payments were restored.

As the DFA's 40-year history shows, unionization has given academic staff a real say and collective power over their terms and conditions of employment, while at the same time solidifying important professional rights like academic freedom and tenure. It has allowed ad hoc and arbitrary management diktat to be replaced by enforceable collective agreements and grievance procedures. It is no surprise that today the vast majority of academic staff associations are certified trade unions, and universities have become among the most unionized workplaces in Canada.

## From bean-bag chairs to the bargaining table



Reference: *Dalhousie Gazette*, Volume 111, Issue 9, cover page, *Dalhousie University Reference Collection*, MS-1-Ref, OS Box 171, *Dalhousie University Archives*, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

While 2018 marks the 40th anniversary of the Dalhousie Faculty Association (DFA), the organization actually began in 1951 as an informal association.

Under the leadership of President James Aitchison, the DFA held its meetings on the top floor of the Arts and Administration Building. In the mid-1960s, the Political Science department moved into that building and the DFA needed new meeting space. In 1965, the DFA asked the Board for help in purchasing a house for a faculty club. For several years nothing tangible emerged. Then in 1971, a member of the DFA Faculty Club Committee, Mirko Usmiani of Classics, went to see Dalhousie President Henry Hicks. Hicks approved the use of the old Law Building.

After consulting with a European interior designer, renovations began. What emerged was a night-club atmosphere of reds, oranges and purples – complete with bean-bag chairs. More conventional decor was eventually adopted and the Faculty Club was established.

During these years, the DFA gathered momentum around concerns with salaries, pensions, and other financial issues. In 1975-76, President Hicks painted a rosy picture for DFA President Tarun Ghose, saying that "Dalhousie has been fortunate in my time in generally having very good relations with its Faculty Association." Despite this characterization, there had been friction. At least two former DFA Presidents, K.T. Leffek (1969-70) and R.L. Comeau (1970-71) had complained that the Board ignored DFA's salary briefs.

## THE DFA: THE EARLY YEARS

In December 1974, at the DFA's request, the Board allowed the DFA President to attend Board meetings as an observer. Three years later, DFA officers would discuss the forthcoming budget with the Board's budget committee.

In 1977, Dalhousie academic salaries were almost the lowest in Canada, and lower than those of other local universities. The Board was also facing a \$300,000 deficit. That year, the Nova Scotia government had earmarked an additional \$200,000 for Dalhousie and Philip Welch, DFA President (1977-78), believed that funding should be used to raise academic salaries, not reduce the deficit as the Board wanted. The Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC) had ruled that any university's annual deficit had to be kept within 2% of its annual operating grant. Otherwise, MPHEC would require that 2% of the following year's grant go to reduce the deficit. Caught between the MPHEC and the DFA, the Board declared it could not manage more than a 5.5% increase in salaries. Dalhousie's Vice President Andy MacKay warned the Board that "salaries of Dalhousie professors will have slipped significantly behind those paid elsewhere." President Hicks was less generous.

A few weeks later President Hicks asserted that probationary appointments and others, prior to tenure, would have to be one to three years, despite a recent regulation that such new appointments would normally be for three years. This alarmed young and untenured faculty, all of whom had votes in DFA.

At the time, Dalhousie faced significant labour unrest. In November 1977 there was a two-week strike of the International Operating Engineers Union, local 968, responsible for Dalhousie heating and without a contract since February 1977. The strike was settled early in December with an 8% salary increase (5.5% with additions to come later). A long struggle with CUPE local 1392, the cleaners and caretakers union, was settled in February 1978, with a similar increase. The Dalhousie Staff Association broke off contract talks in March 1978 and was moving into conciliation.

In 1977, 44% of the DFA's members were in favour of a legal union; 36% were not, and 20%, undecided. A majority, 50.4% favoured the principle of voluntary recognition - formal consultation and arbitration procedures but without the formation of a legal union. The DFA came to the Board requesting collective bargaining by voluntary recognition with three conditions:

1. binding arbitration of salary and fringe benefits disputes, and of individual grievances;
2. recognition of the DFA as sole bargaining agent of academic staff; and
3. the sharing of all relevant information between the Board and the DFA.

In January 1978, the Board at first denied the DFA's request but then quickly contacted the DFA asking that the refusal be disregarded and tabled three counter-proposals:

1. arbitration on salaries but on nothing else;
2. recognition of DFA as the primary, but not the sole, bargaining agent; and
3. a reasonable release of information.

At a DFA membership meeting on February 16, 1977, several former DFA presidents testified to the difficulty, if not the impossibility, of securing what DFA wanted through the Board. DFA President Philip Welch cited the question of free tuition for dependents, which he said "had gone on for several years sliding up and down the administrative ladder without any appreciable result." There was also some dissatisfaction with the Hicks-MacKay leadership, which seemed to be confirmed by their rejection of voluntary recognition.

A strong core of intensely conservative opinion in the DFA opposed faculty unionization. The issue that most worried the conservative group was fear of a strike. To many a strike was barely conceivable, as it would be against the students, innocent third parties to such a confrontation. DFA President Welch tried to assure the conservatives that even if the Association did become a certified union, a strike was most unlikely.

## THE DFA: THE EARLY YEARS

After a union drive led by DFA member Robert Rodger, the DFA members voted 119 to 29, with three abstentions, in favour of asking its executive to seek certification under the Labour Relations Act. (A week later the Board agreed to a 50% reduction in university fees for dependents of faculty members!) After cards had been signed by the required 40% of the bargaining unit, certification was requested on April 7, 1978. The vote was held, but results not released until after the Nova Scotia Labour Relations Board (NSLRB) hearings

The NSLRB heard the DFA application in July 1978 and the hearings were complicated. Who would be included in the bargaining unit? How far and where did the chain of management go? The middle ground that emerged across Canada in the mid-1970s was to include in the bargaining unit departmental chairs, but exclude from it deans and directors. Professional librarians were usually included, dentists and clinical doctors were not. In November 1978, DFA was certified as the official and exclusive bargaining agent of Dalhousie professors and professional librarians. There were 636 members in the bargaining unit; 489 had voted - 265 in favour, 217 opposed, and seven spoiled ballots. That was a yes vote of 55% and a victory for the new DFA union.

The figures pointed to the divisiveness of the unionization process. Some departments were almost wholly in favour of the union; some were equally opposed; most departments were split. The feelings pro and con were intense. For a time friends of many years were divided, each feeling betrayed by the other. In December 1978, Senate entered the picture with notice of motion that the negotiating team for the Administration not agree to any collective agreement that would impinge on the authority and prerogatives of Senate. That motion carried in January 1979.

Bargaining between the Administration and the DFA began in February 1979. The management team was represented by: Vice-Presidents MacKay and McNeill, David Cameron, Norman Horrocks, the University solicitor and a designate of the president.

The DFA was represented by: Michael Cross (History) as chief negotiator, Alan Kennedy (English), Robert Rodger (Psychology), Susan Sherwin (Philosophy), plus a place for a representative from CAUT and one other designate.

The DFA team was very well prepared, having been coached by CAUT and armed with model clauses from other universities. Robert Rodger had a desktop computer program that covered each member's salary, sabbaticals, and other benefits, while Dalhousie's VP Finance had to work all night with his little black book (in which he had recorded by hand all increases to each member of staff year by year), cranking out on a calculator a total salary base for the DFA bargaining unit. The two salary bases came to almost the same, but what a difference in method! There was little direction from Hicks. He seemed, as one Dalhousie negotiator said, "to have no stomach" for the negotiations.

The Association was anxious to get a contract in hand; and within a month it was suggesting that the University was not bargaining in good faith. Language could occasionally become rhetoric, arguments manipulative, and facts distorted. MacKay replied that the DFA was being unreasonable about the length of time needed to "forge a first contract."

The draft contract was not ready until the end of October. According to Dalhousie VP MacKay, nobody was entirely happy with the final agreement, which "might not be a bad feature of it." It had 420 clauses in 33 articles, three schedules and four appendices, 68 legal-size pages of single-space type. Salary was increased by 18.1% (9.5% for 1978-79 and 8.6% for 1979-80).

That first Collective Agreement - and the people who committed time and effort to put it in place 40 years ago - helped to lay the foundation for a strong Association that works tirelessly to protect the rights of almost 1000 members who make up the DFA today.

*Material adapted from: Waite, Peter B. The lives of Dalhousie University: Volume II. 1925-1980. The Old College Transformed. McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014. Print.*

## THE DFA: THE EARLY YEARS

### Faculty union formed by Friday

by Eric Simpson

The Dalhousie Faculty Association and the university administration have finally agreed on the composition of the Association's bargaining unit. A last minute reconciliation on Tuesday, October 31 resolved the contentious issue of the status of senior research associates.

Although the agreement does not mention the senior research associates per se, Michael Cross, vice president of the DFA, said that "all but one of the persons in contention were included in the unit."

R.S. Rodgers, president

of the DFA, said that the Association will continue to press for the right to negotiate on behalf of all individuals with academic rank.

Ballots were cast last April to decide on the formal certification of the DFA as the official bargaining agent for the faculty. The ballots are now being counted by the Nova Scotia Labour Relations Board and the results are expected by Friday, November 10.

Cross predicted that 75% of the vote would be in favour of the resolution. There are 636 faculty members eligible to vote.

During the waiting period since the April vote, the DFA

has drawn up a 30 page contract which, as a first collective agreement, covers such areas as appointment, promotion, tenure, grievance, vacation and salary scales.

Cross noted that the average salary of a Dalhousie faculty member is 20% below the national average. He also said that special attention will be given to the protection of part-time workers and the prevention of discriminatory hiring practices.

The DFA's negotiating committee will consist of Rodgers (Psychology), Cross (History), S.B. Sherwin (Philosophy), one other permanent member

(as yet unnamed), and one rotating member.

Cross expressed hope that the collective bargaining process would begin within three weeks and progress throughout the Christmas holiday. Cross said a certain amount of "stalling" could be expected on the part of the administration, but he added that with goodwill, a new contract could be drawn up by early next year. The faculty has been without a contract since July 1.

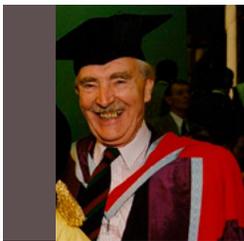
Approximately one-half of Canada's university faculty are unionized at the present time.

## Certification?

**Robert Sinclair Rodger, Ph.D.**

**Faculty of Science, Department of Psychology**

**DFA President 1978-79**



I started at Dalhousie as a Killam Senior Fellow on January 1, 1969, for only a year, as my sabbatical leave from the University of Sydney in Australia. But I am not an Australian. In 1926 I was born, then bred, and educated in Scotland at the University of Edinburgh.

In December 1977, after we returned from a sabbatical at UNC Chapel Hill, the DFA voted to proceed to certification as a Trade Union under the Trade Union Act of NS. I heard no more until I received a call from DFA President Philip Welch in March 1978, saying the DFA Executive would like me to organize the process towards certification. Of course, as a student of psychology my familiarity with "certification" was for "insanity", signed by two doctors. Surely not the DFA!

I delayed my answer and consulted two colleagues as to the likely union-support among the faculty. "Go for it," they said, again and again. But gave no advice on "support." I met the DFA Executive a couple of days later, and agreed to try (was I the crazy one then?) and, if they agreed, that I would "call all the shots."

I was rather ignorant of union laws and requirements, so I had a hectic time, not only helping the poll captains in every department encourage Dalhousie faculty to sign union cards; but I also read up on faculty collective agreements (e.g., at St. Mary's University, Acadia University, and especially the University of Manitoba). I also attended a Collective Bargaining workshop in Quebec, set up by the Canadian Association of University Teachers. There I learned a lot, especially from a physics professor from non-unionized University of British Columbia about academic salary theory.

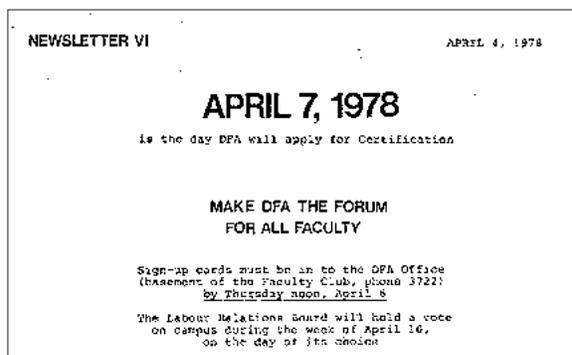
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**DFA's first Collective Agreement with the Dalhousie Board of Governors was ratified in 1979. A total of 79% of eligible DFA members cast a ballot. Of the members who voted, 92% voted yes.**  
*(Source: DFA newsletter, Vol. 3, No. 3, 1979)*

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## THE DFA: THE EARLY YEARS

\*\* Motion proposed: "The General Meeting of February 16 directs the Executive Committee to proceed to seek certification of the Faculty of Dalhousie University under the Trade Union Act of Nova Scotia".



I believe the DFA Executive had chosen its potential bargaining team, if it ever became a union. Chief negotiator Michael Cross (a labour historian), Susan Sherwin (a philosophy academic with exceptional knowledge and understanding of women's rights), Alan Kennedy (English), myself as negotiation secretary, and a slot for a librarian, Instructor or a representative of any other category of member.

Around this time, I heard from some of our colleagues in the Faculty of Medicine that they would like to meet with me about their bargaining unit membership. Accompanied by Susan Sherwin, I met with a group of them in the Tupper Building. They indicated that they represented the clinical faculty members in Medicine, and that group did not want to join the union. (I was privately somewhat concerned about that claim, e.g. for Community Health and Epidemiology, as well as Pediatrics and Medicine, but I made no fuss.) I knew that the employment contracts for these doctors were likely quite varied, and somewhat more complex than those of professors in Arts and Science; so we agreed not to include the clinical Medical departments in the DFA bargaining unit.

Early in April 1978, the DFA called a meeting in the large law school lecture room. It was pretty packed, I think President Henry Hicks was there. Before it started, I whispered to Philip Welch that the DFA had now signed up at least 40% of potential members of its bargaining unit, thanks to the great departmental poll captains, so the Executive could apply.

There was some heated debate. One well-known professor went on strongly about how cowardly we were trying to unionize. An equally well-known professor responded to him by saying, "Come, come, John, not pusillanimous. Surely not pusillanimous!"

A young philosophy academic later made an excellent, scripted, plaque of that statement and gave it to me. It holds an honored place on my bookshelves to this day.

Application was made to the Nova Scotia Labour Relations Board (NSLRB) at that time. The NSLRB held a vote, in Dalhousie's Student Union Building (SUB) and in the Tupper Building. I monitored the SUB process, others monitored the Tupper, and reported to me later that numerous physicians from places like Truro and Windsor had turned up to vote (those votes, of course, would not be counted). Not much later the votes were counted by NSLRB. I was there and a Dalhousie Administration representative was there. (The faculty-member lists I had on the CDC6400 through my desk-top were invaluable.) What surprised me most during the count were the number of ballots that were blank: professors came to SUB, registered, went into the voting booth, folded up the blank voting paper, then came out to drop it in the vote box. Did they realize that their blank papers would be set-aside as spoiled? Anyway, the bargaining unit achieved a majority; so we were certified on November 24, 1978.

But before that, in July, hearings were held in the Citadel Inn. The shocking thing about those was that the Dalhousie Administration, or their lawyers from McInnes Cooper, had found a head of department who swore on the stand that he hired and fired Instructors. DFA's lawyer Gerry McConnell talked to me about that - the NSLRB was unlikely to certify a unit that contained both employees AND employers. I said I had serious doubts about the head's claim, but Gerry indicated it might take quite a time to produce evidence against the allegation - it would be better to settle for two DFA Bargaining Units: one for

## THE DFA: THE EARLY YEARS

NEWSLETTER VII		13 APRIL 1978	
<p>In Your Dealings with the Management of The Governors of Dalhousie College and University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, are you in favour of being represented by the Dalhousie Faculty Association, Halifax, Nova Scotia, as your Bargaining Agent?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">S</p>	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**CELEBRATE, CELEBRATE**

the

**RATIFICATION**

**GREEN ROOM, SUB**

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 24**

**9:00 p.m.-1:00 a.m.**

**\$2.00 admittance, cash bar**

Professors and Librarians, the other for Instructors. We did so settle and were certified.

Meanwhile, I had been writing in consultation with the other potential negotiators the DFA's proposed Collective Agreement, using my desk-top terminal to the CDC6400; including Scales of Salary Minima/ Experience.

Also I contacted CAUT for assistance with the Instructors' Collective Agreement. They suggested sending us the very experienced Ron Levesque. When he arrived he asked for guidance. I said "Try to get a Collective Agreement with terms as close to the professorial one as possible. Do not move too fast. We need time to see what is agreed at our bargaining table." He and his fellow negotiators did wonderfully well, which was especially important later.

We met in the Senate room with the Board of Governors negotiators: Vice-President Andy MacKay (Board Chair), Vice-President Finance D.H. McNeill, and Director of Library Services Norman Horrocks and agreed to hand over copies of our proposal (in some 'agreed' order) to the Board team. I printed that material on legal-sized print-out paper from the CDC6400. At this time, that machine could only print capital letters; so we dealt with a Capital First Draft Collective Agreement. I've heard since that the DFA lawyer thought it was capital in more than print.

We ended, eventually. Both sides wanted me named as the Chairperson (note the DFA title) of the Salary Review Committee. A few years earlier I believe I had served on a Senate committee looking into the representation of women among the students across the campus (if I recall, our committee was chaired by a geologist). We found that women were quite under-represented in the Dalhousie student body, and recommended steps to correct that. I think steps were taken and that the distribution is no longer male-biased.

I thought it quite likely in 1979 that we would find that the pre-Collective Agreement salaries of women in the DFA Bargaining Unit would be notably lower than men, based on years of creditable experience, qualifications and other relevant experience. After the whole process ended, I assessed the women < men hypothesis. The data did not support it. Of course, unfair salaries is not the only possible inequity that needs concern.

## A Defining DFA moment: Stopping the closure of Music, Theatre, Public Administration and Library & Information Studies

Ray Larkin, Q.C.  
DFA Legal Counsel



On September 22, 1993, President of Dalhousie University Howard Clark recommended closing the Departments of Music and Theatre, and the Schools of Public Administration and Library and Information Studies. He said that years of underfunding which had required equal percentage cuts to the budget of each Faculty was not sustainable. Selective cuts to individual programs were necessary.

The DFA filed a grievance arguing that the proposed program closures violated Article 25.01 of the Collective Agreement, which provided in part that, “The Board agrees to maintain the integrity of Programmes approved by the Senate by providing a staff of members sufficient to that purpose.” Dr. Clark’s view was that the Board was entitled to set the financial limits of compliance with that obligation so that the Senate would have little choice but to reduce or close the programs in the Departments involved.

Daniel Soberman was appointed as the arbitrator of the grievance and a hearing was held on December 15, 1993 in which the Board challenged the DFA’s right to proceed with a grievance until, in effect, the closures were a fait accompli. Mr. Soberman disagreed and the hearing resumed in January of 1994.

At the resumed hearing the Board argued that it could set financial limits that would force the Senate to reduce or eliminate programs and result in layoffs if members in those programs could not be redeployed elsewhere. The DFA argued that

## THE DFA DEFENDS ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

a decision to eliminate a program for any other reason than the program's intrinsic academic worth could not be undertaken under Article 25; closure of programs or layoffs for financial reasons could only be taken by the Board under the very stringent procedures in Articles 26 and 27 of the Collective Agreement.

Mr. Soberman decided that a reduction or elimination of a program under Article 25 required first a decision by the Senate that it be done primarily for academic reasons and not in response to financial initiatives of the Board. If the reasons put forward for reducing or closing a program were primarily financial, the Board had to meet the requirements of the process set out in Article 26 or under financial exigency as defined in Article 27.

In this case, the President's reasons for recommending the closure of programs in Music, Theatre, Public Administration and Library Information Studies were primarily financial and the procedures under Articles 26 and 27 had not been followed. The closure of the Departments of Music, Theatre, Public Administration and Library and Information Studies could not go ahead.

Programs in Music, Theatre, Public Administration and Library and Information Studies are still being provided 25 years later.

### **Fountain School of Performing Arts**

Today, more than 25 years after the DFA successfully grieved against the recommended closure of Dalhousie's music and theatre departments, those programs are thriving.

In 2014, the former departments of Music and Theatre joined together to form the Fountain School of Performing Arts. Funded by a generous \$10 million donation by the Fountain family, it is the only university performing arts school east of Montreal and brings a range of new opportunities to students of Music, Theatre and Film Studies.

(Source: [www.dal.ca](http://www.dal.ca))

## Celebrating 25 years with help from the DFA: School of Public Administration

**Dale Poel, Ph.D.**

**Faculty of Management,  
School of Public Administration**

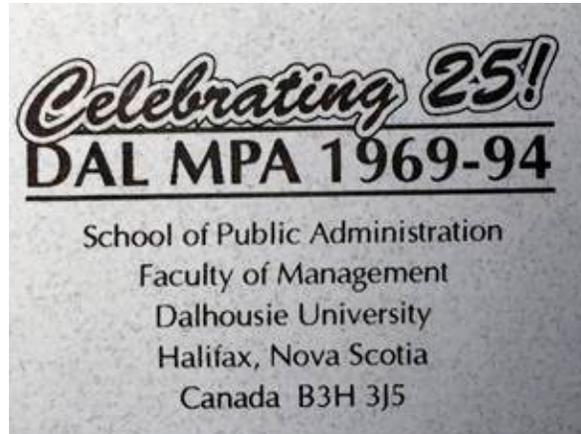


*This article has benefited from selected minutes of the Dalhousie University Senate and the Dalhousie Board of Governors over the 1993-94 period.*

In the early 1990s, Dalhousie University President Howard Clark sought advice from a Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) which reported to him, met outside the framework of Senate advisory committees and did not engage in widespread consultation with the University Faculties. In presenting its Second Report to Senate (January—93.004), the Chair of BAC spoke to the importance of a recommendation to identify “selective cuts in academic and non-academic units” as BAC sought to “develop recommendations to deal with the 1994-97 fiscal years.” This was an early warning shot which was only countered a year later by the outcome of a grievance filed by the DFA.

The warning shot was firmed up on September 22, 1993. Without prior consultation with the targeted academic units, President Clark stood up in a Monday morning public meeting in the Rebecca Cohn auditorium to announce that, on the advice of his Budget Advisory Committee, he was recommending that Senate close the School of Public Administration (SPA) and Departments of Theatre (including Costumes Studies) and Music. His recommendation also modified the status of the School of Library Studies and the Dalhousie Art Gallery. The Saturday before, President Clark had met with Faculty deans to brief them on this announcement but asked them to keep it confidential before the public meeting. We would have been blindsided by this announcement had not our Dean, Jim McNiven, decided to ignore this request.

## THE DFA DEFENDS ACADEMIC PROGRAMS



These events of 1993 and 1994 could support a longer case study in university governance, collective bargaining and labour relations. In addition to the specific closure recommendations, President Clark noted that:

- The University was not dealing with a financial crisis, but rather a serious anticipated financial problem;
- No firm decisions on program reductions or closures had been made (at that point); and
- The specific programs suggested for closure met criteria considered by his BAC.

The President had reached this point because “he had not been encouraged by the collective ability of the Senate and Board to reach hard decisions,” noting that “Faculties had been asked repeatedly to set priorities and now had three months in which to do so.” The criteria that pointed to these academic units included:

- Cost-per-student of each program;
- Student demand for the program;
- The importance of the program to the University's stated mission; and
- The ability of the program to generate sufficient revenue to support itself (93: 107).

In the following months the SPA director drafted the occasional memo to the Board of Governors pointing out that none of these criteria applied to the School of Public Administration. But in the days before social media, the SPA was at a significant disadvantage compared to the departments from the performing arts. Their students and alumni

could write letters, demonstrate and protest to their heart's content. On the other hand, all students and alumni of the School of Public Administration were entering or in a profession in which open political positions were and still are considered professionally inappropriate. The President's office even noted the relatively few letters received from the School's constituency – as if that showed a lack of support for the School and its mission. The national Institute of Public Administration of Canada (IPAC) did send a letter of support, but only after an IPAC Board argument as to the propriety of doing so.

The student newspaper, the Dalhousie Gazette, took pity on our quietude and wrote an article on the School. They included a picture of the director and students sitting on the front steps of our LeMarchant street house. . . “protesting.” We decided in the fall of 1993 to celebrate our 25th Anniversary a few months early by changing our business cards and letterhead to reflect the anniversary we were confident would take place.

In October 1993, the President's “Notes for Remarks” and the BAC's Third Report to the President were referred by Senate to its Academic Planning and Financial Planning Committees with a request that they return within a month with recommendations concerning Senate's response. (93: 150) At the same time, the Board of Governors were also discussing these issues. A Board member noted the “eloquent lobbying” being undertaken by representatives of the performing arts departments.

The Board's officers made it clear that the Board must determine the University's financial framework while Senate was charged with determining academic program directions. The Board passed

## THE DFA DEFENDS ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

a motion to accept the BAC recommendations in its October 19, 1993 meeting. The same meeting noted that the DFA had filed a grievance against these steps. This grievance was characterized as “premature” by Board officers.

The DFA grievance process led to the appointment of an external arbitrator, D. Soberman, a law professor from Queen's University. The distinction between financial framework and academic programs and the respective responsibilities for them was critical in the arbitration process. It was not within the Board's mandate to cancel programs. The question of cancelling programs went to Senate as the body to decide on academic programs. Why had the President accepted the BAC recommendations? The plain language of the BAC reports was the anticipation of a financial crisis within the three-year framework under review. But, how bad was this financial crisis? And, was the core issue a matter of sustaining academic quality or finding the money to support programs?

The BAC, President and Board leadership were certain that horizontal cuts to faculty and staff were not sufficient or appropriate to maintain Dalhousie's academic standards. They could not press the financial case without bumping into the language and import of Article 27. The SPA director took advantage of the open nature of the arbitrator's work and listened to the arbitrator persist in asking President Clark why he had made these recommendations. Several attempts to answer that question all began with the assertion that this was all about maintaining academic excellence – Dalhousie would not have enough money to maintain the academic quality of its

programs without these cuts to programs. After several iterations of the same question and nuanced responses, the arbitrator finally said again, “So, you don't have enough money.” President Clark finally responded, “yes.”

That last response by President Clark brought the University's Administration face-to-face with the requirements of the DFA/Board of Governors Collective Agreement. The arbitrator supported the grievance filed by the DFA. They were not “premature.” The termination of academic programs was not possible under the Collective Agreement.

A nice ending to this year of crisis came at the annual celebration at the President's house for those who had worked at Dalhousie for 25 years. The director of the School of Public Administration came to Dalhousie in 1968. Usually individuals had an opportunity to say something at this occasion, but because of the number appointed that year, the communications staff offered a 1968 overview instead. Most people accepted their pen, shook hands and had their picture taken with the President. The 1968 overview, however, noted that in 1968 Senate had approved the creation of a School of Public Administration. The SPA director couldn't resist pointing to that reference to the School. He told the gathering that throughout the 1993-94 turmoil, he had taken comfort from a sentence the President or the Chair of the Board used repeatedly: “If there were any alternatives to these difficult decisions, we would be glad to follow them.” In turning to shake the President's hand, he noted to those gathered that the smile on President Clark's face confirmed how glad he was with the outcome.

## PRESIDENT RECOLLECTIONS



**Susan Sherwin, Ph.D.**  
**DFA President 1979-80**  
**Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences, Philosophy**

*Born in Toronto, lives in Halifax*

### **What is your most striking memory of your time as a DFA President?**

While our first Collective Agreement is dated 1978, the contract was not finished until 1979 under my presidency. We also negotiated the first Collective Agreement for Instructors during my term (they were initially in a separate bargaining unit). Finalizing those contracts and settling on ways of administering them was pretty memorable (as were the celebratory parties!)

### **What are your thoughts on the role the DFA plays for its members?**

Wow! Besides standardizing the salaries by setting minima for rank and years of service and thereby raising the salaries for most women and many, many others, the DFA gives important advice about terms and conditions of employment to its members, and provides professional support when those terms are violated. I like to believe that the mistreatment of Dr. Gabby Horne could not have happened if she were a member of the DFA.

## PRESIDENT RECOLLECTIONS



**Chris Axworthy, Q.C.**

**Faculty of Law**

**DFA President 1981-82**

*Born in Plymouth (UK), lives in UK*

### **What is your most striking memory of your time as a DFA President?**

My experience as DFA President and Chief Negotiator was, primarily, about two things. The most important and lasting was the opportunity to build relationships with colleagues outside my own Faculty, seeing academic life and, indeed, life in general from different perspectives and through the lens of many disciplines. This stayed with me my whole life. The other was the amazing learning experience in terms of negotiating and political skills in general. 1982 was early in the process of faculty seeking fairness and respect from the Administration that led to the formation and growth of the DFA. We were, of course, negotiating on behalf of, and representing, colleagues, but we were also strengthening collective awareness and mobilizing faculty to pursue what was best for them, their disciplines and consequently for their University.

My most striking and enduring recollection (reinforced by my experience with other universities later in life) was how lacking in vision the Administration was. It was interested in maintaining its own power and control rather than pursuing what was best for the University. Being the best university it could be never seemed to be its focus. Needless to say, this managerial power dynamic is at

play throughout society. Surely, though, universities should rise above this and should instead apply the rigour of the disciplines administrators exhibited when they were academics to the running of an intellectually curious, complex and crucially important institution.

### **What are your thoughts on the role the DFA plays for its members?**

My view of the role of the DFA was that it should play a constructive and collaborative role in University decision-making, of which it and its members were such a critical component, that it should seek what was best for the University's research and teaching priorities, while being attentive to the challenges of a complex and multi-faceted institution. We should be part of the solution, not just an opposition.

Not everyone agreed and that disagreement provided the backdrop to the spirited election for DFA President in which I was elected.

However, my most memorable moments from those days are, without doubt, the many hours spent at the Faculty Club, not infrequently over a little too much beer with colleagues from across the campus. The conversation was frequently spirited, but always collegial, as I nostalgically recall. A fair bit of negotiating solutions to issues at the bargaining table took place, as well. It was a heady and exciting time, but so long ago now!

*DFA Note: As a result of being contacted for a submission to this publication, Chris was prompted to reach out to two former colleagues from the 1984 negotiations team. They are planning to meet in the near future.*

## PRESIDENT RECOLLECTIONS



**Marcia Ozier, Ph.D.**

**DFA President 1986-87**

**Faculty of Science, Department of Psychology**

*Born in Montreal, lives in Halifax*

### **What is your most striking memory of your time as a DFA President?**

What come to my mind most often are my adventures in the DalMobile, the van we rented, decorated and drove around during the 1988 strike, in an effort to reach out to students. We talked with them about the stress they were feeling at that time of uncertainty and we distributed handouts on how to deal with stress.

One day I was in the DalMobile with Larry Holt, parked on Spring Garden Road. In the rear-view mirror I saw a large police officer steadily approaching the driver's window. In the moment, I imagined what the paper would say if members of the DFA were to be arrested in the DalMobile for illegal parking. Instead, when the police officer reached the driver's window he said: "Hi, Dr. Holt, do you remember me? I took your class two years ago?"

What makes me so fond of that memory? I think it is the realization that when students leave us (abandon us!) every few months, we are not forgotten, but one way or another we continue to live on in their recollections.

On a more personal note but on the same theme, I was out to brunch with my family a couple of years ago when a man whom I recognized vaguely as a former colleague came up to the table and said, "Marcia, I think of you every time my pension payment arrives. I will never forget you and what you did for all of us." Of course that came about as a result of the efforts of all of us, but I gave my standard response, "It's so nice to be remembered!" And it is!

### **What are your thoughts on the role the DFA plays for its members?**

The DFA provides its members with the power required to advocate for members' legal rights as employees. To answer this question, my thoughts turn to the essential contribution of the grievance process to the well-being of all. Here's some of what comes to mind.

When I came to Dalhousie in 1965, Dalhousie President Henry Hicks objected to the fact that a wife

## PRESIDENT RECOLLECTIONS

could have the same contract as her husband. There were seven wives in that position. It took us two years to convince the employer legally that we would not accept lower status than our husbands.

In 1970, well before union certification, Bob Rodger came to me with a special request. As I recall, a member was being harassed by a Chair and needed an advocate. The issue then was providing the member with power she did not have otherwise on her own. Over the next 32 years, I processed many grievances, from informal to arbitration. In that work, I learned how powerless we would have been without the union.

The last grievance David Tindall and I processed concerned the Employer's efforts to contract out Biology 1000 and other large intro classes to a start-up called Knowledge House. It was difficult for me because the idea that this "entity" would deliver a better "product" for biology students than biology professors was offensive and disrespectful to all of us. I took it personally also because I had taught many very large classes (up to 1200 students) at Dalhousie. David and I and the DFA recognized that Knowledge House was a con. As things turned out, the deal with Knowledge House did not come to pass. That was in 2002. In March 2018, the former Knowledge House insiders have been sentenced to jail for fraud involving stock manipulation.



## PRESIDENT RECOLLECTIONS



**David Lewis, Ph.D.**

**DFA President 1987-88**

**Faculty of Science, Department of Engineering**

*Born in Edmonton, lives in St. Margaret's Bay*

*"Thanks to my defined benefit pension I am able to spend the winter in warmer parts of the world."*

### **What is your most striking memory of your time as a DFA President?**

We negotiated a Collective Agreement during my Presidency. The Executive was regularly briefed by the Negotiating Team, and after a great deal of effort, and support from the membership, the Team recommended to the Executive that we accept the most recent proposal from the Board. A General Meeting of the DFA was held to consider our recommendation that the proposed agreement be ratified. Strongly felt disagreement was expressed by some members. Chairing this particular General Meeting of the membership was my most perplexing experience as president. Finally, the vote was held and the membership ratified the Agreement.

The DFA office staff and our legal counsel were always able and dedicated, and a pleasure to work with, and I think we accomplished a lot on behalf of our members. Dalhousie President Howard

Clark was amiable and capable, but constrained by the Board, via the Vice-President Administration, to balance the budget. Some Board of Governor members were clearly anti-union; on the other hand, at least one, Treasurer Alan Shaw, was not of that persuasion. During that period, Dalhousie's assessment by various national rating agencies improved.

### **What are your thoughts on the role the DFA plays for its members?**

Most members of the DFA simply want to get on with their professional work, and they rely on the DFA to ensure that the conditions of work are what I think of as fair. When I became a Dalhousie employee in 1963, I was shocked at how ad-hoc, and frankly in some instances racist or sexist or in other ways biased, decisions were made. The union ended that, and its vigilance in support of the rights of our members is valuable, to the members and the University.

I am proud that I was selected by the DFA membership to be President on one occasion. Dr. Tarun Ghose, (DFA President 1975-76) now in his 90th year, was very active, nationally as well as locally, in support of the DFA and University employees. He was also the founding president of the Association of Dalhousie Retirees and Pensioners. So when I think of DFA Presidents, all of whom volunteered service to their fellow workers, I include Tarun in my very positive feelings.

## PRESIDENT RECOLLECTIONS



**David Tindall, Ph.D.**

**DFA President 1989-90**

**Faculty of Science, Physics & Atmospheric Science**

*Born in the UK, lives in Halifax*

### **What is your most striking memory of your time as a DFA President?**

It would have to be December 6, 1989 -- The Montreal Massacre. I don't think I need to add anything.

### **What are your thoughts on the role the DFA plays for its members?**

The most obvious one is negotiation of the Collective Agreement but I would like to highlight an equally important, less public role -- that of enforcement of the Collective Agreement. Without this, the Collective Agreement would just be a piece of paper that the Administration could choose to follow whenever it suited its purpose.

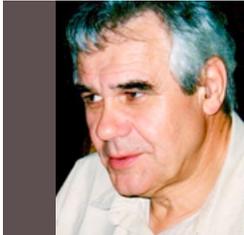
The role played by the Grievance Committee of the DFA is vital to the membership, even though the vast majority of members, fortunately, never need its services. I regard my service as a grievance officer over many years as my greatest contribution to the life of the University. It was certainly most challenging and, at times, frustrating work but I

enjoyed working with individuals from across the University. Even when a case couldn't be won, I was impressed with the way in which (in most cases) the grievor would be grateful for my efforts, when they could have just as easily blamed me for doing a lousy job.

The Grievance Committee has always had trouble recruiting members -- probably because we are all academics and have "better things to do with our time." And, of course, it is, by its nature, confrontational and not many (including me) relish that aspect of human behaviour. Also, it cannot be denied that it can be extremely frustrating work, but then so can academic research most of the time! The thing that makes grievance work worth pursuing is the time when you can make a positive difference to a colleague's career or even sometimes make everyone's better by staving off an encroachment by management on our pension, benefits or other rights. Sure, it's a dirty job, but someone has to do it! If even one member who reads this joins the Grievance Committee, I will be happy.

In 1971 I came to Dalhousie as a Killam Post-Doctoral Fellow, intending to stay for a "year or two". From 1974 to 1977 I was a Research Associate at StFX and, in 1977, was appointed to the Physics Department at Dalhousie, where I remained on the full-time faculty until retirement in 2011. From 2011 until 2017, I continued to teach one Astronomy class and I would recommend continuing contact with bright young minds as a way to keep one's old brain young!

## PRESIDENT RECOLLECTIONS



**Colin Stuttard, Ph.D.**

**DFA President 1993-94, 2002-03**

**Faculty of Medicine, Microbiology & Immunology**

*Born in England, lives in Halifax*

### **What is your most striking memory of your time as a DFA President?**

In the early 90s, the Tory government's Compensation Restraint Act, which froze and subsequently clawed back salaries for public sector employees. Article 25 arbitration victory and rescue of the departments of Music, Theatre (and Costume Studies), Public Administration, and Library and Info Studies, and the Art Gallery. The result: Dal Plays On! Also, Janet Halliwell and the "Revitalization and Renewal" of Nova Scotia's universities (the demise of Dalhousie's School of Education); 2002-03: the November 5 General Meeting of the DFA when we adopted a motion to oppose US President G.W. Bush's push towards war against Iraq.

### **What are your thoughts on the role the DFA plays for its members?**

The DFA is a trade union, the certified bargaining agent for employees comprising Dalhousie's academic staff; and as such the DFA periodically negotiates with the employer, the Dalhousie Board of Governors, to reach a Collective Agreement specifying the terms and conditions under which the employees work and get paid. Having reached a Collective Agreement, the DFA's major role is to police that Agreement and seek redress for any grievances arising from any failure by the employer to abide by the terms of the Agreement.

## PRESIDENT RECOLLECTIONS



**Jane Fee, Ph.D.**

**DFA President 1996-97**

**Faculty of Health, School of  
Communication Sciences & Disorders**

*Born in Vancouver, lives in Ladner (BC)*

**What is your most striking memory of your time as a DFA President?**

Being thrust into the amalgamation process of Dalhousie and TUNS.

**What are your thoughts on the role the DFA plays for its members?**

The DFA plays an essential role in ensuring that individual faculty members are treated fairly and justly and that faculty as a whole participate in the collegial governance of the University.

## DFA Chief Negotiators

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In the 1977-78 academic year, the minimum salary of a full professor at Dalhousie was \$23,500, less than their counterparts at the following universities: Saint Mary's University, University of Moncton, Mount Saint Vincent University, St. Francis Xavier University, Université Sainte-Anne, University of Prince Edward Island, University of New Brunswick, Queen's University, University of Ottawa, and University of Manitoba. (Source: A letter dated December 5, 1977 from DFA President Philip Welch to the Dalhousie Board of Governors)

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The DFA extends a special thank you to our Chief Negotiators and their bargaining teams, who negotiated the 14 Collective Agreements that we have had with the Dalhousie Board of Governors since becoming the certified bargaining agent for our members in 1978.

1978-80 - Michael Cross, Ph.D.

1980-82 – Chris Axworthy, Q.C.

1982-84 – Patrick Kerans, Ph.D.

1984-87 – Marcia Ozier, Ph.D./Peter Schotch, Ph.D.

1987-88 – Patrick Kerans, Ph.D.

1988-90 – Graham Morgan, Ph.D.

1990-93 – Alan Andrews, Ph.D.

1997-2001 – Michael Cross, Ph.D.

2001-04 – Alan Andrews, Ph.D.

2004-07 – Dianne Pothier

2007-11 – Elizabeth Kay-Raining Bird, Ph.D.

2011-14 – Kevin Grundy, Ph.D.

2014-17 – Ray Larkin, Q.C.

2017-20 – Ray Larkin, Q.C.

# 1985 strike

# THE GAZETTE

Volume 117, Number 16

Dalhousie University, Halifax

January 17, 1985

## Dal quiet as profs stage one day strike

By SAMANTHA BRENNAN

DALHOUSIE CAMPUS WAS quiet Jan 16 as faculty picketed the campus in a one-day strike. The usually packed Grawood bar sat empty during the lunch hour and there were no lines at the Garden cafeteria.

Bruce Grouter sat alone drinking a beer after his economics class Wednesday. Despite the strike his professor chose to teach and Bruce chose to attend the lecture.

He says of the 20 students who regularly attend the class, only about half were in attendance and the class was unable to continue with new work.

For many students the one day strike was a time to decide — a time to test newly formed political ideals. For many the test was made harder by professors who planned to continue teaching through both the one day and the indefinite strike scheduled for Jan 28.

Despite motions passed by the university senate Jan 14 assuring students that the decision not to cross picket lines will be treated as a matter of conscience not bearing academic consequences, some students are still worried.

One political science student says he's concerned that his refusal to cross picket lines will result in his losing a 10 per cent grade for participation in one class.

The professor made it clear that in the event of an indefinite strike students are expected to be there and those who aren't will lose out.

"I respect his decision to teach but he should respect my decision not to cross picket lines," he said.

Dave McCann, a student representative on the senate, says one of his top priorities has been trying to ensure students won't be hurt by the strike.

McCann says he's glad the administration has promised students they won't be penalized for supporting the DFA, but he's not optimistic about their abilities to see that promise through.

"They made a rash claim, now they're going to have to figure out how to administer it," says McCann.

Political science professor Dr. James Eayrs says he's not sure

Continued on page 4



Members of the Dalhousie Faculty Association stand in front of the administration building during the informational pickets leading up to the one-day strike on Wednesday. If no settlement is reached by Jan 28, this could be a familiar and more permanent sight until matters are resolved. Photo: John Davie, Dal Photo.

## DFA-Administration no closer to accord

By WENDY COOMBER

ONE STRIKE LATER THE Dalhousie Faculty Association and the Dalhousie administration are no closer to solving their problems.

Last week after a three hour meeting, DFA members decided to hit the streets for a one-day strike — testing the waters before their proposed indefinite walk-out Jan 28.

"Another day, another dollar comes very close to explaining what the Board's been offering us in terms of salary," said Tom Sinclair-Faulkner, a member of the DFA's campus support committee.

While the administration is saying they are offering the DFA a 12 per cent increase over the next two years, the DFA is saying there are figures which cannot be included in that number.

Dr. Sandy Young, president of the DFA, said the Career Development Increment (CDI) is one of those figures, because its payment is flexible and left to the administration's discretion. Sinclair-Faulkner said without the CDI and the Income Maintenance Change, the increase is only 6.8 per cent.

"This is a classic labour versus management conundrum," vice-president Robbie Shaw told *The Gazette* last November. The DFA has "a legitimate bitch" against the administration, Shaw said, but the administration's first priority must be reducing the administration's \$11 million deficit.

"The administration has not

placed faculty high enough in their priorities," said Young.

Negotiations broke down between the two parties before Christmas when the conciliators said they were too far apart over salary and pension matters.

Besides salaries, the other main area of contract contention is the pension plan. According to Young, the Board told him pensions were non-negotiable because the Dalhousie pension plan included all Dalhousie employees and not just the faculty. Young said if the pension plan only included the DFA the administration might settle on it faster.

Sinclair-Faulkner told *The Gazette* last November that the administration was taking a "pension holiday," not paying their share into the pension fund because of its \$12 million surplus. The DFA says this surplus should be used to increase the faculty's inadequate pension plan, and not used by the administration to repair its debt.

A press release distributed by the DFA on Tuesday stated, "The DFA is willing to permit the Board to take the present pension 'holiday' as an interest free loan to be repaid over two years."

Dalhousie president, Dr. Andrew MacKay, said he is "ever an optimist" and feels the strike, if there is one, will not last long because "everyone is concerned over the problems of the students."

Meanwhile, contract negotiations have not resumed and the DFA's strike date is less than two weeks away.

## Faculty dispute part of long-term issues at Dalhousie

IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T noticed, we at *The Gazette* support the Dalhousie Faculty Association in their dispute with the administration. In case you don't know why — here goes.

First, there are the obvious reasons. We support the right of all workers to a decent salary and pension plan. We also support the right of faculty to unionize and support their decision as a union to exercise strike action.

Then there are selfish reasons. Faculty who are paid less than faculty at other universities may leave to teach elsewhere, and that hurts us as students.

And then there's a larger issue. The faculty strike is only a symptom of problems in the governing structure of Dalhousie university.

The administration is arguing that as a community we have to work together to bear the brunt of Dalhousie's debt. They argue that if we give the faculty their salary and pension demands we'll only hurt our university in the long run. At first glance this talk about co-operation sounds nice and friendly, but it's not.

There's a problem in logic here. You see, we didn't work together to create the debt. Why should people who didn't have a say in how the university's money was spent now be expected to

work with the administration to solve the problem.

For us the DFA issue is part of a long-term struggle — that of faculty, staff and students to have a say in the governing of our work environment.

For both students and the DFA this means wanting greater representation on governing committees of the university and an open, accessible board of governors. For students this also means a say in the setting of tuition fees and for faculty this means fighting for control of their pension plan.

The DFA has proposed a system that would move towards greater accountability by the board though increased involvement of students and faculty in the financial decisions. We support this as a step in the right direction for Dalhousie.

The bright side to this whole dispute is that the administration might wake-up and realize the strike isn't just caused by underfunding from the provincial government, or by mismanagement in previous administrations. It's the end result of years of alienation of the governed by those who govern. Restructuring the university is necessary and if that happens, in five years time maybe we won't be faced with the possibility of an indefinite strike by faculty.

Reference: Dalhousie Gazette, Volume 117, Issue 16, cover page, pages 3 and 8, Dalhousie University Reference Collection, MS-1-Ref, OS Box 173, Dalhousie University Archives, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.



## In search of arbitration

by Ariella Pahlke

The Dalhousie Faculty Association (DFA) has rejected a contract proposal presented by the Dalhousie Board of Governors.

Some members of the DFA executive say this latest development will probably result in a November 4 strike.

The contract proposal, presented by the Dalhousie Board of Governors October 25, was rejected by the DFA at an October 26 meeting of the DFA executive.

"Their proposal entails everything we were supposed to have been doing since the end of April. It didn't work then and we don't think it'll work now," says DFA member Tom Sinclair-Faulkner.

The Board of Governors' proposal entailed six further weeks of fact-finding and mediation before moving to arbitration. The DFA found this "unreasonably complex, lengthy and expensive." Four days earlier, on October 21, the DFA had delivered their own proposal for

continued on page 3

**References:**

1. *Dalhousie Gazette*, Volume 121, Issue 6, cover page and page 3, *Dalhousie University Reference Collection*, MS-1-Ref, OS Box 174, Dalhousie University Archives, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

2. *Dalhousie Gazette*, Volume 121, Issue 1, cover page, *Dalhousie University Reference Collection*, MS-1-Ref, OS Box 174, Dalhousie University Archives, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

## arbitration continued from page 1

binding arbitration to the Board of Governors, but the Board's negotiators were reluctant to discuss it.

"When people sit down to talk, they talk. The Board talks about talking. We want to talk and this is not happening," says Sinclair-Faulkner.

The DFA still wants a reasonable settlement on salary, pension and benefits, and quality of education, but unless they come to a contract settlement with the Board, they will strike on November 4.

Sinclair-Faulkner does not

expect the Board to be reasonable. "I think we've got a strike on our hands," he says.

Caroline Savoy, another DFA member, believes the stronger solidarity the faculty and students show, the sooner the strike will be over. She says everyone should be putting pressure on the administration to come forward on the settlement and believes the Board is forcing the strike because they're not making a reasonable offer.

The Dalhousie Board of Governors has offered the DFA a 2.5 per cent cost of living increase so far.

Thursday, October 27

**Dalhousie Gazette** Page 3

## Faculty, Admin resume talks

by Heather Hueston

A provincial conciliator has been appointed to assist in contract negotiations between Dalhousie administration and one of two unions whose collective agreements both ran out on June 30, 1988.

The conciliator will meet September 21 with representatives from the university's negotiating team and negotiators from the Dalhousie Faculty Association to resume discussion of work load, attrition (non-replacement of vacant positions), wage benefits and salary.

The Dalhousie Staff Association is still waiting for the government to respond to its request for a conciliator made in mid-August after talks with the administration broke off. Pay equity and job security are issues for the 740-member predominantly female clerks, technicians and secretaries.

At a press briefing September 1, the DSU and DFA representatives joined colleagues from eight of Nova Scotia's nine universities and colleges in blaming the recent campus labour problems on "the mood of confrontation" prevalent in university boardrooms across the province. That mood is reciprocated by faculty and Staff. Steve Enman, president of the Acadia Faculty Assoc., which voted yesterday to go ahead with a strike vote, said that in light of continued cutbacks, "it's clear that maintaining a pleasant sort of relationship with the Board of Governors doesn't work."

DFA president David Williams said members are frustrated when they see buildings go up on campus while library hours are cut, secretarial support is lost and the spending power of faculty has declined by 20 per cent over roughly the last 10 years.

"There's no doubt that universities are being starved," said Williams, "but that's compounded by how the administration uses (the money)."

Dalhousie Vice-President of Finance and Administration Bryan Mason responded that although some may argue that spending priorities are strange,

"I'm not debating whether their salary demands are justified; the reality is that we can't afford it."

Mason said the increase to the operating budget under 3.5 per cent prohibits granting a cost-of-living clause or DFA salary demands.

As for DFA charges of an unfulfilled verbal agreement promising pay increases this year in return for faculty cooperation last year on leaving 50 positions unfilled, Mason said there never was such an agreement. Mason said the salary increases were already awarded in 1987/88 in return for the DFA granting the board some "flexibility" in staffing and added that the figure of 50 positions is not accurate.

"We hope over time that using staff flexibility we can free up funds for other priorities which would certainly include staff salaries," said Mason.

In an interview this week, DFA's chief negotiator Graham Morgan agreed that Dalhousie's spending priorities should be "rearranged" and stated flatly that a prestigious university like Dalhousie must pay its faculty a fitting wage. Countering administration's claims that DFA demands will run to 25 per cent of the budget over two years, Morgan cited the nearly \$2 million saved by not replacing 50 faculty positions and the larger-than-usual government money granted to Dalhousie last year. The DFA is also asking for a cost of living adjustment of 4.1 per cent, a clause that is standard in faculty contracts at the University of New Brunswick, which the DFA uses as a yardstick.

Mason said the academic community has a chance to influence the budget every year through Senate. He also held out a long-term hope of restructuring grants from the Maritimes' granting authority to make them more equitable for Dalhousie.

Dalhousie Student Union president Juanita Montalvo said she is meeting regularly with both sides. Although Montalvo said preparations are being made in case of a strike she added, "it's important that students not think that there's going to be a strike."

Continued on Page 15

Paula Grandy-Dal Photo

## DFA ON THE PICKET LINES

# 1988 strike



## Confusion over figures

by Heather Hueston

"At issue are salaries" is how some news reports close their stories on the seven day old Dalhousie faculty strike.

But there are two different issues at stake. One is the amount of money each side says a contract demanded by the Dalhousie Faculty Association will cost. The other issue is whether the university administration actually needs more government funding to meet this settlement.

DFA president David Williams states that Dalhousie has enough money now to make a settlement. "There is no 'bottom line'. They make it up," said Williams referring to Board of Governors' claims of inability to pay.

Premier John Buchanan stated Tuesday that the government would not transfer more funds to the university. Buchanan told the Halifax Chronicle-Herald that Dalhousie receives the "lion's share" of Nova Scotia university funds, which is the largest per capita (per total population) in Canada.

Royden Trainor, interim chair of the Students Union of Nova Scotia, said Buchanan cannot absolve himself of the responsibility. Trainor said the premier had not fought hard enough

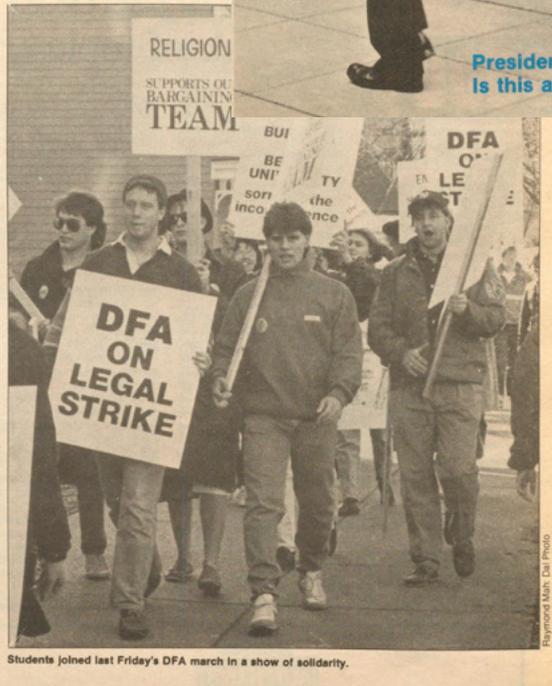
against cuts made by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney to federal transfer payments for education. Trainor added that per student funding in Nova Scotia is the lowest in Canada.

The administration says that DFA demands would cost the university an extra 25 per cent to its faculty salary budget over the next two years. Included in this estimate is wage comparability for female DFA members, something the DFA says should have been settled long before the contract negotiating began.

DFA spokesperson Caroline Savoy said COLA, scale, Blue Cross and CDI adds up to about 9 per cent in the first year and 7 in the second.

In a press release dated November 7, the DFA outlined the nature of its salary demands. The major demand is for a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) to be included in the agreement. (In an October 27 release, the DFA cited 13 Ontario universities whose 1988-89 settlements were at least 4 per cent. They also published the contract won by Saint Mary's University faculty giving increases of six, five and five per cent over three years.) The DFA is asking for scale which would raise the minima and maxima of

Continued on page 14



DFA's legal counsel Ray Larkin has worked with DFA since our certification in 1978, just two years after he was called to the bar in Nova Scotia. He has been our chief negotiator for two rounds of bargaining.

### Reference:

Dalhousie Gazette, Volume 121, Issue 8, cover page and page 3, Dalhousie University Reference Collection, MS-1-Ref, OS Box 174, Dalhousie University Archives, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

## DFA ON THE PICKET LINES

## 1998 strike

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**THE GAZETTE**  
Volume 130, Number 25. Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia. Thursday April 2, 1998

## Profs and Dal hammer out tentative deal

*Agreement must pass a faculty vote*

BY SHELLEY ROBINSON

One week after it started, the Dalhousie faculty strike may be over because of a tentative settlement between professors and the university's Board of Governors.

Dalhousie faculty and administration agreed on the outstanding terms of contract negotiations the night of Mar. 31, hammering out a final proposal by Apr. 1.

The strike and ensuing university lockout began Mar. 25. The latest proposal must be successfully passed by the 722 member Dalhousie Faculty Association (DFA) before the strike will officially be over. The association includes full-time professors and instructors, as well as professional librarians and counsellors.

DFA president Ismet Ugursal said that while the deal didn't include everything the faculty were looking for, it was fair and the association would likely support it.

"I think the [DFA] membership will probably find [the settlement] acceptable," he said.

"Obviously we aren't totally and completely happy... this is an imperfect agreement — nothing is ever perfect — so I think given the situation it is a good agreement."

The two unresolved issues were salaries and the replacement of departing faculty members — called complement.

The specific terms of the settlement cannot be released until the faculty association has voted to accept or reject the offer.

If the association rejects the offer, the strike — and talks — will continue.

University spokesperson Michelle Gallant says the proposed settlement is good news, but with a price tag.

"Everyone is delighted that we have a settlement so that students can come back to class," she said.

"[But] the strike was about money we don't have — so the issue of university funding continues to be a priority."

The administration's original offer of a 9.5 per cent salary increase over 32 months and no guarantee of complement was overwhelmingly rejected by the faculty association. And it was an offer the university said it already couldn't afford.

But the DFA proposal for a 13 per cent salary increase and a guarantee of full replacement of all leaving professors fared no better.

Both sides say they had to make hard choices to defend the quality of education, but they also acknowledge how hard the strike was on students.

**THE GAZETTE**  
Volume 130, Number 24. Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia. Thursday, March 26, 1998

## Dal profs go on strike

BY KAVERI GUPTA AND SHELLEY ROBINSON

Dalhousie professors hit the picket lines on the first day they were legally allowed to strike, but nobody knows how long they'll stay out.

The strike came after a series of stops and starts in the negotiations between the Dalhousie Faculty Association (DFA) and the university's Board of Governors.

Following the breakdown of scheduled talks, the failure of provincial conciliation, a mandatory two-week waiting period, and 24 hours of last-minute negotiations, the DFA took to the streets on Mar. 25.

More than 200 professors walked downtown from the campus and back again to protest what they say are unfair contract terms.

The DFA represents 722 members, including professors, professional librarians, and counsellors.

Counsellors are not striking as their work has been deemed an essential service.

The university has instituted a lock-out in the face of the strike. Professors are not allowed to teach classes or use any university facilities.

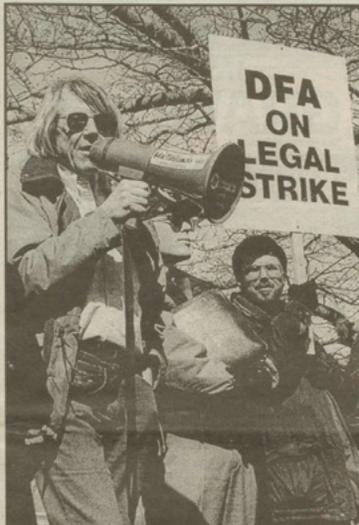
Michael Cross, chief negotiator for the faculty association, says the strike may not be pleasant, but may have been necessary.

"I'm not at all sure the board believed [a strike] was going to happen," he said. "So now that they know we're serious I hope that they'll come back to the table and we can have some really serious discussions."

The issues still at the table are increased salaries and replacement of departing faculty, or complement.

In the last 10 years the university

*continued on page 3*



Chief DFA negotiator Michael Cross rallies his troops outside of the Student Union Building. For more strike information, see page 3. (Photo by Lisa Verge)

## Profs on strike indefinitely

*continued from page 1...*  
has not replaced 113 faculty positions.

The board's original offer of a 9.5 per cent salary hike and no guarantee of faculty complement was rejected by a faculty membership vote.

And the DFA's two proposals — a 13 per cent salary increase with full replacement guarantee of faculty and a concession to an 11.8 per cent salary raise and guarantee of faculty leaving through early retirement packages, have also both failed.

But complement has become a big issue as both sides deal with 46 early retirements on Jul. 1.

The administration says it can't afford to guarantee full replacement of all these positions, and the faculty association says it can't afford not to.

Cross says the board's latest offer, which guaranteed to not eliminate, but not necessarily fill, the vacant positions is a step — but a small one.

"I suppose it's a recognition that there is a problem," he said. "[But] it doesn't put any people in classrooms."

Dr. Gunter Muecke, an Earth Sciences professor, agrees.

Muecke is one of the early retirees. He says he was on Wednesday's picket line to prove a point, even though he wouldn't benefit from any new settlement.

"I am walking because I see the programs in this university being threatened by the cutback in faculty," he said. "I am retiring 10 years before I have to [because]... I can no longer do for the students what I want to."

The board says their current offer would incur a debt of \$17-million.

But university spokesperson

Michelle Gallant says the board is committed to settling.

"We are ready to meet at any time," she said. "It's unfortunate the faculty adjourned the meetings to go on strike — we were making progress."

Talks, which broke off the morning of the strike after a full 24 hours, are tentatively scheduled for the afternoon of Mar. 26.

The provincial conciliator Robert Durdan is still mediating discussions.

But no one seems sure about where talks, or the strike, will go from here.

Cross is sure of only a few things.

"There are only a couple of weeks left in the term and people are going to graduate, we have to do something fast," he said.

"[But] we all need some sleep first."

### References:

1. *Dalhousie Gazette*, Volume 130, Issue 24, cover page and page 3, Dalhousie University Reference Collection, MS-1-Ref, OS Box 177, Dalhousie University Archives, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

2. *Dalhousie Gazette*, Volume 130, Issue 25, cover page, Dalhousie University Reference Collection, MS-1-Ref, OS Box 177, Dalhousie University Archives, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

# 2002 strike



## Strike nears end?

The Dalhousie Faculty Association reached a tentative agreement with the University's administration on Tuesday.

> News pg 3

Reference: Dalhousie Gazette, Volume 134, Issue 25, cover page, Dalhousie University Reference Collection, MS-1-Ref, OS Box 179, Dalhousie University Archives, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

the GAZETTE March 28, 2002 NEWS

## Deal reached - strike over?

Classes tentatively set to resume April Fools' Day

by tyler kustra the gazette

To the relief of 14,000 Dalhousie students, professors began voting Thursday, March 29, on a tentative agreement to end the four-week old faculty strike.

"I'm pretty excited that it's over," said second-year health-education student Stephanie Needham. "I'm going a little stir crazy living in residence."

Third-year philosophy major Dave MacDonald echoed her comments.

"I'm relieved. It's been too long."

Dalhousie Student Union president Shawn Tracey exploded into dance upon hearing the news of the deal.

He added, however, that with professors on strike and classes cancelled since March 4, the deal was long overdue.

"I'm upset at both sides for taking so long to come to an agreement," he said.

Both the 772 members of the Dalhousie Faculty Association bargaining unit and Dalhousie's board of governors must approve the agreement before classes can resume.

The faculty will be voting from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. Thursday at DFA headquarters. The board is meeting at noon.

The two sides reached a tentative agreement on March 25, with the help of provincial mediator Milton Veniot. They had been continuously negotiating for five days.

The deal contains a letter of understanding, requiring Dalhousie to employ at least 760 full-time faculty so long as its operating budget does not decrease, after accounting for inflation.

The DFA had been fighting for staffing levels - known as complement - to increase by 18 positions during the course of three-year contract.

"The mediator said he viewed [the letter] as a guarantee," DFA president Andy Wainwright said.

"It's absolutely binding. This letter speaks to the actual replacement of members, the maintenance of complement."

Wainwright said the DFA was "generous" in allowing the university to decrease complement by up to 12 professors.

He added that after 10 months of negotiations the DFA was victorious.

"We won this strike. Unfortunately we and the students had to pay a great price, but the future of the university is the better for it."  
- DFA president Andy Wainwright

"We won this strike. Unfortunately we and the students had to pay a great price, but the future of the university is the better for it."

THE DFA ON THE PICKET LINES

# 2002 strike



## THE DFA ON THE PICKET LINES

# 2002 strike



## PRESIDENT RECOLLECTIONS



**Ian Flint, Ph.D.**

**DFA President 2003-04**

**Faculty of Engineering, Civil & Resource Engineering**

*Born in Toronto, lives in Halifax*

### **What is your most striking memory of your time as a DFA President?**

My first meeting with the Administration was concerning an 8:01 arbitration regarding Association-Board relations, which we had just won. Everyone just sat there with visible anger and frustration. Afterwards I asked our lawyer what the purpose of the meeting was. The answer was that it was required under the Collective Agreement.

### **What are your thoughts on the role the DFA plays for its members?**

In the early years, it was to protect members against a heavy-handed Administration and to protect tenure-track teaching.

## PRESIDENT RECOLLECTIONS



**Kevin Grundy, Ph.D.**

**DFA President 2004-05, 2007-08, 2013-14**

**Faculty of Science, Chemistry**

*Born in Auckland (NZ), lives in Whangarei (NZ)*

### **What is your most striking memory of your time as a DFA President?**

I arrived at Dalhousie in 1978, shortly after certification and during the negotiation of the first Collective Agreement. Tenure-track positions were scarce then and I took a pay cut coming from a contract position at Scarborough College in Toronto. The DFA first came to my attention upon concluding the first Agreement, when my salary went up by 50%. I started getting involved in DFA activities in the mid-eighties and ultimately served in many different capacities. Without doubt, my starkest memories derive from the times I was involved in negotiations as a member of the team or as President. Of those, the most dramatic occurred during the round of 2011 when I was the Chief Negotiator.

It was a tough round. Above all else, the Board wanted major concessions on the pension plan, essentially converting it from a defined benefit plan to a money-purchase plan. We were literally hours away from strike action when the Province changed reporting rules thereby removing the rationale for the Board's pension proposal. The remaining issues were dealt with quickly and, in the process, we achieved extra increases in the Career Development Increment (CDI) for the life of the contract. Later that day, in our empty strike headquarters, I received a call from my counterpart on the Board's team. Apparently, they had miscalculated the CDI increases in their counter-offer which, despite our

tentative Agreement, they had to walk back; the deal was off. I have never lost my composure quite so completely as I did then, and probably never will. Fortunately, then Dalhousie President Tom Traves listened to reason from DFA President Anthony Stewart and myself and agreed to accept the original deal.

Whether serving as President or in some other role, my most enduring memories are of the people I served with, both faculty and staff. The DFA has been well served over the last 40 years by exceptional staff. During my tenures, I was reliant upon the skills and professionalism of Barbara MacLennan, Lynn Purves, Brigitte Schotch and Linda Robertson. Their efforts over the years have saved many a President from disaster and humiliation. Their vigilance has also saved DFA members, both individually and as a group, untold sums of money by ensuring that the Collective Agreement is correctly applied. We owe them all a huge vote of thanks.

It would also be remiss of me to not recognize the past Presidents and Presidents-Elect who so ably supported (and amused) me during my terms as President. So, a much deserved shout out to Helen Powell, Jerry Singleton, Catrina Brown and David Mensink. I would also like to thank Anthony Stewart, who allowed me to strong-arm him into being President during the 2011 round of bargaining. His support for the team was rock solid and his performance as the point man during those talks was the very definition of grace under pressure.

### **What are your thoughts on the role the DFA plays for its members?**

Without the DFA as a bargaining unit, Dalhousie faculty would have little to no control over a myriad of aspects of their work environment: salaries, workloads, leaves, pensions, staffing levels, tenure and promotion, etc. The list is long. As a faculty association, the DFA can join with others across Canada and the world to protect and promote issues of general importance to academia. Academic freedom comes to mind. By acting collectively, our faculty have a much louder and more compelling voice.

## PRESIDENT RECOLLECTIONS



**Helen Powell**

**DFA President 2005-06**

**Sexton Design & Technology Library**

*Born in Windsor (NS), lives in Halifax*

### **What is your most striking memory of your time as a DFA President?**

My most striking memory of my time as President of the DFA is my experience with the Grievance Committee. Grievance work would never have been my first choice, timid as I have always been of any kind of conflict or discord. However, once I became engaged with the Grievance Committee members, and the issues they dealt with, I developed a deep appreciation for those members and their commitment to their colleagues.

I remember that every member of the DFA Grievance Committee was unfailingly respectful of each member who brought an issue before us. They thoughtfully considered each case, whether it was simple or particularly thorny. Their contributions of time, talent, and patience were remarkable to me.

Another memory from my Grievance Committee days still makes me smile: the look of pure glee lighting up the faces of one or two committee members, who shall remain nameless, at the prospect of tackling an especially “juicy” grievance. Their enthusiasm was delightful.

### **What are your thoughts on the role the DFA plays for its members?**

In my view, the role of the DFA, beyond the obvious roles in collective bargaining and administering the Collective Agreement, is to ensure fairness. The DFA has so many roles and responsibilities: human rights in the workplace, safety, justice, employer accountability, being a few that come to mind.

## PRESIDENT RECOLLECTIONS



**Jerome Singleton, Ph.D.**

**DFA President 2006-07**

**Faculty of Health, School of Health & Human Performance**

*Born in Kitchener, lives in Halifax*

### **What is your most striking memory of your time as a DFA President?**

I will place my reflection of my experience of being the DFA President within the context of the history of the organization. I first arrived at Dalhousie in 1981, that fall I contacted the DFA regarding moving costs to Dalhousie. I met with Bob Rodger and I received insightful suggestions how to negotiate with the Dean. I then became involved with the DFA as Executive Committee Member-at-Large and other committees.

The previous Presidents of the DFA prior to me becoming President of the DFA in 2006-07 provided the foundation of the DFA I could build upon. I would like to thank the previous Presidents Kevin Grundy (2004-05) and Helen Powell (2005-06) who assisted and guided me during my term in that position.

When I became President, the first agenda item was CAUT censure related to Dr. Gabrielle Horne's experience at the Capital District Health Authority. I was supported by the DFA staff, Barb McLennan,

Brigitte Schotch and the DFA Executive during my three years' involvement as President-Elect, President and Past President. Kevin Grundy and Helen Powell assisted me during these years to focus on the collective well-being of Dalhousie University's faculty. The Presidents who followed me have continued to reflect the collective well-being of the Dalhousie spirit of collegiality.

Stark memories aside, my fondest, most enduring memories of all the time I spent working within the DFA centre on the people with whom it was my privilege to serve: Kevin Grundy, David Mensink, Terry Mitchell, Carrie Dawson, Anthony Stewart, Catrina Brown, Laurene Rehman, Darren Abramson and David Westwood.

Each of the Presidents reflects the right leader for the right time during our collective history. Five DFA Presidents have been from the School of Health and Human Performance: Sandy Young (1984-85), Carolyn Savoy (1999-00), myself (2006-07), Laurene Rehman (2016-17) and David Westwood (2018-19).

The DFA is a strong organization due to the support of its members. As a collective we are stronger and you can make a contribution to the well-being of the collective by becoming involved. So take the time and sit on a committee of the DFA.

My experience with the DFA over my career made me a stronger person working with colleagues across the Dalhousie University community to ensure we move forward as a collective. I also enjoyed the four social (strike) opportunities provided during my career to meet colleagues across campus.

### **What are your thoughts on the role the DFA plays for its members?**

The DFA is us, the community of Dalhousie University. We empower all of us in our working environment. So be an active part of the DFA.

## PRESIDENT RECOLLECTIONS



**David Mensink, Ph.D.**  
**DFA President 2008-09, 2012-13, 2015-16**  
**Counselling & Psychological Services**

*Born in Michigan, lives in Victoria*

### **What is your most striking memory of your time as a DFA President?**

How great it was working with such dedicated volunteers and staff of DFA. There were times when it felt that my purpose for being at Dalhousie was to be President of the DFA; not once, not twice, but three times in total!

### **What are your thoughts on the role the DFA plays for its members?**

What blew me away about DFA was in spite of the diverse backgrounds and disciplines of its members, how dedicated most were to the core values of the DFA:

1. look out especially for those with less power and advantage;
2. fairness must be exercised on a global basis, fairness for all members--inclusion and equity for all;
3. belief in a non-hierarchical, co-operative organization; and
4. belief in the overwhelming respect and dignity of each member.

## PRESIDENT RECOLLECTIONS



**Terry Mitchell**

**DFA President 2009-10**

**Faculty of Dentistry, Dental Hygiene**

*Born in Ottawa, lives in Dartmouth*

### **What is your most striking memory of your time as a DFA President?**

My memories of DFA President include a small, a medium, and perhaps, a huge event. I was instrumental in the DFA having a sign that finally identified the location of the DFA office on South Street - a small, but significant project. At the beginning of my term, we began determining terms of reference for a "PR Person/Communication" position, and the process of finding someone who would meet our needs - a medium but important project. However, the majority of my Presidential year was consumed by the fraud that had been perpetrated on the DFA for over a three-year period. I'm very pleased to recall that not only were we successful in prosecuting the perpetrator, but we were successful in having the total amount of the defrauded money returned to the DFA - a huge

event. There were many "smaller branches" to that significant event including revisions to the DFA handbook and accounting practices, as well as the DFA's staffing needs. There were many "doubting Thomases" both within and without the DFA who did not think the DFA would ever see a dime of the \$150,000 returned, but every cent was returned. So while it was a very trying time for all concerned, in my opinion, overall the result can be considered a positive one.

### **What are your thoughts on the role the DFA plays for its members?**

I think the most important role the DFA plays for its members is that of a valuable resource. Members can call the office for questions related to their academic responsibilities, protection of their career accomplishments, the progression of their career, and of course, all aspects of their benefits of employment at Dalhousie from child care rights to pension, and a myriad of things in between. Although strikes are never anything faculty want to consider, even the picket lines offer benefits. The networking opportunities on the picket lines are invaluable whether they result in collaborative research and teaching opportunities or simply long-standing friendships.

## PRESIDENT RECOLLECTIONS



**Carrie Dawson, Ph.D.**  
**DFA President 2010-11**  
**Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences, English**

*Born in Vancouver, lives in Halifax*

### **What is your most striking memory of your time as a DFA President?**

I have fond memories of the very thoughtful discussions at Executive meetings: it felt really good to sit around a table with engaged, passionate colleagues determined to make this a better place to study and work.

I was proud of the work we did to resist the Administration's interest in using Navitas, a for-profit provider of "education services," to provide English language and transition courses for EAL students at Dalhousie. That said, I think we still need to find ways to push the Administration to provide better in-house supports for those students!

## PRESIDENT RECOLLECTIONS



**Catrina Brown, Ph.D.**

**DFA President 2014-15**

**Faculty of Health, School of Social Work**

*Born in Winnipeg, lives in Halifax*

### **What is your most striking memory of your time as a DFA President?**

I have been involved as a volunteer with the DFA since 2005. The most significant experiences I had as President were around launching the DFA speaker series, participating in the government post-secondary education consultation and presenting on Bill 100 at Law Amendments. As my Presidency was during a negotiation year, the process leading up to negotiations and the collective bargaining process were significant experiences for me.

### **What are your thoughts on the role the DFA plays for its members?**

As a professional association, the DFA's primary role is to negotiate the Collective Agreement and ensure that the Administration and Board of the University act in compliance with the Agreement. We play a critical role in safeguarding the central academic mandates of teaching and research are not subordinated to management's fiscal priorities and that the principles of academic freedom and collegial governance are upheld. Through the Collective Agreement we seek to ensure fair and equitable work environments, to support faculty through grievances, and to protect benefits and labour rights. We also communicate with the membership on key issues such as precarious labour, faculty complement, program prioritization, equity, and fiscal auditing of management's budgeting choices within the University. As well, we work with Dalhousie students around our shared interests.

## PRESIDENT RECOLLECTIONS



**Laurene Rehman, Ph.D.**

**DFA President 2016-17**

**Faculty of Health,  
School of Health & Human Performance**

*Born in Castlegar (BC), lives in Dartmouth*

### **What is your most striking memory of your time as a DFA President?**

My most striking memory is actually a series of memories. They have been each time we had one of our members step up in a truly inspirational and leadership role, from working to better understand the University finances to issues facing our members around precarious employment. These instances continue to make me realize how much can be accomplished through passion, energy, and commitment to the rights of our members. The work Darren Abramson (DFA President 2017-18) helped to lead around the budget, along with Karen Janigan (DFA Communications Officer 2011-14) and Donna Balkan (DFA Communications Officer 2014-16) and several others, assisted in creating a discussion on allocation of resources in the University. As well, the research of Karen Foster around precarious employment and the impact on people's work/life balance led to a panel which

facilitated dialogue about issues to consider and brought greater awareness to these. These were just two examples of how leaders can inspire others to act. It wasn't until I was in the role of DFA President that I was able to witness this commitment to pursuing a broader goal or mandate within Dalhousie. Although I had been involved with the non-profit sector where many paid and unpaid staff support the mission of an organization, I had not seen such passion to a "better" academic environment on such a broad scale. These memories continue to stick with me and have helped to shape my academic lens and perspective.

### **What are your thoughts on the role the DFA plays for its members?**

For me, the DFA is a facilitator of opportunities and dialogue of issues of concern to our members. They are also an advocate in instances where our members may not even realize they need to be concerned or aware. Through both this facilitation and advocacy, they are able to identify and focus attention on timely issues that will better impact the work/life of our members.

## The DFA welcomes TUNS Faculty Association

**Jane Fee, Ph.D.**

**Faculty of Health, School of Human  
Communication Disorders**

**DFA President 1996-97**



My time as President of the DFA took place during a time of major change at Dalhousie University. In July of 1996, an Agreement was signed between the Province of Nova Scotia, Dalhousie University and the Technical University of Nova Scotia (TUNS) that would lead to amalgamation of the two universities by April 1, 1997. <https://nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/daltech.htm>

The legislation raised more questions than it answered. A Transition Committee was created and monthly Amalgamation Bulletins were sent out to employees as decisions about the transition were made. Both universities were concerned about how their culture and identity would be impacted. Employees at both institutions were concerned about their jobs, pension plans, bargaining units and collective agreements. Naming proved to be far more difficult than anyone had imagined and the original name for the new college identified in the legislation – Dalhousie University Polytechnic – was eventually withdrawn.

On January 1, 1997, the Boards of Dalhousie and TUNS made joint application to the Nova Scotia Labour Relations Board (NSLRB) to amalgamate the eight bargaining units of the combined universities to three: one representing the DFA and TUNS Faculty Association (TUNSFA); one representing part-time faculty and teaching assistants; and one representing support staff. Sheer size suggested that the DFA would be the successor Association after amalgamation (638 DFA members vs. approximately 90 TUNSFA members). The executives of the DFA and TUNSFA immediately initiated discussions and less than a month later both Associations responded

## THE DFA CELEBRATES MERGERS



to the NSLRB application by proposing that a single successor bargaining unit be created and the DFA/ Dalhousie Board of Governors Collective Agreement be extended to cover faculty from both universities after amalgamation.

During this transition period, the two association executives further discussed issues such as how to merge the finances of the two associations, how to ensure that TUNSFAs executive members would continue to have a role on the DFA executive, and how promotion and tenure would work within the new Faculties of Engineering and Computer Science. We had determined that grievances of both universities had to be resolved prior to the final merger date so grievance committees worked closely together to make this happen.

I personally learned a great deal during this time. I learned that open and honest communication goes a long way in times of uncertainty and anxiety. I learned that I enjoy administrative work and that one of my strengths is in building relationships and encouraging people to work together. I learned that every post-secondary institution has a unique culture and identity and that anxiety reigns when culture or identity are threatened. And most of all I learned that when you sign up to take on a volunteer job you may get more than you bargained for!

I am likely one of few people to have actively participated in two university mergers in Canada. From 2002-06, I was involved in the amalgamation of the Technical University of British Columbia (TechBC) into Simon Fraser University. Like the Dalhousie/TUNS amalgamation, the SFU/TechBC amalgamation was provincially mandated.

I have borrowed heavily from my President's Message of February 1997, DFA Dialogue in drafting this summary. If you're interested in more information on the amalgamation see more at:

Eastman, J and Lang, D.W. (2001) *Mergers in Higher Education: Lessons from Theory and Practice*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

## THE DFA CELEBRATES MERGERS



## The DFA welcomes NSAC faculty

**Debbie Mellish**

**Faculty of Agriculture,  
Department of Plant,  
Food & Environmental Science**



In September 2012, the Nova Scotia Agricultural College (NSAC) was merged with Dalhousie University. The merger of the former NSAC and Dalhousie University required extensive discussions on both campuses. During discussions, two major questions had to be answered:

1. Should the NSAC faculty remain members of NSGEU or should they become members of the DFA?
2. If they became members of the DFA, how would NSAC academic staff be classified in the Dalhousie structure based on their responsibilities?

The NSAC faculty started lobbying on behalf of themselves and realized very quickly they should be merged as members of the DFA. The DFA agreed and a team was set up consisting of DFA representatives Ray Larkin and Barbara MacLennan and three people from the NSAC: John Stackhouse, Margie Tate and Debbie Mellish. The team began negotiating with representatives of the Dalhousie Administration.

After many meetings with no conclusions, the DFA went to the Nova Scotia Labour Relations Board (NSLRB). In the spring of 2014, the NSLRB decided that most of the academic staff should become members of the DFA, either as members of the professoriate or instructor members. We then went back to the table to negotiate the final details for the move of former NSAC members to the DFA.

Without the support and backing of the DFA members for these former NSGEU members, this move would not have happened. The former members of the NSGEU appreciate the support that the DFA members gave to us during this time.

## THE DFA CELEBRATES MERGERS



# A union is more than a union

**Pierre Stevens**

**Faculty of Science, Department of Mathematics & Statistics**

**&**

**Elizabeth Kay-Raining Bird, Ph.D.**

**Faculty of Health, School of Communication Sciences & Disorders**

One of the beautiful things about a union is that while striving to improve working conditions, it fosters a wonderful community; a space for developing one's thoughts, a space for testing oneself, and a space for finding one's place in the world. This true community spirit can go far beyond the legalese of contract talk.

The joy of working together with colleagues towards common goals for the good of all can lead to surprising results (unintended consequences). It was during one such endeavor, contract negotiations, that Pierre Stevens and Mandy Kay-Raining Bird met. Pierre was on the Executive and Mandy was on the negotiating team. The DFA was embroiled in the longest strike in its history. It was an intense, nerve-racking time. Mandy and Pierre recognized each other as like-minded people, with similar beliefs and values. Those shared beliefs and values formed the basis of a friendship that eventually evolved into love.

The two grew up big union supporters. They have always believed that it is primarily through the work

of unions that employees have been able to achieve social justice, decent wages and safe working conditions. The DFA was their union and they were motivated to support its work. They became active in the DFA early and stayed active throughout their careers at Dalhousie University. And that's how they met—through the DFA.

Fast-forward a number of years. Mandy has finally convinced Pierre to marry her ☺. They thought, "What could be more meaningful than to marry in the arms of the organization that was so instrumental in bringing them together?" They asked. It was granted.

On August 12, 2006 Pierre and Mandy were married in the conference room of the DFA. Back then the DFA was located in a beautiful old house designed by Andrew Cobb (or so we believed) on South Street.

Barbara MacLennan, the DFA's professional officer, agreed to be a witness to the marriage, together with Dr. Gerhard Stroink, Pierre's oldest friend in Canada and then chair of the Physics Department at Dalhousie. Dr. Srinivasa Swaminatan, a mathematics colleague of Pierre's agreed to marry us—his first secular wedding ceremony, and the first wedding in the DFA quarters. Our four children (two each from previous marriages), Mandy's father and a few close friends also attended.

The DFA house on South Street has since been demolished, but it was only a house. The DFA and its spirit keeps living among us. The space of community called the DFA keeps going strong, a fortress on its own.

And growing from it a set of unintended consequences: a ceremony that could not have been better in a place that could not have been more perfect, and a love story that keeps growing, a union of its own.

Thank you DFA. We can truly say you enriched our lives.



## The DFA, psychology, and me

**David Mensink, Ph.D.**

**Counselling & Psychological Services**

**DFA President 2009-09, 2012-13, 2015-16**

First off, congratulations to all who have contributed to the DFA over the past 40 years of certification. The DFA has been exceedingly successful in representing its members over the past 40 years and it takes many hands, hearts, and minds to do so. Good on you!!

Personally, I had the honour and pleasure of serving the DFA as President (three times), member of the Executive Committee, member of the DFA Bargaining Team (two times), Treasurer, member of the Grievance Committee, and Chair of the Equity Committee. I am grateful to the DFA, its staff, and members for putting such trust and responsibility in me over the years.

My first experience with the DFA was dramatic. I had just started my career with Dalhousie University as a Professional Counsellor in Counselling and Psychological Services on September 6, 1988. Freshly out of a Post-Doctoral Fellowship at the University of Alberta, I was going to apply my skills and expertise to counselling students, performing psychotherapy. Then November arrived and I found myself "out on the street" and holding a placard as I was on strike for the DFA. This was the first of three strikes in which I participated for the DFA. My strike experiences taught me three lessons which would later help me in my responsibilities to the DFA:

1. Membership unity and involvement are crucial to the health of an organization;
2. The central role of equity and fairness at work and beyond; and
3. The high value of employee rights.

## THE DFA: MOVING CLOSER TO 40

Yes, I became committed to become active with the DFA, then and throughout my employment at Dalhousie University.

My next major experience with the DFA was as a member of the bargaining team during the 1997-98 negotiations. I thought, somewhat naively, that being trained in negotiation and mediation skills as a psychologist might help and contribute to the process. I learned a lot about bargaining as a union member, including strategy and the importance of team work. My experience during those negotiations, which ended in a strike, and also my negotiation team experiences during the 2011-12 negotiations, which almost ended in a strike, emphasized the importance of maintaining your values and sticking to what you believe is right.

Finally, being President of the DFA was very impactful and, interestingly, reinforced my training as a psychologist. Four major principles of ethical practice as a psychologist are:

1. Respect for the dignity of persons and peoples;
2. Responsible caring;
3. Integrity in relationships; and
4. Responsibility to society.

These principles were in the background and provided direction for me as DFA President for the three terms I served. I found that no matter what decision needed to be made and no matter what action needed to be taken, I was guided by these principles; moreover, the work done by the DFA reinforced these principles in me. Being President of the DFA was both rewarding and challenging to me. The rewards came in successfully representing members and in working together as a finely tuned team. The challenges came in many forms including understanding legal matters (e.g., Duty of Fair Representation), finding time to serve the organization well, and the public nature of the office.

I enjoyed my other roles with the DFA and found them both challenging and rewarding too. Although, looking back, I might have tweaked or changed some things during my work with the DFA, I would not have done any less work or functioned in any fewer roles with the DFA. That experience was highly valuable and helped shape me into a better person in my journey of becoming. All in all, thanks to the DFA and all the events and experiences in which I participated. Thanks especially to all those with whom I worked over the years.

Congrats and long live the DFA!!



## A busy year, indeed!

**Catrina Brown, Ph.D.**

**Faculty of Health, School of Social Work**

**DFA President 2014-15**

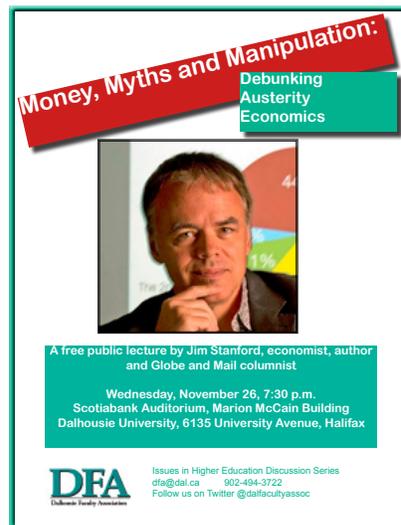
I have been involved with the DFA in one capacity or another since 2005. While I was President, we negotiated the 2014-17 Collective Agreement. Before that, I served as President-Elect and Second Vice-President. During this time, I had two immediate goals: 1) to initiate a DFA Equity Committee and 2) to develop an action plan for the recently developed DFA Communications Co-ordination Committee to mobilize faculty on key issues such as precarious labour, the neo-liberal, corporatized university agenda, and academic freedom.

### **Collective Bargaining**

I recommended that we hire Ray Larkin as Chief Negotiator given the complexity of issues and deeply divided interests of the Board and faculty. Ray Larkin had been the DFA's lawyer for many years, and the executive agreed that he would bring his knowledge of labour law and experience as a skilled negotiator to the role. I was concerned the Board would continue to try to modify our pension, as they had attempted in the previous round, which came perilously close to a strike (and would go on to do again in both the 2014 and 2017 rounds).

Thus during the 2014 round, we focused on preserving our defined benefit pension, challenging the precariousness of limited-term appointments, improving the situation of instructors, and increasing the number of Dalhousie Diversity Faculty Awards (DDFAs). This contract negotiation was not typical in that it involved complexities around the merger with the Faculty of Agriculture, Truro Campus. The contract for 2014-17 was negotiated quite quickly without conciliation, and with some gains, while keeping the pension intact.

## THE DFA: MOVING CLOSER TO 40



Barbara MacLennan, DFA's professional officer, has brought incisive perspective and thorough knowledge of the Collective Agreement and has been a consistent force at the DFA particularly through the Grievance Committee and in contract negotiations, with clear institutional memory.

### Equity

Following CAUT's direction that bargaining units have equity committees to raise awareness and incorporate these issues effectively into negotiations, I initiated a DFA Equity Committee in 2014 and chaired the committee until recently. In 2017, we finally saw sexual orientation and gender identity included under designated groups in the Collective Agreement.

Multiple conversations across the University have occurred between 2014-17 to see sexual orientation and gender identity fully recognized among the designated groups in the Collective Agreement and in all university practices. Indeed, in the preparation period of the most recent Collective Agreement, the DFA Equity Committee consulted with equity seeking groups and helped develop surveys related to equity. From these consultations a Queer Faculty Caucus and a (dis)Ability Caucus emerged. However, there continues to be the creation of identity silos (rather than acknowledging the complexity of intersectional identities), and more remains to be done to take down the bureaucratic blocks to full recognition of sexual orientation and gender identity in equity discussion, policy and practices.

### Speaker Series

The DFA Communications Coordination Committee began a speaker series to address the ways that neo-liberalism was having a significant impact on the academy, including on self-governance, academic freedom, work-load creep (declining resources and escalating class size), the growth of precarious labour, and efforts to attack our defined benefit pension. By 2013 university faculty associations and CAUT were alarmed by the demonstrated growth of limited-term appointments (LTAs) and the failure to replace tenure-stream faculty. During my presidency, statistics clearly demonstrated a growth in LTAs at Dalhousie with 40% of them in the Faculty of Health Professions (now Faculty of Health). As I began to have conversations about the importance of this, I faced some significant push back. Some speculated there were pedagogical reasons for this, or that LTAs chose to be LTAs rather than tenure-stream faculty, or just general skepticism that LTAs were an increasingly widespread precarious and exploited form of labour in the academy.

Donna Balkan was the DFA Communications Officer during this time and she was a tireless, energetic, smart woman with significant vision about labour politics. She and I worked very closely together on these events and it was a memorable experience. Sadly, only a few years later she passed away from cancer.

I helped to organize, and moderated the speaker series beginning in 2014 with a forum, "Perils and promises: corporate culture in academia" with Marjorie Stone and Eric Neustadt. This was followed by "Profit U: who controls our universities and why you should care," with well-known writer and activist Linda McQuaig. Two panel discussions were

## THE DFA: MOVING CLOSER TO 40

### *Silencing the Academy: Academic Freedom and the future of university governance*



#### A free public panel discussion with:

- James L. Turk, former Executive Director, Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) and editor of *Academic Freedom in Conflict*
- Letitia Meynell, Associate Professor of Philosophy and Dalhousie University Senator
- Victor Catano, Professor of Psychology, Saint Mary's University and former President, CAUT

Tuesday, March 24, 2015, 7:30 p.m.  
Room 303 Student Union Building, 6136 University Avenue



held: one on “Whose priorities? Whose choices?: program prioritization and the future of post-secondary education”, with Craig Heron, Len Findlay, Jacqueline Skipunis, and the other on “Seeing the invisible academic,” with Wayne Peters, Past President of CAUT.

We were excited to have left wing and well-known CAW economist Jim Stanford discuss “Myths and manipulation. Debunking austerity economics.” And in 2015, there were presentations with students including one on “Faculty and students working together” to reduce student fees where I presented, and another where I provided the opening remarks at the Dalhousie Student Union Rally: Day of Action. In 2015 the speaker series held another panel on “Silencing the Academy: Academic freedom and the future of university governance” with Jim Turk, Vic Catanno, and Letitia Meynell.

### **Consultations & Lobbying**

In addition to contract consultations and negotiations, and an ongoing speaking series, the DFA was involved in a number of other consultations including the Equity Committee participating in and providing a written submission to the Task Force on Misogyny, Sexism and Homophobia in the Faculty of Dentistry meeting in 2015.

In a coalition with the Association of Nova Scotia University Teachers, the DFA participated in two government consultations which were precursors to Bill 100, the Universities Accountability and Sustainability Act. As President of the DFA, I presented at the Law Amendments Committee, as did Ray Larkin. Bill 100 passed in the spring of

2015 and exemplifies a neo-liberal managerialist agenda toward education, which strikes at the heart of the purpose of a university and its core mission of teaching and research. One deeply contested section had language indicating that universities needed to comply with the government’s social and economic agenda: “An outcome agreement between the Minister and a university must establish the strategic alignment between the social and economic priorities of the Government and the university’s funding decisions....” I also spoke at a rally outside the legislature along with other activists against the Bill.

In 2016, following my Presidency, I published “The constraints of neo-liberal new managerialism in social work education” which was influenced by my experience as President of the DFA and with Bill 100. I subsequently became a Senator at Dalhousie for a three-year term where similar concerns and debates continued, including controversy on the hiring of Deans, VPs, and Presidents with very little faculty input. Going forward, I would like to see the DFA and Senate forge a stronger alliance and to maximize opportunity for conversation.

## Budgeting and collective bargaining at Dalhousie

**Darren Abramson, Ph.D.**  
**Faculty of Arts & Social  
Sciences, Department of  
Philosophy**  
**DFA President 2017-18**



All DFA members received an Aug. 2, 2018 “weekly news” email from the Dalhousie Administration with a link to a compensation disclosure web page. That page states that, “As for administrative spending, the percentage of Dal’s budget devoted to administration sits at 6.3% of total expenses, according to the latest numbers submitted to the Canadian Association of University Business Officers (CAUBO). That’s the second lowest among the U15 universities.”

This statement is at best misleading. In my recent time on the DFA Executive I made it a priority to understand budgeting at Dalhousie. Thanks to CAUT (Canadian Association of University Teachers) analysis of CAUBO data, we now know that, starting in 2010, Non-Academic Salaries at Dal began to rise above Academic Rank Salaries (full and part-time) at Dalhousie as a percentage of total expenditures.

That gap is widening, and it is new (not seen in previous Dalhousie data since 1972).

## THE DFA: MOVING CLOSER TO 40

Let me repeat that: salaries, as a percentage of what Dalhousie spends, is directed more to folks who are not working as academics, than to those who are. In case you believe that this is a common phenomenon, let me assure you: it is not. It is anomalous in the U15.

I served as DFA President during the 2017-18 round of collective bargaining with our employer, the Dalhousie Board of Governors. The Board of Governors, responsible for the current state of Dalhousie budgeting, took the view that any gains for the Association would have to be offset by concessions. Based on the DFA's analysis I believe that this approach is not justified by any financial reality, and is eroding the ability of our members to achieve excellence in their teaching and research.

If you are still reading this, I encourage you to take action. That can be as simple as emailing the current DFA President with an expression of support. Or, you can explore the DFA website to get further informed, in particular about Dalhousie budget practices. If you have room in your service obligations, you can volunteer for a position with the Association. Finally, you can decide to be skeptical the next time an administrator tells you "there isn't money for that."

### Making choices:

How Dalhousie spends its money...and why it matters



**DALHOUSIE FACULTY ASSOCIATION**

January 2016

## THE DFA: MOVING CLOSER TO 40



## The DFA and the Dalhousie Pension Plan\*

**Faye Woodman, Ph.D.**

**Schulich School of Law**

**Former DFA representative to Dalhousie's Pension Advisory Committee**

*\* For those new to the world of pensions, the basic types are defined benefit, defined contribution, and target plans. The terms are italicized in the text because the differences can be crucial.*

The DFA has played an important role in advocating for changes to the Dalhousie Pension Plan so that long serving employees at Dalhousie can now look to their pension plan to provide a reduced but adequate income in their old age. The Dalhousie Plan is certainly not, as has been suggested by hostile commentators, "gold-plated." Dalhousie employees contribute significant amounts of their pre-tax salaries (8%) to the Plan, and the Plan does not provide automatic indexing to the cost of living for pensions in pay.

### **I. DFA participation in the governance of the Dalhousie Pension Plan**

The governing parties of the Pension Plan include the Dalhousie Board of Governors (BOG), employee unions, and a management group. The DFA participates in Plan governance through its representatives on the Pension Advisory Committee (PAC). The DFA also nominates a member to the Board of Trustees of the Pension Trust Fund (PTF) (funds of active members), and to the Board of Trustees of the Retirees Trust Fund (RTF) (funds of retired members). Despite the objections of the Association of Dalhousie Retirees and Pensioners (ADRP), retired members are represented by a Board appointee.

DFA representation on the PAC has been remarkably stable over the years: Paul Huber (economics), Philip Welch (medicine) and a bit later, Paul, Philip and myself (and others who contributed from time to time). Inevitably old hands must be replaced, and our new team on the PAC is Jonathan Shapiro and Jodi Lazare, both from Law. Because of the longevity and experience of its representatives, the DFA has had more influence than would normally

## THE DFA: MOVING CLOSER TO 40

be expected. The DFA's goal has always been a better pension plan for all employees including those belonging to other unions or management. The DFA has tried to work closely with other union representatives, recognizing both common areas of concern and some differences.

### II. The challenges of the early years

In the early years, many of the issues concerning the pension plan were “technical issues.” These technical issues, however, could significantly impact individuals. The resolution of technical issues could also affect the overall fairness of the Plan. In pension plan administration, the adage that “the devil is in the details” rings true.

Then as now, the DFA assisted DFA members who were adversely affected by interpretations of the Plan. As the Plan matured, many situations arose that had never been contemplated. The DFA helped resolve issues by proposing amendments to the Plan and it assisted DFA members on various types of appeals.

### III. Current issues

#### 1. The “problem” with defined benefit plans

In more recent years, the DFA has been involved in successfully resisting attempts to reduce or eliminate benefits under our Plan, which is a defined benefit plan. Employers dislike a key characteristic of a defined benefit plan, which is its guarantee of the amount of pension on retirement. In particular, employers do not like having to assume the financial risk implied by a defined benefit plan. Even if the plan has been underfunded or has investment losses, the defined benefit must be paid to retirees, and the employer must make up any deficit in plan funding.

Today, employers are more likely to sponsor a defined contribution pension plan, if they have any pension plan at all. Under these plans, employees only get the pension the funds credited to them can buy at the time of retirement. In other words, the risk of an inadequate pension falls on the employee, and not on the employer, under a defined contribution plan.

Legislation has been introduced by the federal government and by some provinces, including Nova Scotia, to recognize that employers and employees can agree to have target benefit plans, as an alternative to defined benefit plans. Under target benefit plans, it is possible for the employer contributions to the plan to be predetermined and fixed, so that if the plan is underfunded, the employees will face either a reduction of benefits or an increase in their contributions to the plan.

#### 2. The problem of limited or no indexing

The automatic indexing of pensions, particularly in public sector plans, has recently been under attack. Whole or partial indexing is expensive, and if an employer wants to reduce the cost of a pension plan, then the elimination or reduction of indexing often is a goal.

The Dalhousie Pension Plan has excess interest indexing. Indexing in any year is guaranteed, but is limited to the difference between the cost of living (CPI) and plan investment returns less a benchmark amount. The benchmark amount is (roughly) the amount necessary to keep the Plan solvent. Indexing is further limited by the necessity of retaining investment returns in the Plan (and thus not available for indexing) equal to amounts by which the Plan failed to achieve benchmark returns

## THE DFA: MOVING CLOSER TO 40

in previous years. This process can result in zero or only partial indexation of employee pensions over many years. At Dalhousie, some retirees have seen their pensions reduced in value by as much as 30%.

Where retirees' pensions have been reduced in value, there is a mechanism for discretionary indexing under which Trustees of the RTF can use up to half of any surplus in the RTF for "catch-up indexing". In the past, this has meant that retirees could eventually recoup substantial amounts of lost indexing. More recently, however, Trustees have expressed less willingness to exercise their discretion to use the surplus when the plan is in deficit (the PTF and RTF together) because it would result in increasing the deficit in the plan, which might in turn require a BOG infusion of funds. It is debatable on what grounds the Trustees should exercise their discretion, but it is worth noting that most of the Trustees are appointed by the BOG.

This short narrative of some issues concerning the Dalhousie Pension Plan, past and present, does not adequately pay tribute to members of the DFA executive, DFA staff and DFA members for their leadership and support concerning pension issues over the years, particularly when in collective bargaining.

### **IV. The long-term benefits of pension plans**

More than once, DFA members of the Plan have been heard to say that they would rather not have been required to join, or that they would prefer to manage their savings themselves during their work life and upon retirement. For many of our members, retirement seems far away. Many are trying to manage the costs of a young family, or may be

members of the "sandwich" generation, paying for both childcare and elder care. They may resent the significant payments into the Pension Plan. Some worry that the Pension Plan won't be there for them when they retire. One answer is that it is more likely that the Pension Plan will be there on retirement, than the savings they intended to make, but never quite got around to it. Economists tell us that we value a dollar now much more than a dollar in the future. Present retirees tell us that they are glad they have a pension.

In the meantime, employees have the advantage of a low-cost savings vehicle that is well managed, with a conscientious and dedicated staff. There is no need for the less expert among us, which is probably most of us, to worry about the competence and trustworthiness of investment advisors or to see savings reduced by often-significant fees, some of which may be hidden.

### **V. Pledge for the future**

Since its inception, the DFA has made the safeguarding and improvement of our pensions a high priority. It will continue to do so in the future.

## Forward to the 50<sup>th</sup>!

**Julia M. Wright, Ph.D.**

**Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences,  
Department of English**

**DFA President-Elect 2018-19**



The DFA has accomplished a great deal over its 40 years. We have a clear Collective Agreement that protects us all as university employees: for instance, it enshrines academic freedom, includes a no-discrimination clause and positive diversity provisions, ensures peer assessment of members' work through collegial processes, as well as sets the terms for everything from salary and various benefits to promotion. The Collective Agreement is also supported through the daily work of the DFA office and Executive as well as the Association Board Committee, which facilitates regular communications and problem-solving by the Board and the DFA.

The academic mission requires not only collegial oversight of academic policies and curricula, but also the defense of the working conditions of all DFA members. Our labour rights under the Collective Agreement support research, teaching, and other activities, including collegial governance. Whether faculty, librarians, or counsellors, we need the time, resources, and collegial practices to support our work—including stable employment.

Knowledge advances and times change. Social media is raising new questions in discussions of academic freedom, particularly given the prevalence of online harassment. The Fundamental Science Review (the Naylor Report) has rejuvenated support for curiosity-driven and basic research. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action are a national obligation with specific Calls that speak urgently to higher education. We now know more about healthy workplaces than we did even a decade ago that must inform our discussions of workload, timetabling, and other life-impacting factors. Dalhousie needs to keep up—and in deeds, not just in words. Keeping up must also include the longstanding principle of bringing Dalhousie compensation in line with its comparator group.

As our world changes, so too will our work environment and thus our Collective Agreement, but our core principles remain. Moving onward to its 50th anniversary, the DFA will continue to press for fair working conditions, diversity and equity, and academic freedom and the support of it through collegial governance so that we can all continue to make important contributions to education, scholarship, and society.

## PHOTO COLLECTION

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1. The DFA house on Seymour Street.
2. Association members applaud DFA President at 2014 AGM.
3. DFA AGM 2012.
4. DFA President Anthony Stewart at 2012 AGM.
5. David Tindall receives the Dedicated Service Award in 2012.
6. Darren Abramson speaking on behalf of the DFA.

# PHOTO COLLECTION

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1. DFA President Darren Abramson at the union rally supporting Chronicle Herald striking workers, 2016.
2. Laurene Rehman and furry friends stop by the DFA office for a visit.
3. DFA's I Am Dalhousie campaign, 2013.
4. Tim Juckes at DFA retreat, 2013.
5. Susan Holmes and Uday Venkatadri at DFA retreat, 2013.

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am

Dalhousie

I urge the senior administration and Board of Governors to place the mission of Dalhousie University -- *Learning, discovery and innovation, and engagement* -- ahead of all other considerations and direct funding to properly support and defend academic programs.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Unit/Faculty/Area \_\_\_\_\_

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4



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## PHOTO COLLECTION



1. DFA button as part of DFA's I Am Dalhousie campaign, 2013.
2. Student demonstration, 2013.
3. Audience at Get Science Right, 2015.
4. Karen Foster presents at the Invisible Academic, 2014.
5. Mandy Kay-Raining Bird supports Brock University Faculty Association during BUFA strike.

## PHOTO COLLECTION



1. DFA Executive meeting, 2008-09.
2. The DFA house on South Street.
3. Five DFA Presidents at the 2017 AGM: (l-r) David Mensink, Laurene Rehman, Darren Abramson, Dave Westwood, Jerome Singleton.
4. DFA supports the food bank, 2015.
5. Speakers at Get Science Right, 2015.
6. Kevin Grundy's retirement, 2014. (l-r) Kevin, Mandy Kay-Raining Bird, and Kevin's spouse, Jan.
7. Kevin Grundy's retirement, 2014.



## PHOTO COLLECTION

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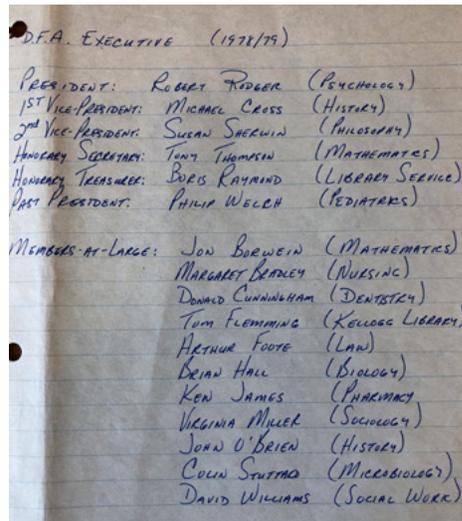


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1. Sarah Jane Dooley and Susan Holmes at a DFA Executive meeting.
2. The first DFA Executive Committee post-certification.
3. Kevin Grundy speaks at DFA's 2014 AGM.
4. DFA Executive meeting 2017.
5. DFA staff say good-bye to David Mensink at his retirement party, 2018. (l-r) Linda Robertson, Barbara MacLennan, David Mensink, Lynn Purves, Kristin Hoyt, Catherine Wall.

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The DFA staff congratulate the DFA on your 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration! It has been our privilege to work with you over the years as you have established a strong academic union in your tireless support of and advocacy for academic staff.

# A very moving tale

**J**an. 30 and 31 were days for moving house at Dalhousie. And when we mean moving house, we mean... moving house.

The house at 1367 LeMarchant had to make way for the new Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Building. But Facilities Management and a project team plotted to save the old gem from the wrecker's ball.

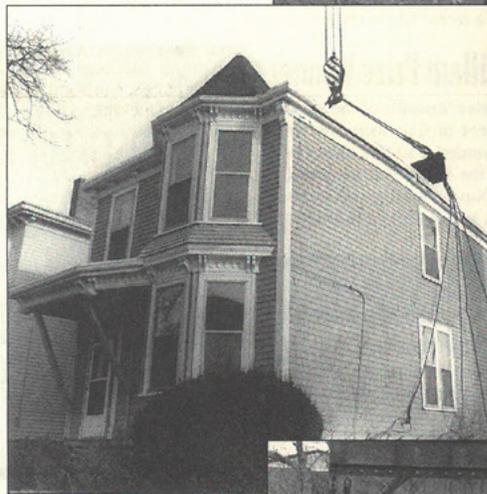
This kind of relocation is rare and requires preparation. After months of planning, the weekend of Jan. 30 and 31 was set aside. The heavy-duty trucks and a crane were obtained. The necessary permits were secured and traffic was rerouted temporarily. All this was done on a Saturday and Sunday to minimize disruption to the neighbourhood, staff and students.

On Jan. 30, the team of 25 swung into action. Representatives from Facilities Management, Sagadore Cranes, Nova Scotia Power Inc. and Asplundh, among others, were on hand as the specially-built crane gently lifted the house from its foundation.

"When we began, it was heavier than we anticipated so it went very slowly. But it went off without a hitch," said Alex Walker, project manager for Facilities Management.

In fact, the old house weighed in at a whopping 58 tons.

Obviously, an old house hanging from a crane is an uncommon sight. In fact, it garnered media attention in such papers as the *Montreal Gazette* and the *Hamilton Spectator*.



The next day, the home was tenderly placed on a prepared foundation at its new site on 1443 Seymour. After repairs to the plumbing, heating and siding, it will be used for administrative purposes. The ultimate plans are to turn it into a student residence.

As Director of Facilities Management Bill Lord said at the time, "The house will play an important role for the Dalhousie community for years to come."

**Photo above left – Before – 1367 LeMarchant gets winched.**

**Large photo, top right – During – an uplifting sight.**

**Photo left – During – wide load, indeed.**

**Photo above – After – at 1443 Seymour, with historic neighbours.**

**(Abriel photos)**

**Dalhousie Faculty Association**

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