

Trent launches new ad campaign  
featuring Trent "Heroes"  
See pages 4 and 8.

# FOCUS

LEARNING TO MAKE A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE  
AT TRENT UNIVERSITY

# TRENT

November 2008 Volume 7 Issue 7

## THE DELICATE BALANCE OF TEACHING

Sitting in his Champlain College office, Dr. Gavin Fridell, an assistant professor in Trent University's Politics Department, is humble and modest when asked to describe what makes him a good teacher.

"Trent is a great place to develop as a teacher," Professor Fridell responds broadly. "The bar is set especially high here. People always remember that one great prof, but at Trent everyone is that cool professor you remember."

According to his students, Prof. Fridell is no exception to this rule. And, in the short time since coming to Trent in 2006, he has proven to be a favourite among his students.

To read more about  
Professor Fridell, see page 2.

*"Teaching and research don't  
have to be separate entities."*

— Prof. Gavin Fridell

*“There is a strong social and ethical component to my research and the social justice component of my research is alive and well in all of my teaching.”*

– Prof. Gavin Fridell



*“Gavin plays the role of facilitator, encouraging students to present and defend their own positions while guiding discussion with thoughtful and probing questions.” – Tim Howlett, Trent alumnus*

In 2007, Dr. Gavin Fridell released his first book, *Fair Trade Coffee: The Prospects and Pitfalls of Market-Driven Social Justice*.

## Talk about Teaching

### Balancing Teaching with Research

For Prof. Fridell, good teaching is all about balance – balancing research with time spent in the classroom and balancing firmness with fun to ensure all students get the most out of their academic experience.

In the world of research, Prof. Fridell is known as an expert in global politics. His areas of interest include global political economy, international value chains, the politics of Latin America and the global South, development theory, and world history. He has conducted research on the politics and history of fair trade coffee and is currently working on a new project dealing with international commodity agreements in coffee and bananas.

“There is a strong social and ethical component to my research and the social justice component of my research is alive and well in all of my teaching,” Prof. Fridell says.

Prof. Fridell attributes the opportunity to merge his research interests with his teaching to being a professor at a university like Trent, which is committed to teaching excellence and innovation. Since arriving at Trent, he has been able to custom

design a number of courses in the Politics Department around his own research interests and work. One such course is the fourth-year Democracy and Global Order course, which Prof. Fridell runs as a straight seminar and describes as being “littered with all of my favourite books”. This fall, he launched another new course, Local to Global: States and Civil Society in Comparative Perspective; it’s a second-year course that Prof. Fridell describes as an important “reintroduction of comparative politics” that takes the students “around the world in 180 days.”

“Having the opportunity and freedom to create your own course based around your own interests really allows your students to get to know you on a different level,” Prof. Fridell says. “Teaching and research don’t have to be separate entities.”

### Facilitating Debate and Discussion

In his attempt to balance research and teaching, Prof. Fridell views student feedback and participation key to the success of any course – especially a course that has been designed around a professor’s own research interests. It is a balance that, according to his students, Prof. Fridell is well on his way to perfecting.

“Gavin plays the role of facilitator, encouraging students to present and defend their own positions while guiding discussion with thoughtful and probing questions,” says recent graduate and former Prof. Fridell student, Tim Howlett. “Gavin’s class really lived up to all my expectations of a university seminar. It was engaging, lively, thought-provoking, and most importantly, we left the class still discussing and debating the ideas. In fact, I am still debating the ideas a year later!”

Engaging his students in the material and encouraging debate in the classroom are critical aspects of Prof. Fridell’s noteworthy approach to teaching. And throughout his time as a professor, Prof. Fridell has worked to develop these skills.

“Academia is not just about reading from textbooks but rather it’s about sitting in a classroom and debating ideas,” he explains. “Reading and debating was how I woke up to the fun of learning – it’s a more passionate approach to learning – and I want to pass that along to my students.”

*“Academia is not just about reading from textbooks but rather it’s about sitting in a classroom and debating ideas.” – Prof. Gavin Fridell*



### Inviting Students into the Conversation

To encourage the development of critical thought and debate in his students, Prof. Fridell has developed a system for engaging his students in class material. Each class, students must bring in a quote from the assigned readings and come ready to discuss it. As Prof. Fridell explains, this system requires students to be prepared for each class because they might be called upon to talk. At the same time, it is not an intimidating process because students are not graded and they don’t have to deliver formal presentations.

“This is my way of teaching students to critically engage in the reading material,” Prof. Fridell explains. “It’s also a way to invite students into the conversation without too much pressure or expectation. My students have really responded well to this.”

Third-year student Eni Hanxhari finds Prof. Fridell’s approach to teaching both refreshing and stimulating. “I enjoy the most the f

act that he includes his students in the lecture and allows for there to be a discussion between him and the whole class. Prof. Fridell is a really great professor and he is constantly pushing his students to their full potential, and on top of that he is really relaxed and creates a welcoming environment.”

### Passionate Scholar; Committed Teacher

As a teacher, Prof. Fridell finds it important to make a connection with his students. He also believes it is equally important to challenge his students and have high, yet realistic, expectations

for their work and progress. This is where the second piece of balancing comes into play – the art of balancing being fun and being firm.

“My teaching philosophy is a mixture of being casual and being firm. I’m always swinging back and forth between the two,” Prof. Fridell explains. “I think students need to be challenged to be interested and I want my course to go beyond just teaching the course info. At the end of the day, I hope my students would describe me as a pretty cool guy but also pretty demanding.”

As the great teacher he is, Prof. Fridell’s students view him in exactly that way. On an exchange to Trent from South Africa, Mayibuye Magwaza remembers Prof. Fridell’s course on Latin

American politics well. In fact, it was one of her favourite classes at Trent. Commenting on Prof. Fridell’s strengths as a teacher, she says, “One of Fridell’s main strengths is his ability to clarify issues without losing depth. He can draw out the key elements in a debate on, say, free trade or one of Chavez’s policies and present them clearly, but without dumbing down anything.”

For Tim Howlett, Prof. Fridell will always be one of his most influential teachers at Trent. “Gavin is both a passionate scholar and a committed teacher. He drives his students to actively engage with a text and really unpack its arguments. He never underestimates the ability of his students, but pushes them to meet high expectations,” he says. “Prof. Fridell is a tremendous asset to both teaching and research at Trent. He is energetic and passionate about academic study and shares this with his students. Future Trent students will be well served by a university that attracts and retains scholars such as Fridell.”

## Sharing the Gift of Literacy

### Penpal Program Thriving at Trent University in Oshawa

“It is a great experience for everyone involved,” says fourth-year student Elyse Kadey about the Penpals program at Trent University in Oshawa. “It brings our school community together in a group setting and allows us to meet our peers. It also helps create a greater sense of identity for Trent students in Oshawa.”

Ms. Kadey is the senior coordinator of the Penpals program in Oshawa. Along with fellow student and junior coordinator, Tawny Weese, and faculty coordinator Dr. Rita Bode, she is matching 45 Trent in Oshawa student volunteers with students in grades one and two at Duke of Edinburgh Public School. Over the course of the school year, the two groups of students will exchange letters and will meet in person three times.

“The greatest highlight has been seeing the elementary students meet their penpals,” Ms. Kadey says. “It’s very interesting seeing the level of attachment that develops throughout the year and how excited the kids get when they see their Trent penpals.”



Created by Dr. Deborah Berrill, founding director of the School of Education and Professional Learning at Trent, the Penpals program has successfully been running at Trent in Peterborough for 19 years. Last year, the program was launched on the Oshawa campus and it is quickly gaining momentum.

“The Duke teachers and principal love the program and the Trent penpals seem very enthusiastic and committed,” says Prof. Bode. “This is a student-run activity and so far the interest has been very strong.”

Citing that there are many goals of the Penpals program, Prof. Bode highlights that it aims to “complement the elementary school language arts curriculum and to foster the development of a human relationship.”



*Trent in Oshawa penpals Erin Jenkins, Elyse Kaday, Christopher Visconti, Jessica Clarke.*

From the student volunteer perspective, the program also offers an opportunity to get involved, make friends, and gain valuable experience for future careers.

“My future goals are to become a teacher,” Ms. Kadey explains. “The Penpal program will help me reach my goals by giving me the experience in planning and organization necessary for a classroom, by teaching me that things don’t always go according to the plan and

that you have to learn from the past experience.”

According to Ms. Weese, the experience she is gaining by being involved on the coordinator level is also important. “I’m not only gaining experience working with students, but also organizing events and setting deadlines,” she says. “This program is a great way to get involved and make a mark for our smaller campus at Trent in Oshawa. As a future teacher, I hope to implement a Penpals program with my own students one day.”

## Meet the Innovators: Research Showcase



# FORESTS for the Future

Just as forests are an interconnected web of organisms that need one another to survive, so too is the scientific world inhabited by Environmental and Resource Studies professor Dr. Julian Aherne, who builds international research collaborations to take on the most pressing environmental issues of our time.

"Collaborative work is essential for synthesizing the results of individual monitoring sites and for providing a coherent message to the public, and to industry and policy makers," said Professor Aherne, who holds a prestigious Canada Research Chair in Environmental Modelling at Trent, one of the most elite research appointments in the country.

His work focuses on the application of models as a means of investigating the impacts of human perturbations, such as pollution and land-use change, on aquatic and forested ecosystems and the immediate and long-term consequences on their sustainability. Originally from Ireland, Prof. Aherne's scholarship on forests and climate variations extends across the globe from the United Kingdom to Canada.

Drawing on the University's strengths as an environmental research powerhouse, Prof. Aherne works closely with other Trent

faculty in the development and application of predictive modelling tools. Creating a tool that's accurate involves the sharing and synthesizing of forest hydrogeochemical monitoring data-sets from a vast number of sites. Prof. Aherne hopes that this will enable scientists to predict how climate change and human activities will affect the ecosystems on which life on earth depends.

"Prof. Aherne's rigorous fieldwork provides the scientific backbone today's policy-makers need to create meaningful legislation to improve the environment," said Dr. Gyles Iannone, associate vice president of research for Trent. "He is absolutely committed to supporting the process of

making positive changes in the way we manage the environment before it's too late." 

*To find out more about interesting research taking place at Trent, pick up a copy of Showcase – Trent University's premier research publication.*

**"Collaborative work is essential for synthesizing the results of individual monitoring sites and for providing a coherent message to the public, and to industry and policy makers."** – Prof. Aherne

## Meet a Trent Student



### Learning in the Global Classroom

The best educational experience Matt Whitfield has had as a Trent student didn't happen on the University's main campus in Peterborough. It happened while he was half way across the globe, as a participant in the Trent in Ghana program.



**"The biggest thing I've learned from Trent is to think critically."** – Matt Whitfield

"Travel is the best possible educational experience," he says enthusiastically. "My study abroad experience changed my life. Living in Ghana gave me insight into how things really happen globally. The opportunities outside of class, the work experience I gained – there is no better learning experience."

For someone who wasn't sure he had the courage to study abroad, Mr. Whitfield took a brave step by enrolling in the study abroad program and making his global mark. "I didn't think I could spend eight months away," says the Peterborough native. "But I began to feel it was time to go and have a new experience." His new experience brought him to remote parts of Ghana, where he worked with an NGO and gained many new perspectives.

### Learning to Think Critically

Operated by International Development Studies Department, the Trent in Ghana program is open to students of any discipline, provided they receive applicable credits while in Ghana. Now a fourth-year Global Studies major with a special concentration in African Studies, Mr. Whitfield spent his year abroad studying African and Ghanaian history at the University of Ghana.

He also had the opportunity to conduct field work, completing a work placement with an NGO called Tawodep in Bolgatanga City in northern Ghana. Tawodep provides local women with micro credit and income generating skills training, enabling them to profit from products they make themselves.

"Completing practical work in order to earn school credit was the most rewarding part of my experience," he says. "To just study abroad would not have been the same. I wouldn't have learned as much."



During his time away, Mr. Whitfield also gained a renewed appreciation for his home university. "I think that the type of education we get at Trent is superior to other schools. There were students from other schools on the year abroad and all the Trent students seemed to have a broader perspective of global development studies," he said. "Trent offers a radical critique of the development happening overseas and because of this we are able to develop a broader perspective and better able to think critically about what is happening around us. The biggest thing I've learned from Trent is to think critically." 

## Jane Urquhart Delivers the 19th Annual Margaret Laurence Lecture



This most recent visit marked the fifth time Ms. Urquhart has come to Trent but her first as the Margaret Laurence lecturer. Calling herself an avid and "almost obsessive" reader of Laurence's work, Ms. Urquhart was especially pleased to take up the challenge to speak in the popular lecture series founded in honour of Trent's fourth chancellor.

"Margaret Laurence was deeply important to my early reading life and, that being the case, there are most certainly ties between her work and mine; some likely more unconscious than others," Ms. Urquhart says. "Like Margaret Laurence, I am a woman writer and knowledge of her work, in some ways, gave me permission to at least give writing a try at a time when the notion of becoming an author – especially a female author – was not nearly as believable as it is now. Writers like Laurence, and those who preceded her are our literary mothers."

Being able to deliver the lecture at Trent – a University where she has developed many strong ties over the years – was an added bonus.

"The academic community at Trent, to my mind, is one of the most vibrant, and vibrantly Canadian I have come across – both in terms of students and professors," she says. "I have always found the students at Trent to be both engaging and fully engaged." 



**"I have always found the students at Trent to be both engaging and fully engaged."**

– Jane Urquhart

Acclaimed Canadian novelist and poet, Jane Urquhart, said it was a "splendid honour" to be invited to Trent as the nineteenth annual Margaret Laurence lecturer. On November 5, the award-winning author delivered a dynamic presentation entitled "Looking at the Work" to an engaged audience in Champlain College. During her lecture, Ms. Urquhart discussed the "tendency of readers to look too much at the author and not at the work." She also explored the visual aspects of both reading and writing and discussed landscape and the role it plays in life and literature.

## Matter of Course

### Provoking the Heart and the Head

**Literature and Social Justice: Imagination, Empathy, Ethics**  
**English 3703H**  
**Professor: Dr. Michael Fralic**

When Dr. Michael Fralic was invited to teach an English course on Literature and Social Justice he felt "excited and a bit trepidatious". While on one hand he felt the course, which has been offered at Trent several times in the past, had a lot of potential, he also wanted the opportunity to put his own mark on it and give the course a more distinct shape and focus.

With an academic background examining matters of power and politics in Newfoundland literature, Prof. Fralic was an ideal choice to teach this popular Trent course. Wanting to avoid any chance of the classroom becoming a forum for "soapboxing" and moralizing, Prof. Fralic established with his class of 40 students from the beginning that this course would be an opportunity to explore and debate one question: "Do socially engaged writers necessarily try to foster empathy?"

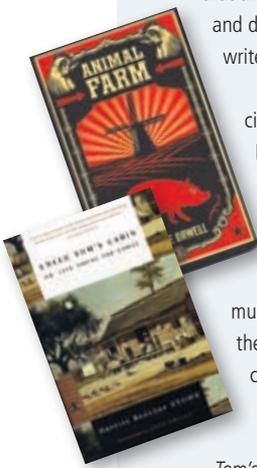
"I want to have my students circulate around that question," explains Dr. Fralic. "We want to look at the way literature acts on the head and the heart – how we are provoked, manipulated and moved by works of the imagination."

To raise the issue of empathy from multiple perspectives, Dr. Fralic opted to design the course around a variety of texts, some conventional and some not. Throughout the semester, students are charged with reading historically significant works such as *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *Animal Farm* in addition to less conventional and more modern texts such as *Halfbreed*, an autobiography by Maria Campbell, "They Club Seals, Don't They?", a play by a Newfoundland collective and *The God of Small Things*, a novel by Arundhati Roy.

"It's hard to be neutral about most of the works in this course," Prof. Fralic says with a grin.

With no exam but six smaller writing assignments and one larger essay to complete, students in the course are encouraged to connect and really explore each of the texts studied. This is accomplished further through weekly seminars when students are broken out into smaller groups to look at the works in more detail.

"All of these students are young, passionate, and engaged and they are experimenting with their own beliefs," Prof. Fralic says. "It is my hope that this course will foster a kind of attentiveness and perceptiveness and a sense of nuance around social and literary issues." ❧



### New Living Learning Community Offers Exciting Opportunities for First-Year Students

For student don Marina Berbatotis, the greatest part about being involved with the new Otonabee College Expressions Living Learning Community is the energy that radiates throughout the residence. "I always find myself surrounded by individuals who are amazingly creative and have an energetic presence," she says.

One of Trent's newest Living Learning Communities, Expressions is home to artists, musicians, actors and writers. It's a home for students who share a true passion for the arts.

"Being part of Expressions is like taking on a second coat of skin. I live, breath and sleep Performing Arts," Ms. Berbatotis says, adding that the goal of the Expressions Community is to encourage artistic growth among students. "I want to share my passion with students with similar interests and provide them with challenges that will further their passion for the arts and encourage them to take leadership roles within the Trent community."

The Living Learning Communities at Trent take advantage of the fact that learning can happen in any university space, especially those outside the classroom. The Expressions Community offers students the opportunity to learn from one another through artistic endeavours. "Each student within this community has a unique style and opinion about the arts," Ms. Berbatotis says. "I encourage students to pursue their artistic interests and to share them with others across campus. Expressions can only benefit the residence life experience while taking arts at Trent to a whole new level."

#### Sharing Similar Interests and Goals

Being part of a Living Learning Community provides first year students like Dayna Rose with the opportunity to connect with other students who share similar interests and goals. This common bond encourages learning and relationship-building to enhance the Trent experience. "OC Expressions has already impacted me a great deal. As a dancer, I wasn't sure how easy it would be to find other dancers," Ms. Rose says. "But as it turns out OC Expressions introduced me to several dancers of styles I've never even heard of. I'm learning new things and meeting

new people." Since coming to Trent in September, Ms. Rose has joined the Latin/Swing Dance Club and the Anne Shirley Theatre Company.

The Expressions Community has big plans for this school year. On October 28, they hosted their first event, Free Music Jam Day, where students were encouraged

to share their music by playing in the OC residence hallways and outdoors. Talent showcases, coffee houses, photography contests and theatre games have also been planned. Ms. Rose is especially looking forward to So You Think You Can Dance Trent, a two-month-long dance competition, based on the popular reality TV show, which she is helping to organize. "It's going to be just like the real thing," she says. "And it's going to be very entertaining." ❧



*"At Trent, I was able to create a list of books I wanted to read and have a professor to talk with on a weekly basis."*

**ALUKI ROJAS**  
Deputy Minister, Department of Environment  
Government of Nunavut

B.A. Indigenous Studies and International Development Studies, M.A. Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies, Trent University

As a Trent student, Aluki was part of the group that started the Inuit Students' Association.

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**TRENT UNIVERSITY**  
PETERBOROUGH • OSHAWA

## Alumna Leads Inspired Life in Nunavut

"Attending Trent University provided me with the opportunity to expand my horizons," says alumna Aluki Rojas.

Originally from Igloolik, an Inuit community in Nunavut, Ms. Rojas completed high school in Ottawa before coming to Trent in 1993 to pursue a degree in Indigenous Studies and International Development Studies. She returned to Trent after graduating to complete a master's degree in the Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies. Today, she is back in Nunavut and holds a high-level position within the government as deputy minister in the Department of the Environment.

"Being a deputy minister at the Department of Environment certainly provides opportunities for me to grow as a person. Not only do I grow in terms of gaining more knowledge of content or topic areas but I also develop as a person as I stretch my limits during stress-filled times," Ms. Rojas says, explaining

that her department deals with a wide variety of issues from climate change to maintenance of territorial parks to wildlife management. "Each work day, I feel inspired by the staff who are so passionate and knowledgeable about their files. It is contagious."

Looking back on her time at Trent, Ms. Rojas says that her experiences at the University have played a key role in her current career and lifestyle. "Many of the critical thought processes and tools that I learned while going to university have continued to play an important role in my life," she says.

Ms. Rojas also made an impact on Trent. As an undergraduate student, she joined with other Inuit students to create the Inuit Students' Association. In describing the group, which organized Inuit fashion shows and cultural nights, among other activities, Ms. Rojas says, "We worked on raising awareness

about Inuit. I also think this was an important support system for us at Trent. Having the opportunity to talk about Nunavut and share aspects of Inuit culture filled me with pride."

As a wife and mother of five children, as well as one of six siblings, Ms. Rojas prides herself on having a strong sense of family and community. She also hopes that her journey through life will be inspirational to others. "I am a very caring person and genuinely want to help people," she says. "Although I don't go off into the world each morning thinking I will inspire someone, I know that I have been an inspiration to some people, other than my family, who have told me how proud they are of me and my formal educational accomplishments." ❧

*Aluki Rojas is part of Trent's ad campaign, the transit portion of which features successful Trent alum with interesting and satisfying lives.*



Humanities Research Day 2008

# English

## A Revolutionary Language?

Humanities Research Day is a long-standing Trent tradition that provides a unique window into the cutting-edge research of the University's graduate students and faculty members. During this year's event on December 10, Master's candidate Kristina Ottosen will be among those presenting and will unveil her research project into a link between the legitimization of the English language and insurgency.

An English Literature graduate from the University of Guelph, Ms. Ottosen chose to pursue her Masters degree in Public Texts at Trent because of her interest in relationships between Medieval publics and texts. Her research explores the period of the 1381 Peasants' Revolt and zeroes in on a fascinating transition when the English language was struggling for international recognition as a vehicle for truth and education; particularly where *translatio studii et imperii* – the translation of learning and empire – is concerned.

"England had just been through its own experience of being colonized by the French for close to three hundred years," explains Ms. Ottosen, adding that French and Latin manuscripts dominated the commercial marketplace at this time in England, while English

manuscripts were relegated to regional or personal production. Generally speaking, English as a language was restricted to colloquial use. According to Ms. Ottosen, "people couldn't use English in an official capacity because it carried no prestige."

During the fourteenth century, challenges to authority were sometimes tolerated in certain contexts – e.g. the Oxford Translation Debates in the early fourteenth century – and Ms. Ottosen's research gestures toward the influence of censorship on popularity and argues that perhaps this influence explains Henry IV's choice to have his coronation in English for the first time in history. However, she also suggests that Henry IV's appeal to the English language may have been reflecting what was becoming popular and using it as a form of propaganda to legitimize his usurpation of Richard II's throne as opposed to endeavouring to establish the legitimacy of English.

Her research converges on the possible nationalistic agendas in the works of poets at the time (Chaucer, Gower, and Langland, for instance) and those of court rulers (King Henry IV, Richard II, and Archbishop Arundel) in an effort to forge a connection between pre-modern nationalism and dissent through literature, language, and translation. These connections

between language use and nationalistic agendas prove to be just as important today as they did seven hundred years ago.



Graduate student Kristina Ottosen

  
**Humanities Research Day 2008**  
will be held on  
**Wednesday, December 10** in the newly  
renovated multi-purpose room  
in **Scott House at Traill College.**  
All members of the public are welcome  
at this free event.

### The Trent University Archives

## Recording Our Past; Informing Our Future

From its inception, Trent University has recognized the importance of documenting and paying tribute to its past. As the University approaches its milestone 50th anniversary in 2014, examining this history becomes more and more important.

The Trent University Archives has been collecting historical information about Trent and the surrounding community of Peterborough since the University opened in 1964. Founding Trent President Thomas H.B. Symons believed that collecting documents and records was not only important for Trent but also for the Peterborough community. He believed historical documents could provide the raw materials for the work of scholars who would staff Trent through succeeding generations.

Trent University archivist Dr. Bernadine Dodge wholeheartedly agrees with the importance Prof. Symons placed on maintaining our history. "It's impossible to determine how the University should progress, in terms of scholarly research and administrative direction, without a documented history of Trent and the University's ideals from conception," she says.

### A Modern Research Centre

Within the Archives, visitors will find an impressive collection of private and public historical papers, rare books and special collections. In addition to being a window into the past, the Archives sets Trent apart from other institutions and offers a vital contribution to Trent's future by elevating its global presence. With more than 30,000 photographs, 10,000 special collection and rare book items and nearly 1,000 Master's



### "Our Campus is Famous"

On October 15, 2008, the Trent Archives hosted 40 members of the Canadian Society of Decorative Arts for a campus tour. The group came to experience Ron Thom's architecture first hand, and to explore the Trent Archives, where Ron Thom's original architectural drawings are kept. This visit was one of many that external groups make to the Trent Archives. A group of 78 students from University of Toronto's School of Architecture also recently visited Trent to study Thom's work and explore the architectural records maintained by the Archives.



Construction of Bata Library

and Ph.D. theses, the Archives is a haven for researchers from around the world.

"The historical collections are vital for graduate research," Dr. Dodge says, adding that while the Archives serve as an important academic tool for Trent students, "70 per cent of our users are not related to Trent at all. They are from other institutions, and need information from the Archives to complete their research."

True to Trent's innovative reputation, the Trent University Archives was the first archive in Canada to have all records and full-text finding aids digitized and available through a website. The Archives' website went live in 1996. In 2003 the Trent Archives website was recognized for the impressive amount of digitized material available on-line with a provincial award. Dr. Dodge was also recognized for her work and was invited as one of ten archivists to discuss and design a national electronic archival network.



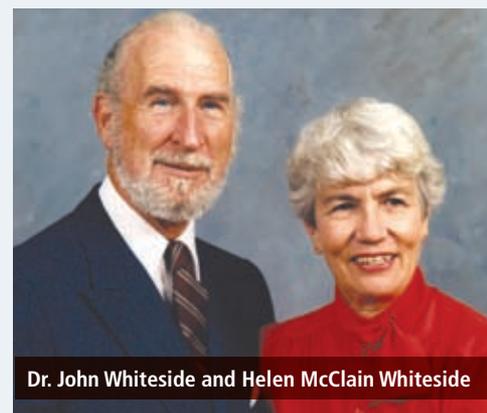
## Investing in Trent

### Grad Students Benefit from Legacy of Learning

Helen McClain Whiteside always had a great love and respect for learning and for a university education. As such, it is only fitting that her husband, Dr. John Whiteside, has honoured her by establishing a new graduate bursary at Trent University in her memory.

The Helen McClain Whiteside Memorial Graduate Bursary was created in 2007. It is a tribute to remarkable woman who had many ties to Trent. Mrs. McClain Whiteside was the first woman to sit on Trent's Board of Governor's. An honorary member of the Board, she was also a recipient of the Eminent Service Award. As a dedicated member of the Peterborough community, Mrs. McClain Whiteside also served on the boards of the Peterborough United Way, YMCA and Red Cross, in addition to the Social Planning Council of Peterborough and the Ontario Trillium Foundation. She was also a founding chair of the Ontario Audio Library and the Peterborough Addiction Research Foundation.

"Some of the values important in Helen's life were a love of learning, a love of nature, and a desire to make our community a better place for everyone," states a letter written on behalf of the Whiteside family to the inaugural recipients of the bursary. "She was blessed with the opportunity to achieve a university education and to spend time working, as a volunteer, on behalf of the community. She considered the rewards of that time spent as immeasurable. She believed the volunteers form the backbone of any community, those who work tirelessly for a cause, giving of their free time to help others, expecting nothing in return. It is in this spirit that we have offered this bursary."



Dr. John Whiteside and Helen McClain Whiteside

As one of three inaugural winners of the Helen McClain Whiteside Memorial Graduate Bursary, Lynn Gehl, a doctoral candidate in the Indigenous Studies Ph.D. program at Trent, feels particularly honoured to be selected.

"It was a pleasant surprise and it made me feel happy," Ms. Gehl said in response to receiving the bursary. She added that bursaries like this one are important because "graduate students need funding to bring forward new ideas, new knowledge, and new methodologies."

Ms. Gehl started the Ph.D. program at Trent in 2002. She came to Trent in order to conduct her work from within an Anishinaabe way of knowing and being. She also received her master's degree from Trent in Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies.

"Digitizing has broadened our user group," Dr. Dodge explains. "We now have requests for information from all over the world. We send photocopies of material to students in Australia, the UK and the States, and we host visitors from around the world who come to Trent to use the collections for research. These people would never have known the information housed at Trent without our website or digitized collections."

All private historical collections within the Archives are acquired by donation from people who are familiar with the University and "who admire and respect what Trent stands for and want to support the university contribute to our archives," Ms. Dodge explains. This contribution will be felt well into the next 50 years, as the Archives continue to grow and help heighten Trent's reputation for excellence in research.



# Spotlight on Athletics: Balancing Academics & Athletics

For some students, learning to balance academic responsibilities with involvement in sport can sometimes be a challenge. For one of Trent's top students and varsity fencing captain, Virginia Portmann, however, it is a balance she has learned to perfect.

For maintaining a high academic average while participating in varsity sport, Ms. Portmann is one of 54 students to be recognized this year as an Academic All Canadian (AAC). This is the fourth year Ms. Portmann has been recognized as an AAC.

Exceptional both in and outside of the gymnasium, Ms. Portmann is currently completing a degree in Business Administration. When she graduates with a BBA in the spring of 2009, it will be the second degree she has completed in five years. In 2008, she graduated from Trent with a Nursing degree. At the spring convocation ceremony, she was also presented with the Symons Medal for high academic achievement.

Working on two degrees simultaneously is, in itself, quite a feat. Combine an academic average of 92 per cent with a drive and desire to become one of the province's best fencers, and you have a student who is truly remarkable.

"Trent has been very good to me," she says, speaking to one of the benefits of attending a smaller school. "I've had support to do what I've wanted. People at Trent have faith in me and what I'm able to do."

*At a special ceremony hosted by the Department of Athletics and Recreation on November 20, 2008, Trent University will honour 54 students as Academic All Canadians.*

## Living an Active Lifestyle

Growing up on a farm in Gwynne, Alberta, Ms. Portmann has always been an active person. While she enjoyed mountain biking and hiking in her scenic hometown, she left Gwynne in 2000 to spend four years working, trekking and climbing in Switzerland. Maintaining her sense of adventure, Ms. Portmann decided to take up fencing when she started at Trent in 2004.



*"People at Trent have faith in me and what I'm able to do."  
— Virginia Portmann*

"Fencing appeals to my European roots," Ms. Portmann adds, referring to her status as a first generation Canadian born to Swiss parents. "It's elegant, graceful and passionate, and there's a sense of history behind it."

As captain of the women's varsity fencing team, Ms. Portmann has quickly become a vital part of a team that ranks among the top Canadian universities in competition. She consistently places in competitions and finished fourth at the Ontario University Athletics (OUA) finals. "I've improved a great

deal and had the chance to learn from many others," she says. "I've learned how to be a better winner and a better loser. It teaches me humility."

## Dedicated Volunteer

Outside of the University, Ms. Portmann is also a dedicated volunteer. She spearheaded the local portion of Cycle North-South, a project that collects and sends used bicycles to developing countries like Mexico and Peru. She is also deeply involved with Friends of Honduran Children/Peterborough Medical Brigades, helping to organize a major fundraiser and has participated in a medical brigade trip to Honduras. While finishing her BBA, she is also working at the Trillium Health Centre in Mississauga in the oncology department. For

all of her efforts, Ms. Portmann was recently honoured as the 2008 recipient of the Student Business Leadership Bursary by the Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce Peterborough.

Looking to the future, Ms. Portmann hopes to use her educational and volunteer experience to eventually become a chief nursing officer of a hospital or health region in order to be able to "implement positive change of a more widespread nature." 

# Trent Speaks: On the 20th Anniversary of the Writers Reading Series

## Student Perspective

**Vera deWaard, fourth-year English Literature major**

### Sharing a Passion for Writing

My very first Writers Reading was exciting. It was with the poet John Steffler and I was so happy to have the chance to meet a writer, to hear them read their work and ask questions. I feared that it would be awkward and formal, but there was a really friendly atmosphere in the room. Professors and other students that I knew were there and it felt reassuring to see

such a strong common interest. In every Writers Reading event I've been to there has been a warm energy to all of it because everyone shares a passion for writing; whether it is that they write themselves or that they simply enjoy reading and literature.

That first presentation with John Steffler became my favourite Writers Reading event from last

year. Steffler is a Newfoundland poet and his poems brought me back to my own time on that island. The first poet of this year's series was Randall Maggs. I play hockey and enjoy writing, so his readings from his book, *The Sawchuck Poems*, were a great experience for me. I am also very interested in hearing from Jeremy Dodds, a Trent alumnus, and Neal McLeod.

I enjoy writing myself and it has really helped my own sense of confidence to be able to meet writers and to hear some of the stories behind the work that they do. Writing is such a personal quest and the individuals that pursue it always have their own unique processes and quirks of character. I've had some memorable experiences with the Writers Reading Series. I am glad to be a part of it when I can and hope that the tradition continues to inspire other students as it did me. 



## Faculty Perspective

**Professor James Neufeld, English Literature**

### The History of Writers Reading

Betsy Struthers may not have foreseen what she was starting in 1987, when she approached Professor Orm Mitchell and the Trent English Department with a simple idea. She had noticed that a lot of energy was expended locally by various different groups in bringing Canadian authors to Peterborough for public readings. Wouldn't it make sense, she wondered, for the English Department to consolidate energies and sponsor a series, one that would be eligible for external funding and would also make writers reading a more prominent event on the Peterborough literary landscape? And with that simple idea, we had a series and a title. Writers Reading, now in its twentieth-anniversary season, prospered and grew to its present scope, presenting eight to twelve authors annually in readings at all of Trent's residential colleges and, through Julian Blackburn College, at Trent's Oshawa campus as well.

In 1988-89, its first season, Writers Reading presented a slate of seven authors — including Carol Shields, Michael Ondaatje and Budge Wilson. Since then, with the help of the Nind Fund, Trent's Colleges, a number of academic departments, the Canada Council, the Writers' Union of Canada and the Playwrights Guild of Canada, Writers Reading has presented over 160 authors — poets, dramatists and novelists, national celebrities and beginning writers — from across Canada and from close to home. This year, WRS was pleased to welcome back Budge Wilson; it will host Trent graduate and CBC Literary Competition winner Jeremy Dodds, who has just published his first collection of poems; and it will take special pleasure in presenting Betsy Struthers, who helped to start it all, reading from her eighth collection of poetry. 



## Staff Perspective

**Wendy Scammell, Traill College Assistant**

### New Learning Experiences

I must admit that when I first arrived at Traill I thought my command of literature was relatively extensive as reading is one of my passions. However, that illusion was quickly dispelled when Michael Peterman, then principal of Traill, introduced me to the Writers Reading Series. I had never been exposed to anything like this in my career. What a wonderful opportunity for me, to not only meet the authors and listen to them read from their works, but to hear about the thought process that goes on behind their writing and why they chose that subject. This opportunity took me down the road less travelled and was a huge learning experience, not only for myself but for the students who were also invited to the event.

I also had the opportunity to be involved in organizing dinners and social events for Writers Reading. Being involved with the planning and co-ordination of the evening certainly gave me an appreciation of how much work it takes to make sure the events go off without a hitch. Also meeting an author in a relaxed atmosphere gives you a greater insight into the person, not the author. I also enjoyed when authors like Jane Urquhart and Larry Hill were invited by Dr. Peterman to come into his class and work with the students. When my office was upstairs in Scott House, the seminar room was just around the corner and my education was once again broaden by hearing what went on at yet another level of Writers Reading.

To kick off the 20th year of Writers Reading, author Budge Wilson came to Traill. What a wonderful inspiration she is. We had every age group in attendance, including a young lady of about 12, who had the chance to sit down and talk with Budge one on one, made possible through this remarkable series. It has been a privilege for me to be involved over the years. 



For more information about the 20th Anniversary of Trent's Writers Reading Series, visit [www.trentu.ca/english/events\\_writersreading.php](http://www.trentu.ca/english/events_writersreading.php).

The readings are always free and open to the public.

# Taking the Next Step: Grad Studies at Trent

## The Transformation of Traill

*"I hope to make Traill an intellectual centre for the University. My vision is that Traill will offer a strong program of professional development activities for graduate students and that it will help to foster the building of strong relationships between graduate students and their faculty supervisors. At the same time, it is important that there will always be a place for undergraduates at Traill. I hope that the events and activities that we hold will be of interest to undergraduates, graduate students, faculty members and members of the community at large."*

– Doug Evans, dean of Graduate Studies and head of Traill College

*"Placing the majority of graduate students in one location might help foster a greater sense of community and sharing between programs. This is particularly important when one considers the emphasis Trent places on promoting interdisciplinary study."*

– Kristoffer Archibald, History M.A. student



*"The renovations at Traill College this year have been an exciting development for graduate students in the Frost Centre. We are now able to provide all our students with superb office space in a quiet setting in which to conduct their work and to consult with students they are teaching as tutorial leaders in undergraduate courses. So far, I've heard nothing but rave reviews about their new office facilities in Wallis Hall."*

– Dr. James Struthers, director of the Frost Centre for Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies

*"Our students are just ecstatic about the changes at Traill. Here we can all be in one place so the History grad program has a community at Traill. I supported this change from the very beginning and I am thrilled to be at Traill. I have a real sentimental connection to this college and I am really glad to see it utilized for something it is so ideal for."*

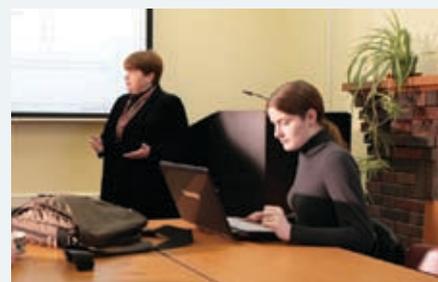
– Dr. Ivana Elbl, director of the History M.A. program

*"There is no doubt from all of us who live this project on a daily basis that these renovations, when completed, will breathe new life into Traill."*

– John Wordley, director of Physical Resources

## TRAILL COLLEGE RENOVATION HIGHLIGHTS

- \$3.5 million investment in renovations and repairs to retain and repurpose Traill College as a primarily graduate studies college
- Conversion of residence rooms in Wallis Hall for use as offices for 150 graduate students and 14 new apartments and seminar rooms
- Transformation of the former Scott House dining hall and kitchen into new academic spaces, including a multi-purpose room, a new college office, a seminar room and storage rooms
- Three level elevator added to Wallis Hall to ensure entire building is accessible
- Old lecture hall demolished to be replaced by new state-of-the-art lecture hall in 2009
- Updated and renovated washrooms
- Construction of a new bridge linking the pathways from Scott House and Kerr House to the second level of Wallis Hall
- Crawford House refurbishments including new office space for graduate program staff and students and a new fully-equipped seminar room



Over the past several months there has been a lot of activity happening at Catharine Parr Traill College. While work is still underway, students, faculty, staff and visitors have already been remarking on the many changes and improvements made to date to one of Trent's cornerstone colleges as it is converted from an undergraduate college to a primarily Graduate Studies college.

## What are people saying about Traill?

*"It is important for graduate students to have adequate space for working that is accessible, safe, quiet, and not overcrowded. With a growing grad student population, it is necessary for Trent to accommodate new students. The new renovations are great and it is nice to have an office space with new furniture and technology. A fresh atmosphere is very appealing to work in."*

– Katelyn Friendship, Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies M.A. student

## At the Centre of Teaching Excellence

*"The Instructional Development Centre is all about supporting excellence in teaching at Trent,"* says coordinator Angie Best.

In order to support and nurture Trent's teachers – what Ms. Best calls the University's "greatest assets" – the Instructional Development Centre (IDC) is dedicated to offering and coordinating a number of important activities and programs, including:

- providing both written and face-to-face forums which promote and support talk about teaching;
- training graduate student teaching assistants;
- distributing funds to encourage academic innovation;
- supporting new and innovative teaching practices initiated by Trent faculty; and
- facilitating all internal and external teaching award nominations.

## Did You Know?

***Over the past three years, the IDC has offered 33 workshops to a total of 480 participants representing 24 academic departments, nine graduate programs and nine service departments.***

Centres that support teaching are quite common within Canadian universities but the IDC at Trent differs from most by drawing on the expertise and experiences of its instructional community, in particular the faculty.

*"This volunteer model of participation, not only in attendance, but also in session leaders, has a positive effect of strengthening our learning community by offering multiple perspectives and voices,"* Ms. Best explains.

At a University renowned for being interdisciplinary in nature, showcasing a variety of perspectives from across all disciplines is a natural and important feature of the IDC's programming. The Centre's signature "Teaching Effectiveness" workshops, for example, bring together faculty members from across the University to share their best practices and experiences.



*IDC coordinator Angie Best (right) discusses teaching nominations with assistant Sue Robinson.*

Dr. Elizabeth Popham, a professor in the Department of English Literature, is one professor who has benefited greatly from these sessions. *"I am an English professor, but some of my best conversations about teaching have been with faculty from the Physics Department,"* she says.

As the founder of the IDC at Trent, Prof. Popham has a unique understanding of the important role the Centre plays at the University. *"The IDC offers essential support for Trent's mission and institutional goals,"* she says. *"This is an institution which has always prided itself on excellence in teaching, and combining research and instruction rather than seeing them as antithetical. The IDC plays a crucial role in creating a 'place' in which faculty and teaching graduate students, whatever their discipline, can talk together about how to be better teachers."*

Along with Prof. Popham, Dr. David Poole, a Mathematics professor, is among the hundreds of faculty members who have benefited directly from IDC's services and support. In his previous role as associate dean of arts and science (teaching and learning), Prof. Poole chaired the IDC's advisory committee for five years. He is also a frequent presenter in IDC's Teaching Effectiveness Program. Having had the opportunity to witness the effectiveness of such programming first hand, Prof. Poole points to the IDC's involvement in facilitating teaching award nominations as key to Trent's reputation as a leader in teaching excellence. *"Trent's success in external teaching award competitions in recent years is in no small measure due to the work of the IDC, and Angie in particular,"* he says. ☺

Due in large part to the work of the IDC, Trent University is renowned the world over for excellence in teaching. To read profiles of Trent's distinguished and award-winning teachers, visit the new Teaching Excellence website at [www.trentu.ca/teaching](http://www.trentu.ca/teaching)

# Headlines and Highlights

Get all the Trent news daily, online from anywhere in the world at [www.trentu.ca/news](http://www.trentu.ca/news)

## Inaugural Jack Matthews Fellow Visits Peterborough



During the week of November 10, Michael P. Robinson, a renowned anthropologist, lawyer, scholar, and writer, delivered a number of public talks and presentations at Trent University, Lakefield College School and The Canadian Canoe Museum as the inaugural Jack Matthews Fellow.

Created in 2008, the Jack Matthews Fellowship honours the founding contributions Mr. Matthews made to

Trent University, Lakefield College School, and The Canadian Canoe Museum. 



## Ad Campaign Features Trent "Heroes"

Trent University has launched its newest advertising campaign under the headline "Learning to Make a World of Difference." Billboards, transit cards, radio and Facebook ads comprise the campaign, which features Trent students and alumni who are making a difference. "Trent attracts exceptional students and produces outstanding alumni who maintain a strong connection to the institution," said Marilyn Burns, director, Marketing & Communications. "What better way to explain the Trent difference than through their stories." Check out the entire campaign online at [www.trentu.ca/consideringtrent](http://www.trentu.ca/consideringtrent). Watch and listen for Trent ads in Toronto, Mississauga, York, Durham, Clarington and Peterborough. 

## Community Leaders Inspire

The inaugural winners of Trent's Community Leadership Awards delivered an inspirational panel discussion on overcoming life's challenges to a group of high school students from St. Peter's on October 21. Wally Macht, Chief Keith Knott, Dave Armstrong, and Dr. Jenny Ingram, were all on hand to share with the students stories about personal challenges they encountered in their youth, and how they overcame them to go on to become the person, and leader, they are today. Dr. Brian Desbiens participated in the discussion via video.



After the panel, students had an opportunity get involved in the dialogue through a question and answer period and a small group discussion, in which they had to answer the question – What can your generation do to improve your community? Volunteering and environmental efforts were high on everyone's list. Support for local businesses, coaching and mentoring young children, working with seniors and getting involved in municipal politics were also discussed.

For more information about the Community Leadership Awards program, visit [www.trentu.ca/communityleaders](http://www.trentu.ca/communityleaders) 



## Ecological Restoration Students Enjoy First Intro to Trent

On October 15, Trent University faculty and staff welcomed the inaugural class of the new Trent-Fleming Ecological Restoration program. Forty students who started the collaborative program at Fleming in September travelled to Trent to receive a formal

introduction to the university where they will complete the B.Sc. portion of this exciting joint B.Sc. Honours and diploma program.

For more information about the Trent-Fleming Ecological Restoration program, visit [www.trentu.ca/ecologicalrestoration](http://www.trentu.ca/ecologicalrestoration)



## Model UN Draws 200 High School Students to Trent

The tenth annual Trent International Model UN Experience (TIME) conference, held at the University from October 23 to 26, attracted more than 200 high school students ranging in age from 13 to 18 from across Ontario and Quebec. During their time at Trent, conference delegates took part in debates as representatives from countries around the world. They were also treated to an international dinner, featuring cuisine from across the globe. Trent University politics professor Dr. Gavin Fridell delivered a special keynote address the group. 



## Hundreds Attend Inaugural David Morrison Lecture

More than 200 students and faculty filled Gzowski College's largest lecture hall on October 7 to hear Yale Sterling Professor Dr. James C. Scott present the inaugural David Morrison Lecture in International Development.

For more information, visit the website at [www.trentu.ca/morrison](http://www.trentu.ca/morrison) 



## Milestone Anniversaries

Two important milestone anniversaries were marked at this year's Head of the Trent homecoming weekend in October – Lady Eaton College and the Geography Department both celebrated turning forty. More than 100 LEC alumni spanning across all graduating years, along with past and present staff and faculty, attended a special family barbecue on October 3. The LEC dining hall was buzzing with excitement as guests shared stories and memories from their time at the college. Across campus, Geography celebrated with a departmental Open House and a reception at Alumni House. During the weekend, the department also launched a new book, *Geography at Trent: The First Forty Years*.

Both anniversaries marked important milestones as the University moves closer to its 50th anniversary in 2014. 

## Little Known Facts

### A Piece of History

Travel to Gzowski College by car, bus or even bike, and you'll pass a cluster of buildings, just off Pioneer Road, that are most definitely not part of Trent's famous post-modern architecture.

Before being used for seminars, classrooms and offices, the century log buildings were home to cows, pigs and chickens as the original Mackenzie farm buildings. Originally, they were also located further from Mackenzie House, and spread apart, with each of the four buildings standing independently. Today, these log buildings, more than 100 years old, serve as space for the Trent University Archaeological Research Centre. 

