

Prof's appeal based on Charter of Rights

Mandatory retirement controversy continues

by Ann Grever

"It's a worse offense to be 65 than to be a drunk on the job."

"We want to keep as many positions open as possible for young, bright, upcoming academics."

These are the two differing opinions of Olive Dickason, a History professor being forced to retire by the university and of Myer Horowitz, the president of the university. Their disagreement may end up in a precedent setting court case.

Retirement at 65 has usually been taken for granted up until now. But the new Charter of Rights may make such age discrimination unconstitutional.

Dickason said, "I was prepared to accept that I would have to retire at 65 when I signed the Faculty agreement. But the Charter made it possible to contest mandatory retirement."

Dickason points to the case of Jackie Ogg, a professor in the Fine Arts department who tried to fight retirement a few years ago. At that

time "she couldn't get a court case... she couldn't even get past square one."

Dickason saw no need for mandatory retirement anyway. "By gearing retirement towards people's needs you have to apply your rules and regulations more regularly. The university would not have an automatic out anymore in dealing with incompetents. Besides, most people want to quit long before then and being more flexible in providing for early retirement helps everybody."

Early retirement has been possible since 1978, said Gordon Unger, executive secretary of the Association of Academic Staff at the U of A.

Presently U of A academic staff can draw a pension and continue to work part time. Two-thirds of staff who retired this year retired early.

But retirement for Dickason is not merely a matter of principle. She had quit a 25 year career in journalism in 1967 and withdrew her pension then to pay her debts.

As a result her pension now will only amount to about \$8,000 a year. "My standard of living will be drastically reduced."

The circumstances of Dickason's retirement are also particularly bitter. After 17 years of study, full professorship was finally conferred on Dickason June 1. The position lasted only a month. She was forced to retire June 30.

The university's attitude disappointed her the most. "I really thought that in this ambiguous situation the university would opt for the liberal course and offer personnel a little leeway."

According to Horowitz this ambiguous situation is exactly why it is impossible to make any exceptions. "The whole matter is in the legal arena," said Horowitz. "Dickason does continue. We have made a post retirement arrangement agreement with her (a one-third contract for the next three years) something few other universities would enter into. We're more flexible than other universities."

The whole affair may end up being decided in the courts. Although Dickason had filed the statement for claim on June 27, she would rather not go to court. Presently she is hoping for some solution from her complaint to the Alberta Human Rights Commission.

However, the only decision the university will abide by is a court decision. "Should the courts decide that she's right and we're wrong we will fall in line with that," said Horowitz. Otherwise, "she will definitely not be re-instated as full professor."

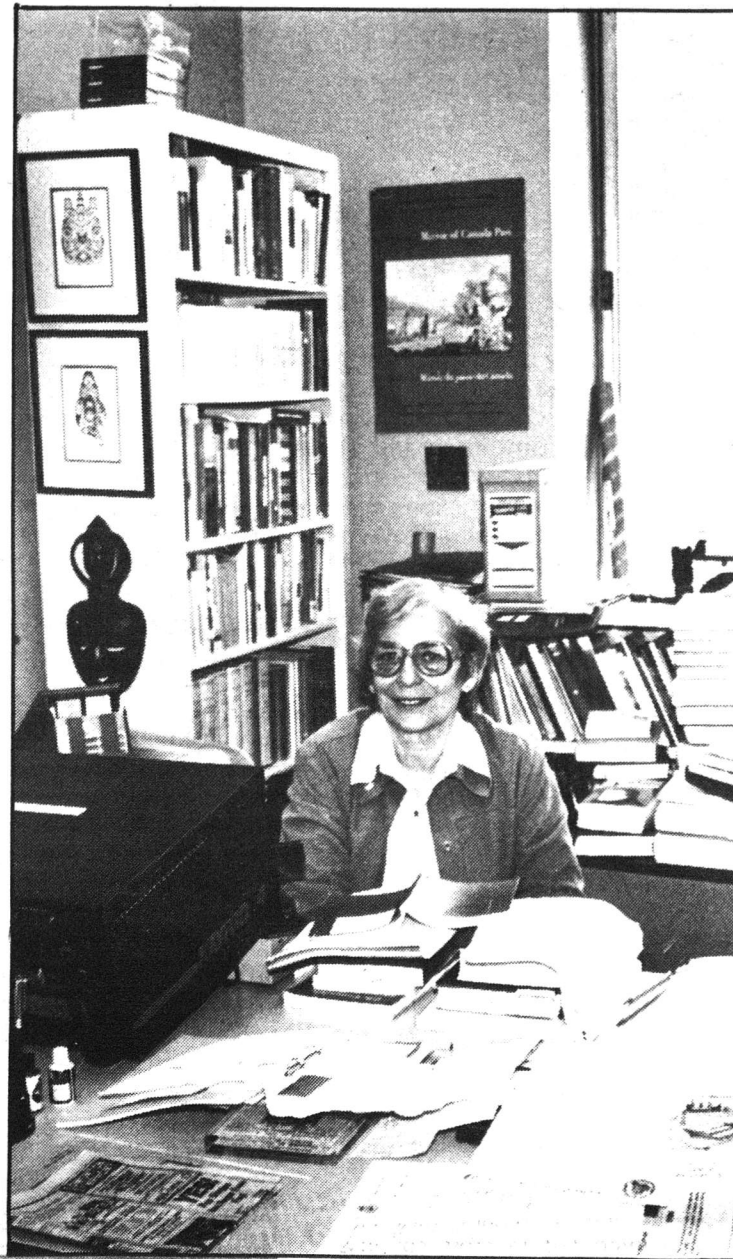


Photo Bill St. John

Parking perils soon

by Suzette C. Chan

If there are any doubts that university is back in session, just count the ticketed cars around Garneau.

Edmonton City Police has confirmed its annual parking crackdown begins this week.

The tagging and towing campaign will cover the residential areas around campus from 72 to 82 ave., 109 st. to Saskatchewan Drive and from 106 st. to Belgravia.

Since the campaign began in 1983, the number of offending vehicles towed away has decreased.

In 1983, 100 vehicles were towed away. Last year, between 30 and 40 vehicles were hauled off, an amazingly low number considering that 1,000 parking spaces were lost to students, faculty and staff with the closure of Windsor CarPark, which has since re-opened.

Quiz: Transportation 500

1. What is a Student Pak??

- A group of unruly first-year students.
- An item used to carry lunch, books, etc.
- A six pack.
- A package of four Edmonton Transit Monthly Passes.

2. True False

It is a selective, time-limited sale.
(Only full-time post-secondary students are eligible, and you buy it early in September and early January.)

3. True False

It saves you money every day.
(You keep the change as you show the pass. Others spend over \$170 with regular cash fares! The more you use it, the more you SAVE!)

4. True False

It will take you anywhere in Edmonton.
(Each pass allows unlimited travel. Not just to classes! And it is fully transferable to your room-mate.)

5. True False

You can buy one right on campus.
(Your Bookstore in the Student's Union Building, or at Campus Drugs, 8623-112 Street. Or come downtown to Churchill Station, 99 Street & 102A Avenue)

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