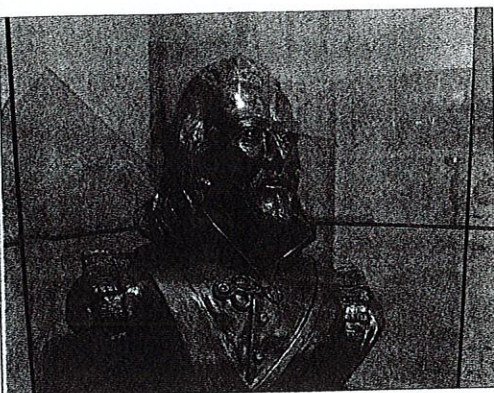


# FROM THE HOUSE...

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## TRENT UNIVERSITY AND SAMUEL DE CHAMPLAIN



DR. ALAN BRUNGER, PROFESSOR EMERITUS & DR PETER ADAMS, PROFESSOR EMERITUS

From its earliest days, Trent University has looked beyond its immediate setting in order to embrace the cultural diversity of Ontario, and Canada in general. Founding President Tom Symons invited the premiers of Québec and Ontario, Jean Lesage and John Robarts, to officiate at the cornerstone laying of Champlain College, the first building erected at the Nassau (now Symons) Campus in October 1965.

His timing was auspicious because Champlain had, in all likelihood, travelled, with hundreds of First Nations warriors, down the Otonabee River, which flows past the site of this College, some 350 years before in the fall of 1615. In his address to the large crowd, President Symons welcomed Premier Lesage

as "the leader of the French Canadian nation with whom we in English Canada joined long ago in a creative union." He continued by observing, "We hope that this college, built on the soil of Ontario and bearing the name of Samuel de Champlain, will serve as a symbol of affirmation of this union for generations and centuries to come."

Within a short time, the students of the new college adopted the mid-winter carnival "L'Ordre de Bon Temps" ("The Order of Good Cheer"), which Champlain had started in 1607 at his fledgling Bay of Fundy colony in order to lift the spirits of his men during the coldest season. The three-day event continues at Trent to this day for the same reason.

The two cornerstones at Champlain College are in both official languages and testify the role of Champlain in exploring and mapping present-day Ontario and his vision for the future of a unified Canada. The college boasts further evidence of Champlain's role in the form of a portrait—a sketch in oils (photo)—completed in 1965 by the noted

artist Charles Comfort in preparing his large mural of the "Fathers of Confederation" completed in Confederation Year, 1967, in the foyer of the Library and Archives of Canada.

In addition, a bronze bust of Champlain (photo) on the staircase leading to the college's Great Hall is the work of the prominent sculptor Jérémie Giles, whose two-metre-high statue of Champlain was completed in Ottawa in 2004.

Apart from the most prominent connection to Champlain in the form of the college in his name, Trent University established other links of this nature from its earliest days, mainly through the work of its archaeologists. The Anthropology and Native Studies departments were undertaking archaeological research in Huronia, home of the Huron Nation in Champlain's time, beside Georgian Bay, Ontario...

For the full article (and list of academic sources), please see: [mycommunity.trentu.ca/alumni/from-the-house#Champlain](http://mycommunity.trentu.ca/alumni/from-the-house#Champlain)