

BRANCH REPORT

NL87 | Avalon-Burin Peninsula Branch

CONTACT US

PO Box 21124
RPO MacDonald Dr
St John's, NL
A1A 5B2

709-745-4517

richard.sparkes@nf.sympatico.ca
federalretirees.ca/avalon

MEMBERSHIP

The National Association of Federal Retirees, or commonly **Federal Retirees**, is the largest organization representing active and retired members of the federal public service, Canadian Armed Forces, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and retired federally appointed judges, as well as their partners and survivors.

We believe every Canadian today and in the future should benefit from better retirement income security and a strong, sustainable health care system.

With your support, we can make retirement better for all Canadians.

President's Update

Summer Greetings to All:

Since our last newsletter we have had three board meetings and three general meetings.



The Annual Members' Meeting, held on March 15, saw a new board elected for a one-year term. All but one of the previous board offered and were all elected. We have one new board member, Marilyn Best, who retired from CRA.

Elaine Hilliard, our previous secretary, decided not to run again. Marilyn Best, offered to serve, however she has subsequently agreed to serve as Newfoundland and Labrador Advocacy Program Officer. As a result, we are seeking the services of a secretary. This is an important position as you can well imagine in maintaining our branch records and ensuring minutes and meeting notices are circulated through liaison with the national office.

If you are interested, contact me or any member of the board.

Membership

Our membership numbers are going in the right direction. Ninety-five new members have joined since January bringing our total membership to 2193.

In May, board member Val Linehan did some investigation of possible membership "churn". By examining a list of members who became inactive in 2023 and removing those who had died or ceased being members for other obvious reasons, he came up with a sub-list of 25 members to be contacted. This sub-list was further divided by member type and region and assigned to



BOARD AND VOLUNTEER LISTINGS

| | |
|------------------|----------------------------|
| Richard Sparkes | President 745-4517 |
| Leo O'Brien | Vice President & RCMP |
| Frank Mackey | Treasurer |
| Vacant | Secretary |
| Directors | |
| Joanne Morrissey | Conception Bay North |
| John Baker | Burin Peninsula |
| Leo O'Brien | RCMP |
| Brian Briffett | Recruitment & Retention |
| Steve Boulos | Information Technology |
| Val Linehan | Canadian Forces & CRM |
| Bonnie Fox | Communications |
| Marilyn Best | Advocacy |



Board members to reach out by telephone and/or email. Initial reports indicate at least some of those contacted did not realize their membership had expired. A follow up action is planned for this fall to see how many became active again and then perhaps we will repeat the process.

Atlantic District Meeting

Since our AMM, four members of the branch including myself, Frank Mackey, Brian Briffett, and Steve Boulos attended the Atlantic District Meeting in Dartmouth on April 19, and 20.

Approximately 40 representatives from branches in Atlantic Canada attended the meeting which provided an excellent venue for networking with members from NS, NB, and PEI.

In addition, the National President, Roy Goodall, and CEO, Anthony Pizzino, spoke to the group and provided information on the general operation of NAFR and what is front and center on their agenda. One important message from National was for all members to ensure they have provided information to Canada Life as the new service provider of the PSHCP.

Other activities included an Advocacy workshop, a discussion on long term care initiatives in Nova Scotia, a review of proposals for the AMM in Ottawa/ Gatineau, branch funding and presentations from candidates running for Atlantic District positions on the National Board.

Marystown Members Meeting

The Branch had its annual Marystown meeting in June and while it was better attended than last year, there is still work to be done in getting members out.

Along with the administrative aspects of the agenda, such as approval of previous minutes and a financial report, there were discussions on the impact of the PSHCP Plan moving to Canada Life on July 1 and the processes of enrolment.

Guest speaker for the meeting was our own John Baker, Director for the Burin Peninsula, who gave a presentation on Fraud, Scams and Seniors. The presentation was well received and a lot of valuable tips were provided to keep us all aware of who is out there trying to steal our identity and our money.



Branch Board 2023-24: L-R
Front Row: Leo O'Brien, Steve Boulos,
Richard Sparkes, and Frank Mackey.
Back Row: Bonnie Fox, Marilyn Best,
Elaine Hillier, and Joanne Morrissey.

Missing from photo: Val Linehan,
John Baker, Brian Briffett

Gatineau AMM

I, along with Treasurer Frank Mackey, as Branch representative, attended the National AMM in Gatineau in late June. This annual gathering consisting of Branch Presidents and Observers from coast to coast was well attended.

The financial position of the Association was provided and presidents voted on various administrative issues affecting operations. On the first day of the meeting Perry Tsergas from Spark Advocacy gave a very interesting presentation on the need to know your audience, how they get their information and what you have to do as an organization to engage new members. This has broad implications for NAFR as we are dealing with a potential membership group who are tuned in to social media. The organization is going to have to adapt to how we reach our audience, what we say to them and how we keep them engaged.

This presentation provided a great segway into more discussions on advocacy as NAFR faces challenges in getting new members and maintaining the ones we have. There were training sessions held for the Advocacy Program Officers. On the morning of the last day all in attendance took part in a simulated advocacy session where there were group discussions and an exercise on advocating to Members of Parliament as well as the techniques required to get the most out of such encounters from setting up the interview to the actual interaction. We finished the meeting with a PSHCP Q&A session.

Stay safe.
Richard Sparkes
President Avalon–Burin Branch 87

Pre-Retirement Session

On June 20, the branch was invited to present at a pre-retirement session held at the Shrine Club. In attendance were DFO and Coast Guard employees as most departments have stopped offering these sessions for retiring staff. Steve Boulos presented with Joanne Morrissey, Leo O'Brien and Brian Briffett observing. Most attendees were not aware of our organization and welcomed the information. Hopefully the session will help us gain a few new members.



John Baker presenting at the Marystown Members' Meeting

September BBQ

Our Annual BBQ and Dance will be held at the same venue as last year - Freemasons Hall 115 Mount Carson Avenue in Mount Pearl. For those who attended in 2022 it was a great event. The location, food and entertainment were excellent. However, this year we are hoping more will attend. The cost will be \$35.00 each for a steak or chicken dinner.

Date. **Sept.29 at 6:30 PM**

Mark your calendar and keep an eye on your e-mail for information on ticket purchase as we get closer to the event.