C U P A R U C

newsletter of the
concordia university
pensioners association

bulletin de nouvelles
de l'association des retraité(e)s
de l'université concordia

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Jim Whitelaw

This fourth issue of CUPARUC tells us, amongst other things, of the retirement experience of three of our members. **Alexa Parkin** relates how a planned retirement in Ontario turned into the renovation of an old farmhouse in Nova Scotia; **Tom Nogrady** shows how difficult it is to resist certain pressures, despite the best of intentions, while **Hilda Squibb** waxes lyrical on the joys of life in Calgary.

For the last issue **Michael Sheldon** wrote the introduction to a series on seniors' organizations. It seemed to us that, rather than limiting ourselves to lists of organizations, it would be more interesting to have a look at specific examples. Michael has therefore put together a summary of what goes on in NDG, and we plan to do the same thing for other places, including those outside the Montreal area.

JP. Pétolas, in addition to giving us an update on the activities of the Coalition of Quebec Seniors, issues a challenge to us in the form of a "sensational contest", in which you are all invited to take part.

Jack Bordan reminds us about the mandate and composition of the two University committees on which he sits as retirees' representative, and brings us up to date on their activities, which are likely to have repercussions affecting us all.

Contributions in French are still not coming in. I approached several of you, but all found excuses which were plausible if not entirely convincing! But next time .....?

The **discretion of members** remains unsullied as far as their activities, or those of their colleagues, are concerned. Who's doing what?

The Treasurer asks me to remind those of you who have not yet paid their 1993-1994 fees ($10) that now is the time - except, of course, for new members, for whom the first year is free.

MOT DU PRESIDENT

Jim Whitelaw

Cette quatrième livraison de CUPARUC nous renseigne, entr' autres choses sur l'expérience de la retraite de trois de nos membres. **Alexa Parkin** raconte comment un projet de retraite dans l'Ontario s'est traduit dans la rénovation d'une vieille maison de ferme dans la Nouvelle Ecosse; **Tom Nogrady** montre combien il est difficile de résister à certaines pressions, malgré les meilleurs intentions, alors que **Hilda Squibb** nous chante les délices de la vie à Calgary.

Pour le dernier numéro **Michael Sheldon** a écrit l'intro- duction à une série portant sur les organismes créés à l'intention des gens du troisième âge. Il nous a semblé que plutôt que de se limiter à des listes d'organismes, il serait plus intéressant de se pencher sur des cas précis. Michael a donc rédigé un résumé de ce qui se passe à NDG, et nous comptons faire de même pour d'autres endroits, y compris ceux en dehors de la région de Montréal.

JP. Pétolas en plus de nous offrir une mise-à-jour sur les activités de la Coalition des Aînés, nous lance un défi sous la forme d'un "concours sensationnel" auquel tous et toutes sont invité(e)s à participer.

Jack Bordan nous rappelle le mandat et la composition des deux comités universitaires auxquels il siège à titre de représentant des retraité(e)s, et nous met au courant de leurs activités, qui risquent d'avoir des répercussions pour nous tous.

Les **contributions en français** nous manquent toujours. Je me suis adressé à plusieurs d'entre vous, mais tous ont trouvé des prétextes plausibles si non entièrement convaincants! Mais la prochaine fois ....?

La **réticence de nos membres** demeure entière en ce qui concerne leurs activités ou celles de leurs collègues. Que fait tout le monde?

I hope to see a big turn-out for **the next meeting which will take place on Wednesday, October 27, 1993 at 2 p.m.** You will be getting later on a notice of meeting and a tentative agenda.

Anne Adams continues to look after the lay-out and set-up of the newsletter. Our heartfelt thanks to her for this valuable contribution.

Le trésorier me prie de rappeler à ceux et à celles qui n'ont pas payé leur cotisation pour 1993-1994 (10$) que c'est le bon moment - exception faite, bien entendu, pour les nouveaux membres, pour lesquels la première année est gratuite.

J'espère vous voir nombreux **à la prochaine réunion qui aura lieu le mercredi, 27 octobre, 1993 à 14h00.** Vous recevrez plus tard un avis de convocation et un projet d'ordre du jour.

Anne Adams continue à s'occuper de la mise-en-page et de la typographie du bulletin. Nos remerciements les plus sincères pour cette précieuse collaboration.

THE RETIREMENT EXPERIENCE

by Alexa Parkin, Berwick, N.S.

When my husband and I talked of retiring, Nova Scotia never entered our minds. We had spent many happy camping holidays in the Maritimes, and in the early sixties had worked in Halifax for four years. Our sights, however, were set on Ontario - an old type house in the countryside, with several acres where we could indulge our passion for gardening. Many a week-end was spent travelling the rural roads of Upper Ontario inspecting possibilities, but to no avail. Then in the spring of 1984 our son decided to join friends down here and before we knew it we were lured eastward and found ourselves the owners of a reputedly 216-year-old house, with one acre of land, set in farming country in the picturesque Annapolis Valley. Looking up the history of the house is still on the agenda, but has slipped on the priority scale.

We could hardly wait to get our hands on the house and repair the ravages of modernization it had suffered. In the nine years we have been here we have scraped through layers of paint and wallpaper, thrilled at uncovering foot-wide pine boards, hand-hewn beams, birch-bark insulation and old tongue-and-groove panelling, but it has been and will continue to be a lot of hard work. For every good find there can be one not so good. Old wiring needed to be replaced, plumbing updated, roof re-tiled - the list grows. The glowing embers in the wood stove are warm and appealing, but wood has to be bought, chopped, piled, and carried, and it does make dust everywhere.

One of my visions had always been to have a picture-book garden - not a weed in sight, lush growth everywhere. It is still a dream! We do grow enough vegetables for all our needs - even delicious asparagus - flowers do bloom but they all share space with the weeds.

Then we tried the egg/chicken bit. Actually, that went quite well, as we managed to keep ourselves, and privileged neighbours, in magnificent large, brown eggs for the two years we ran the coop, and our freezer still has several chickens and turkeys from last year's poultry raising. It was literally chicken in one hand and book in the other when we started out. Some of those earlier chickens must have been very distraught in their prolonged death struggle, but my husband became very proficient, and could despatch them with a minimum of distress to all concerned. However, raising fifty or so chickens, then cleaning and plucking them, became a rather tedious chore, even though the results were tasty. We switched to turkeys only for the last year, and had no trouble in raising thirty-pounders - ten only - although it was tricky getting them together for the last round-up. Some of the methods used are better left unsaid. This years we have decided to pass on the poultry and concentrate on renovations.

The life style here is very pleasant, relaxing and friendly. Our spot is surrounded by orchards and we are expected to help ourselves to the fruit. I suppose you could call it a type of barter - we get the fruit and we give the farmer a Christmas turkey, but neither is contingent upon the other - it is just being neighbourly. The possibility of a more formal exchange of services does exist - we have friends who make stained glass panels, lamps and such, and pay their dental bills by such an exchange.

Berwick, our nearest town and

stamping ground, population 1800, is about six miles from our home. It has everything one needs, from second-hand clothing to a liquor outlet. The larger town of Kentville is a twenty-minute drive by back road, or via a Trans-Canada type of highway. There you can find a very nice pub called the King's Arms, with goodies like steak and kidney pie, fish-and-chips, English ales and so forth. Within a half-hour we can be in New Minas with the malls - not Fairview/ Pointe Claire, but adequate - and all the fast-food outlets on the main road. If the spirit pines for bigger things, Halifax is a mere seventy-five miles away.

There are all types of activities for young and old in the vicinity, such as seniors' clubs, sports, crafts, trips, educational classes, cultural events - nobody needs to be at a loss for something to do.

We never anticipate having nothing to do, though we look forward to having a bit more choice in the manner in which we spend our leisure time. Our son, married to an ex-Montrealer, lives a few miles down the road, and we have three grand-children to spoil. We can have twenty people in the house and all of them ex-Montrealers. Our daughter and son-in-law come down frequently - maybe one of these days they'll stay too.

I guess you can say that we are Maritimers now - by choice - and it's not a bad life. Still, one can't sever all ties. When one of the group makes a trip back they inevitably return with a chunk of smoked meat - and it sure beats cod's tongues and cheeks!

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by Tom Nogrady, Bath, ON.

Well, when I was about to retire, I was just like any other youngster - I thought I had it all figured out. I was not going to do dumb chores around the house or feed pigeons in the park - no, sir! Since we had moved to Kingston before my retirement and I had to commute between Montreal and Kingston, I chose to fade out using the Concordia gradual retirement plan, to ease the burden of weekly commuting. I transplanted my research to Queen's University as Adjunct Professor of Biology. There I was received with great courtesy and given a lab. and an office. Since I was (nominally) a chemist at Concordia, this was change number one. I switched the direction of my work to towards an area that had been my first love from age thirteen - freshwater biology. I combined it with my biochemical background, doing neuropharmacology on some obscure microscopic critters as well as pure taxonomy of these bugs (rotifers). That was change number two. I still had graduate students, but taught only parts of a graduate course as a courtesy to my hosts (it's called cheap labour). I thought that I had it made: putter in a nice little lab.; no rush-hour or traffic jam; lovely house in the country fifteen minutes from down-town; maintain my scientific respectability by publishing the second edition of my text-book. I even took up painting in water-colour (yet another change).

Then Murphy's Law hired a sorcerer's apprentice (to use a mixed metaphor) and I blew it. My peers insisted that I take over the editorship of a new microinvertebrate taxonomy book series ("please, Tom, only you have the time and expertise"). So, who writes the first introductory volume? Well, I got some help, but was still chained to my computer. "Please, Tom, now you have to write about that particular group; after all, you are the acknowledged expert.....". I fell for that too. In the meantime there are two manuscripts waiting to be edited, as they are written respectively in Russlish and Spanglish, and need all the help they can get. More to follow; I am "booked" for the next two to three years. Research kaput.

Of course, painting is relaxing and creative. If I am still caught in my own net science-wise, this is now my hobby, sez I. Fat chance! Since, by bad habit, I go about these things methodically, painting became yet another occupation. I show, I take commissions, I even get paid once in a while. Now I have to rush, because I have an upcoming show and need new material.

O.K., I am crazy, I do it to myself, I deserve it and should stop whining - so say my alleged friends, including the love of my life. They are right, of course. But I really love it. O.K., it got out of hand a little, and, after all, a snooze would be welcome in the afternoon - but it'll have to wait until tomorrow.

But, real soon now I am really going to retire, and I will do it incrementally - I have it all figured out

P.S. *Ontario is nice; plus ça change.....*

by Hilda Squibb, Calgary.

The climate is dry and sunny, and a bit cold sometimes, but it suits me just fine and I would never consider moving back east. Seniors have many advantages, too numerous to list: for example, the Province is very helpful regarding health care, and the City reduces your real estate taxes by one half should you own your home.

There are all sorts of clubs for seniors to join. I even took up square dancing last year, and it was fun. Trips to Banff and Lake Louise, at very little cost, were beautiful. Visiting Drumheller and seeing the remains of the dinosaurs was interesting. Going to Buffalo Jump - referred to by the Indians as Head Smashed In - was money well spent.

The ten days of the Calgary Stampede in July - "the greatest show on earth" - are wonderful. Seniors get in at a reduced rate and also have a free day. There are so many things to see at no cost - Super Dog Show, Pig and Duck Races, the Indian Village with their beautiful buckskins and their dances, bandshells, demonstrations of kitchen gadgets, handicrafts, boutiques, tasting foods from all over the world. I have to admit that my favourite is playing blackjack at the Casino! Over the past two years I have won enough money to buy a VCR and a CD player. Hopefully I shall win a car this summer!

As I step out of my porch in the south-west part of the City, I see the foothills of the majestic Rockies, which are truly God's country.

EXECUTIVE / EXECUTIF 1993-1994

Jim Whitelaw	President/ président
Jack Bordan	Past president/président sortant
J.P. Pétolas	Vice president/vice-président
John Hall	Secretary-Treasurer/secrétaire-trésorier
Doreen Bates **Mary Callaghan** **Stan Kubina** **Dagmar McDougall**	Members at large/membres généraux

We are glad to welcome **Stan Kubina** to the member-at-large category. **Dagmar McDougall** has kindly agreed to serve a second term. **Doreen Bates** takes over from Dagmar the convenership of the Activities Committee. Our sincere thanks to Dagmar for all her work in past years.

Il nous fait plaisir d'accueillir **Stan Kubina** dans la catégorie de membre général. **Dagmar McDougall** a bien voulu accepter un deuxième mandat, et **Doreen Bates** la remplace comme présidente de la Comité des activités. Nos remerciements sincères à Dagmar pour son dévouement au courant des dernières années.

COMINGS, GOINGS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The Secretary reports the following new members since the last issue: Geoffrey Adams, Michele Belisle, Barbara Elmhirst, Audrey Prendergast and Mindel Wise

We regret to announce the deaths of Rolland Brault and Rachel Wasserman.

Hearty congratulations to Alan Adamson, Stan Kubina and Paul Widdows, all of whom have been granted the title of Professor Emeritus.

Our thanks to Guy Gervais and Dick McDonald, who once again participated in the pre-retirement seminar put on by the Department of Human Resources.

INTERESTED IN A NEW COMMUNITY?

Michael Sheldon

Retirement will often bring with it the need for a new community, presenting new purposes, connections and activities. Such a community may be found in a seniors' association, whether wide-ranging or dedicated to specific interests. Also, participation may range from simple membership - turning up at parties and other social events - to being an active volunteer. A good example of the wide-ranging sort is the NDG Senior Citizens' Council.

Located at 6870 Terrebonne Avenue as basement tenant of Rosedale United Church, the Council works with and for residents of NDG and Montreal West, but its public talks and lectures are open to all. It has close to one thousand members, including some two hundred volunteers.

There is an underlying tradition of social action or advocacy. This includes working on the problems of older people who call in for help, problems relating to such matters as income, housing and elder abuse. Also, the Council is alert to problems of general concern to seniors, such as government plans for health and social services, the availability of reasonable and suitable housing, policies governing pensions and taxes. Here it is likely to act in collaboration with its fellow members of the Coalition of Quebec Seniors.

Some of the services it offers derive from the same sense of purpose. Action Transport volunteers drive the frail and handicapped to medical appointments. Friendly Visiting provides companionship for the isolated. Volunteer woodworkers design and build equipment that helps the handicapped carry on their daily lives. Rent-a-hand puts older people in touch with reasonable and reliable assistance for household and other chores. There is also an annual clinic that helps people deal with income tax figures and forms.

The Day Away programme is a Council feature. Isolated older members of the community, many of them frail, are brought by volunteer drivers to spend the day at the Council; it includes a good lunch. This is a social gathering, but also the occasion for professionally directed care and stimulation, and is typical of the way staff and volunteers work together.

Public lectures cover topics of senior interest such as the availability in Montreal of different kinds of housing and the functions of the Public Curator. But there are also sugaring-off parties and boat trips on the St. Lawrence. The Council also provides a range of courses, both helpful and entertaining - such as aerobics, arthritis control, French conversation and bridge.

The NDG Senior Citizens' Council is one of many seniors' associations, each with its own interests and activities. These are not fixed - they will respond to the concerns of the members, particularly members who wish to take an active part - and they offer new, welcoming communities to men and women who have retired.

We draw your attention to the Federal Government's publication Seniors' Guide to Federal Programmes and Services, published under the authority of the Minister of National Health and Welfare, available from Government information centres. It contains a comprehensive list of a wide range of services offered by different government departments, with, in many cases, toll-free telephone numbers.

Nous attirons votre attention sur la brochure Guide des programmes et services fédéraux pour les aîné(e)s, publiée sous l'égide du Ministre de la Santé et du Bien-être social, et disponible dans les bureaux de renseignements gouverne- mentaux. Elle contient une liste complète d'un large éventail de services offerts par les divers ministères, avec, dans plusieurs cas, des numéros de téléphone sans frais interurbains.

THE UNIVERSITY BENEFITS AND PENSIONS COMMITTEES

Jack Bordan

What they are, who's on them and where they're at

The Concordia Employees Benefits Committee deals with the design and administration of the group insurance plans, and with the design of the pension plan. The Pension Committee deals with the administration of the pension plan.

Benefits Committee:

The current membership of the Benefits Committee is as follows:

Board of Governors:	Ron Lawless (Committee Chair), John Economides (Vice-chair), George Lengvari
Administration:	Maurice Cohen, Patrick Kenniff
Faculty:	June Chalkelson, Howard Fink
Admin. and Support:	Linda Orrell, Patricia Posius
Non-active (retirees):	Jack Bordan

In addition, there are five officially recognized non-members, with speaking privileges: Dawn Johnson (Secretary), Ernest Haigh (recording secretary), Susan O'Reilly (all from Human Resources); Bérengère Gaudet (University Secretary-General), Hal Proppe (Assoc. Vice-Rector).

There are also two ex-officio members: Reginald Groome, Chairman of the Board, and Claude Taylor, Vice-chairman, responsible for the Benefits Committee.

The Committee is not nearly as cumbersome as it might appear, since Kenniff, Groome and Taylor don't attend, and Gaudet and O'Reilly attend infrequently. In practice, Dr. Cohen acts as a voting alternate for Dr. Kenniff, and Dr. Proppe for Dr. Cohen. In a pinch, Susan O'Reilly acts as Cohen's alternate. This game of musical chairs is rather fun to watch, particularly since your representative is not yet part of the game.

All is not yet lost, however. An ad hoc decision was made at the July meeting to permit a non voting alternate to replace me in August, in the event that I can't attend because of a conflicting commitment. The question of a regular alternate for our group is still "on the table" and I hope that there will be a satisfactory outcome in due course, before my term runs out. Some things just take time, I guess.

Pension Committee:

The membership of the Pension Committee is essentially the same as that of the Benefits Committee, except that the Pension Committee includes Donald Dunn, an independent outside member, as required by Quebec Pension Law, and Mr. Taylor is not listed as an ex-officio member. I'm pleased to note that Mr. Dunn attends regularly, and serves as a most knowledgeable, interested and active member of the Committee. We owe him a debt of gratitude for his rôle in the management of the Pension Fund.

Both committees depend on the advice of consultants from the Wm. M. Mercer Company: Jean Lefebvre for pensions and Liam Dixon for insurance plans. Lefebvre attends both committees regularly, and Dixon participates in the work of the Benefits Committee as required.

Activities of the Benefits Committee:

As reported in the "stop-press notice" in the last issue of CUPARUC, the most recent activity of the Benefits Committee was related to the survey of current employees on whether the University should establish a Visioncare and/or Denticare plan. I agreed, after consultation with members of our Executive, that retired members not be surveyed, since our inclusion in the initial polling would have complicated the question unduly. Our potential usage, and related cost implications, was likely to be a more complex issue than for active employees alone. The Committee agreed that possible inclusion of retirees would be taken up after active employees had demonstrated interest and the University had agreed to implement a plan.

At the May meeting it was reported that there had been a good response to the survey and that two thirds of the

population were in favour of implementing the proposed new benefits. By June, however, the Quebec Government had announced a significant reduction in base funding for universities as of 1993-94, and the University must now consider how it could incur an additional potential cost of some $800,000, taking in account the new financial and legislative constraints. So we should not expect action on this matter in the immediate future.

Activities of the Pension Committee:

In addition to regular monitoring of the pension investment portfolios, the Committee has set the date for the Annual General Meeting of the Pension Plan as October 27, 1993, as you should have been advised.

Activities of your representative:

You will recall that the appointment of the representative of the non-active members (retirees) is for a two-year mandate. My term runs out at the end of 1993, and I don't intend to accept nomination for yet another term. So, friends, think about suitable candidates to represent you effectively on these Committees, before the next call for nominations - and think of a name for an alternate, too, since I hope that by then the committees will have finally agreed to the legitimacy of our request to have a back-up for our sitting member.

Warning of future shock:

I haven't yet digested the impact of the recent changes to the Quebec Income Tax laws. What's certain is that we shall be paying more for our benefits coverage. Those still subject to regular payroll deductions from Concordia or elsewhere have already felt the bite. An expert presentation of the subject might be appropriate for our next CUPARUC, and perhaps for our Fall CUPA meeting.

THE COALITION SEEKS YOUR HELP

by J-P. Pétolas

The Coalition of Quebec Seniors (Coalition des Aînés), in its continuing efforts to serve the cause of Seniors' rights and to save Medicare, has prepared a set of questions that will be sent to the candidates of every party and to every riding in the Province of Quebec for the upcoming federal election. These are leading questions with many ramifications, and it is expected that the candidates will not answer by a simple yes or no. Rather, the candidates should be called upon to explain the policies of their respective parties on these questions as well as their own views and what they intend to do.

Members of CUPA attending political rallies are invited to put these questions to the candidates and see how they react to these issues:

1. Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplements still leave many people below the poverty line. **Is your party prepared to ensure that these programmes will keep Seniors above the poverty line?**
2. The Old Age Security pension is subject to a special clawback provision which discriminates against Seniors. **Will your party get rid of the clawback?**
3. The present system of relating pension increases to the consumer price index does not reflect the real cost of living of Seniors. **Will your party support an indexation based on the real cost of living of Seniors?**
4. Community organizations that protect and support Seniors are an important part of preventive health care and must get proper government support. **Will your party maintain Federal contributions to shared-cost programmes that support preventive health services?**
5. Home care is a basic service which enables Seniors to live at home for as long as possible. **Are you prepared to give support to the development of health care as distinct from institutional care?**
6. Health and hospital care must continue to be universal and free, without user charges. **What will your party do to protect free universal health care without user fees?**
7. Seniors need decent housing at costs they can afford. **What will your party do to provide adequate** housing for Seniors?

8. Some government policies have added to health and social service costs. **In developing economic policies what attention will your party pay to the real human needs of older citizens?**

INTELLECTUAL CORNER \ LE COIN DES INTELLECTUELS

J.P. Pétolas

It's a plane! ....It's a bird! .... It's a Cuparuc!

Sensational contest for CUPA members!

DRAW THE CUPARUC BIRD!

Like many university organizations, CUPA has - or soon will have - its own emblem. This will be a mythical bird, representing its superb level of knowledge and its high moral attitude. Alas! No photograph exists of this important species.

The purpose of this contest is to invite CUPA members to draw an allegorical representation of a Cuparuc. I am offering prizes - for example, the first prize could be a frozen TV chicken dinner, and the second could be two - yes, two! - frozen TV chicken dinners, to be awarded, logistics permitting, at the October meeting.

It is true that nobody has ever seen a Cuparuc. A certain number of characteristics can, however, be listed to help determine its appearance:

- it has small wings;
- it can only fly short distances, and never very high, but sufficient to be noticed;
- it probably can dive and swim, always capable of rising to the surface when faced with adversity;
- it has big feet, one in each campus, and can hop over any obstruction;
- it is rather emaciated, never having received sufficient government grants to really prosper;
- its most visible characteristic is its beak, very large and pointed, because this bird talks incessantly.

Can you visualize this creature? Visualizers are invited to send their drawing(s) to John Hall, Secretary-Treasurer of CUPA, by October 15, 1993.

C'est un avion! .... C'est un oiseau! .... C'est un Cuparuc!

Concours sensationnel ouvert aux membres de l'ARUC!

DESSINEZ LE CUPARUC!

Comme de nombreux organismes universitaires, l'ARUC possède - ou possèdera bientôt - son propre emblème. Ce sera un oiseau imaginaire, qui symbolisera le niveau d'érudition sans pareil de l'association, ainsi que le haut calibre de ses attitudes morales. Hélas! Il n'existe aucune photo de cette espèce importante.

Le but du concours est d'inviter les membres de l'ARUC à dessiner une représentation allégorique d'un cuparuc. J'offre des prix - par exemple, le premier prix pourrait bien être un dîner TV de poulet congelé, et le second pourrait être deux - oui, j'ai dit deux! - dîners congelés, qui seraient accordés, la logistique permettant, lors de la réunion d'octobre.

Il est vrai que personne n'a jamais vu un cuparuc. Pourtant, il est possible d'établir certaines caractéristiques, qui aideraient à en déterminer l'apparence:

- il a les ailes petites;
- il n'est capable que de très courts vols, jamais à une altitude élevé, mais suffisante pour être remarqué;
- il sait sans doute plonger et nager, toujours capable de regagner la surface, en présence de l'adversité;
- il a de grosses pattes, dont l'une dans chaque campus, et peut surmonter en sautillant tout obstacle éventuel;
- il est plutôt étriqué, n'ayant jamais reçu de subventions gouvernementales suffisantes à une véritable prospérité;
- sa caractéristique la plus visible est son bec, qu'il a très gros et pointu, car cet oiseau parle sans cesse.

Pouvez-vous envisager cette créature? Les envisageur(e)s sont invité(e)s à envoyer leur(s) dessin(s) à John Hall, secrétaire/trésorier, avant le 15 octobre, 1993.