



# ST. ALBERT AND AREA RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

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### **Keep Working on the Wellness Challenge**

**REMINDER:** Continue to track your activity in minutes on the personal daily log sheets attached. **On June 30, 2020** compile your best 30 days on the Personal Best log sheet. Submit your results to your branch president (Marian), or mail your log sheet to the ARTA office by **July 31, 2020**.

Please note that the challenge is carried out according to *time not distance*.

To get your Personal Daily Log, go to

<https://www.arta.net/wellness/physical-wellness/wellness-challenge/>

(at the bottom of that page, you can choose to see the **PERSONAL-DAILY-LOG2020.pdf**)

**ARTA ADVOCACY:** Transfer of Pension management from ATRF to AIMCo: ARTA educational members recently received information about how ARTA is advocating on our behalf for the Government of Alberta to reverse the decision to pass Bill 22, which lays out the plan to move investment control of the monies managed by the Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund to AIMCo in December of 2021. It is not too late for each of us to get involved – to send a letter to our MLA as part of the 'hands off my pension' campaign. The following is a copy of the letter one of our members received after contacting our MLA.

A letter from Dale Nally, our MLA, in response to an email regarding Bill 22 re teachers' pensions.:

Dear Lou,

Thank you for your e-mail regarding your concerns with the Alberta Investment Management Corporation (AIMCo). Minister Nally has consulted with his colleague, the Honourable Travis Toews, President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance, and he is pleased to provide the following information.

Your email mentioned your concerns with the investment performance and governance of AIMCo and you may be concerned about the recent news regarding AIMCo's volatility-based investment strategy and its impact on their clients. First of all, this will not affect teachers' pensions as the management responsibility has not yet been transferred to AIMCo. This is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2021.

We are facing unprecedented times, and these are challenging market conditions for all investors. It's anticipated that all institutional investors will have some tough quarters due to the economic effects of the pandemic. Government is aware of the volatility-based strategy and AIMCo's board of directors is currently conducting a review using internal audit measures as well as external third-parties. After AIMCo's review has been presented to government and all of AIMCo's clients, government will determine next steps. AIMCo does not anticipate that the losses incurred will affect the long-term viability of any of the impacted clients.

AIMCo has a consistent record of outperforming their mandated benchmarks and a proven record of responsible corporate behavior and effective corporate governance. We remain confident AIMCo will continue to meet the long-term investment objectives of their clients.

It should be noted that other public pensions whose assets are managed by AIMCo have also reduced contribution rates in recent years. For example, the Local Authorities Pension Plan reduced contribution rates by two per cent in 2018 and again in 2019. The primary reason for these and other contribution rate reductions was the very strong general market investment returns seen from 2010 to 2019 as well as completing some of the amortization of past investment losses.

Government has no intention of changing its policy of consolidating investment management under AIMCo. This policy will reduce costs paid by pension plans. These savings will ultimately be passed on to contributors through lower contribution rates. The board of the Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund will continue own the teachers' pension fund and they will set the investment policy for its assets, which is the most critical decision in determining risk and return levels over time.

Thank you again for taking the time to write. Minister Nally values your feedback on this important matter.

*Michelle Rahel*, Constituency Assistant – Office Manager For the Hon. Dale Nally, MLA

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*Submitted by Lou Duigou*

### **To The Top Of The Hill Quiz**

I am writing this quiz quite a while after I went on my trek so I hope I remember the locations of the signs correctly. To discover more signs and statues of St. Albert, I decided to start my exploration at the small church at the north end of the bridge on Perron Street. There is a sign beside the church and another outside the house one block to the east.

Why did they build that church when there was a church at the top of the hill?

What is the name of the traditional Métis language that is still spoken today? It is a combination of what languages? The Métis of St. Albert are descendants of marriages from men of what nationalities and women of what tribes?

Near the tennis courts to the east of the church, you will see the Founders' Walk. Why is it called this name?

As you climb the path going up to the big church, notice the plaques on the left side of the path. I found 18 of them. It is interesting to note the names and dates on them. Part way up the path I did take a detour over to the little white school house to learn about education in St. Albert. When was the first school started in St. Albert and who started it? What were the subjects taught? When did the Separate School system start in St. Albert? There is a statement on the Education Fact Board that is no longer true. What is the false information?

There is a wealth of historical information on the sign boards on the top of the hill. I started at the Founders' Walk and worked my way north to the back of the church and to the grotto. Although I have no questions regarding the graveyard, it was fascinating



to wander through it to see the old graves, the section reserved for the Oblate Fathers of Alberta, and I believe the former North West Territories. As I returned to the front of the cathedral, I found another sign board called Mission Hill Introduction. I read the information on the statue of Father Lacombe. Then near the parking lot at the top of the hill I found even more signs. There are possibly other signs that I have not yet found.

What used to be located where the statue of Father Lacombe stands?

What two religious communities were responsible for the establishment of the St. Albert mission? Besides spiritual guidance and services, what other businesses or services did they help develop for the community?

Where was one of the first cathedral located in the Canadian North West Territories? I wonder what those early pioneers felt when the Roman Catholic Episcopal See was relocated and elevated to the new Archdiocese of Edmonton.

Remember this question from the first quiz: Peron Street used to have another name.

What was it first called and how did it get that name? Why was it changed? On the Mission Bell sign at the top of the hill there is a different explanation for the change of name that might interest you.

How many bells were given to Bishop Grandin and who gave them to him? When were they given to him? Make your own assumptions about why the bells were retired in 1957 and why they were replaced with an electronic carillon operated from the church organ. What changes were made to the bells that ring today?

*As an aside, I was on the hill at noon on a weekday when I heard the bells ring. When I was a child living in Okotoks, the siren sounded every day at noon. I am wondering if this happens in St. Albert and I do not hear it in my apartment building or if that was for a special happening.*

What catastrophic event forced the very fast construction of the cathedral? Who built it? How long did it take to construct? What changes have been made to it over the years?

At the back of the church is an information board about The Crypt.



Who is interred in the crypt? Note the accomplishments of the Father. Sounds like he was an amazing dynamo of a man!

Go to The Grotto. Who wanted to build the Grotto and why did they want to build it?

What was the total cost of the Grotto in 1920? Of the reconstruction in 1957? That is 175 times the original cost. So why was there such a difference in cost?

The board tells about annual pilgrimages being made to the grotto. *Once again, I am wondering if this still happens? I know there is an annual pilgrimage made to Lac St. Anne but I have not heard about any since I have lived here.*

The Grotto and Stations of the Cross are lovely to look at.

How many years did Father Lacombe work in the Northwest? What did the Cree Nation and the Blackfoot Nation call him? What did the Knights of Columbus do for their millennium project?

An Inspiring Location – How long have the river valleys of this region provided food, resources and transportation? What First Nations' activities have been determined from the archaeological sites found around Big Lake and along the rivers? Note the picture on the sign. Who painted it?

Building the Mission – Why did Father Lacombe want to build at this site? Who helped him? What is the oldest wooden building still standing in Alberta? Where did that building use to be located?

A Growing Downtown – Where did the road south of the bridge lead to?

Founders' Promenade – Along with the placement of each plaque, what other project was initiated?

Schools on The Hill – What two-story public school was located on the hill? When was it built? Where was Father Jan School for Grades 1 and 2 built in 1948?

Expanding Education – What was the population of St. Albert in 1950? NABI used to be a school. What grades were housed in that building and what was it called? When did St. Albert High School open?

Seven Hills – Why was this area called Seven Hills? What sports have been done in this area?

St. Albert Place – Who designed this building? What was his background? Why was his vision for this building?

*Submitted by Maurine Maslan*

*PS... Anyone want answer to last month's Quiz? If so, let me know please, and I will publish them.k*

### **I am a Fan of Hoopla**

Because our Book Club was put on hold during the COVID isolation time, the St. Albert Public Library has kept our club members supplied with a variety of on-line e-books, audio books, movies, and television shows through the Hoopla website. This website can be downloaded and then accessed with your library card. Although I had an assortment of novels (actual books) to read from book sales and exchanges, it was great to be offered a variety of titles to explore.

The first book I downloaded, ***The Gown*** by Jennifer Robson, was a historical fiction about the creation of Queen Elizabeth's wedding gown. The story is told through the eyes of one of the seamstresses who worked for the London fashion designer. Detailing the way of life post Second World War, in the City of London made for a fascinating read. The secrecy surrounding the design of the gown, the romance and the friendships of the seamstresses made the story memorable for me.

On a rainy day, I downloaded the movie, "***An Unfinished Life***", starring Robert Redford and Morgan Freeman. I had a perfectly enjoyable afternoon!.

Based on the first novel I downloaded, Hoopla recommended a variety of e-books and audio books that I might enjoy. I chose "***The Autopsy of a Boring Wife***". This Canadian novel, set in Quebec, was certainly different!

After reading an actual book from my bookshelves, I then downloaded my current novel, "***The Engineer's Wife***" by Tracey Enerson Wood. Again, this book was a recommendation by Hoopla . Another historical fiction, this story is about the building of the Brooklyn Bridge during the late 1800s. The chief engineer, Washington Roebling returns from the Civil War and proposes this momentous building project for the State of New York. Roebling's wife Emily, a brilliant woman, did not fit the traditional role of a woman in this time period. When Washington becomes ill and can not continue to work on the construction site, Emily becomes his messenger and goes daily to the site to supervise the construction. Over the years, she listens to her mentors, studies Wash's engineering books, and becomes self-taught as a civil engineer. (Women were denied an education at this point in history). Most of the events surrounding the building of the bridge are fact. The fictional piece of this novel is the relationship between husband and wife and their family life.

Hoopla has provided these novels and movies, free of charge, with my library card. I can borrow up to 7 or 8 titles a month. It was easy to join and provides several excellent alternatives for reading. I might not have found these novels on my own while scanning the shelves in the library. I have truly enjoyed the variety. The only drawback is that my husband does complain when I want to read a bit before falling asleep. My laptop is not quite as compact as a book! And it shines in the dark!

*Submitted by Wendy Poirier*

**A HUGE Thank you to all those members who contributed to this newsletter**