

TRENT

Winter 2006

37.1

PUBLISHED BY THE TRENT UNIVERSITY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



Remembering Professor John Syrett: 1942-2005

see page 6

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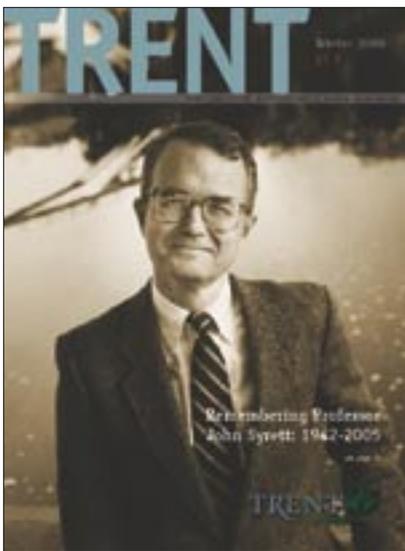
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TRENT

Winter 2006
Vol. 37 No. 1

Cover photo by Michael Cullen, Trent Photographics



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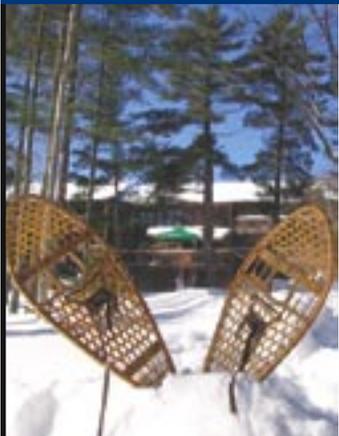
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LIZ FLEMING '77

Reflecting on Positives

I've just spent a good part of the afternoon crying about a man I didn't know.

John Syrett taught history at Trent during my years there, but because I was an English and philosophy major, our paths didn't cross. After reading the slew of glowing tributes that arrived following his death, I'm deeply regretting the opportunity I missed.

I've no doubt that you'll be as touched as I was when you read the collection. Our deepest condolences go out to John's family and friends.

Fortunately, John was not alone in his generous contribution to our university. Trent has always been rich in its collection of dedicated, generous faculty and staff...people who give more than their time and talents...people who give their hearts and minds to the development of our students. One of the graduates who wrote a tribute to John regretted never having told him how much his kindness had meant to her. I'm going to take that cue and say a few thank-yous of my own.

Thank you...to Geoffrey Eathorne, who regularly welcomed me to his home for glasses of sherry and fascinating chats about Virginia Woolf...to Mike Peterman who generously joined our 19th century American fiction seminar group for an impromptu tea and brownies and an evening debate about whether or not the governess in *The Turn of The Screw* really saw ghosts...to Jim MacAdam, who lingered for an hour after every tutorial to make us laugh with stories from the east coast...to Michael Treadwell who has sadly

left us, but who once asked his friend James Neufeld to teach me a class in Restoration Comedy, so I could apply to graduate school...and to James Neufeld who agreed, though he was on sabbatical at the time and would be teaching the class to just one student...to John Burbidge, who showed me that great academic brilliance and dignity could co-exist with a wonderful sense of humour...and to Finn Gallagher, who inspired in me a life-long love for Irish theatre.

Too often in life, we focus on the negative...on what's wrong and what's needing to be changed. We spend far too little time reflecting on the positive, the wonderful and the inspirational...but perhaps this is the time to make a change.

I encourage everyone who reads the tributes to John Syrett and is reminded of an outstanding professor who made an impact to make a call or send an email. Those who change our lives for the better should know how much they are appreciated...and the opportunities to say thank you are all too fleeting. **T**

lizfleming@softhome.net



MATT GRIEM '97

Exciting times for Trent

This past fall has been an exciting season for the Trent University Alumni Association. We've had some wonderful celebrations such as Head of the Trent and have new additions to our Alumni Council.

As your new Alumni Association President, I'd like to welcome our new Councillors, our recent graduates and ever faithful members.

To our new Council, thank you for volunteering your time and energy to the Alumni Association. Without the dedication of our many volunteers, the Association would not be able to function. We appreciate everyone's contribution.

To our recent, and not so recent, graduates, if you haven't already, please think about become actively involved with the Alumni Association and remember to update your information on our alumni directory located at www.trentu.ca/alumni.

To our outgoing Council Members, Adam Guzkowski, Cheryl Davies, Denis Desjardins, Jennifer Mercer and Kate Ramsay—thank you so much for your contributions. Your efforts have helped to build a stronger Alumni Association and I hope that you will continue to be involved in our activities and special events.

As we move forward, it is important to remember how far we've come as both an Alumni Association and a University. There were 72 graduates at Trent University's first convocation in 1967 and 9 alumni in attendance at the first Alumni Council meeting in 1968. As of 2005, Trent has graduated approximately 29,000 alumni in 97 different countries and the association has grown to include 18 council members, 25 chapter presidents and numerous alumni serving on a range of

University committees.

These are exciting times for both Trent University and the Alumni Association. As Trent moves forward with new programs, new buildings and new opportunities, its partnership with Alumni becomes increasingly relevant.

The Trent University Alumni Association will be the voice of alumni to the University. The Association will be moving forward with a number of new initiatives in 2006 including:

- increasing the number of networking opportunities for our local chapters;
- hosting a dinner to honour some of Trent's most distinguished alumni in the Spring;
- continuing the Alumni Association's governance review; and,
- investigating new initiatives such as the establishment of an Alumni House on Symons Campus. The House will not only act as a visible headquarters for alumni programs, but it will also enhance student life by supporting a number of on-campus workshops, lectures, panels, speakers, receptions and celebrations.

The success of these initiatives will largely depend on participation and support from alumni. Together we can build on our past successes and strive to grow alongside Trent University! [✉](mailto:mattgriem@trentu.ca)

mattgriem@trentu.ca



PRESIDENT BONNIE M. PATTERSON

If anything, this month's edition of Trent magazine is the perfect cure for the mid-winter blues. The variety of stories and perspectives between these covers will be a good companion to a hot cup of cocoa on a winter's afternoon.

In this, the February issue, our ubiquitous alumnus-in-residence **Paul Delaney '64** takes a look at the changing face of Trent's campus through new eyes, with a great series of photos accompanied by intriguing and descriptive cutlines, while **Emily Addison '97** delves into the plethora of literacy initiatives underway through the School of Education. The volunteer effort behind producing Trent magazine is truly impressive. I always enjoy the unique perspective of Liz Fleming's editorial page, the familiar names and faces in Tony Storey's "Storeyline," and the entertaining articles written by talented, committed Trent alumni.

Far beyond the pages of Trent magazine: I thought you might be interested in a glimpse into the vitality of alumni enrichment that took place right here on our campus last fall.

On November 1, **John Collinson '90** gave a guest lecture in computer science called:

This continuous on-campus alumni activity is something that each of us in the Trent community can take pride in.

"Would you build a house without a plan? Why are IT solutions any different?" On November 2, Dr. **Jaime Awe '78** gave a guest lecture in archaeology entitled "Caves, Underworld and the Ancient Maya."

That same day, Paul presented "Those Were The Days," a slide show and commentary on Trent from 1964 to 1968. The very next day, the Peterborough Alumni Chapter hosted "Excalibur: A Celebration of Athletics and Recreation – Past, Present and Future," an update on the extraordinary upgrades to Trent's athletic facilities under the leadership of athletic director Bill Byrick.

Over the course of that month, our two alumni-in-residence (Paul and writer **Mike Johansen '84**) continued their very fine day-to-day work of making distinctive contributions to student life—through workshops, coaching and conversation.

In addition, there have been campus visits by **Michael Dixon '78** for the psychology colloquium, **Paul Davidson '83** for the World Affairs Colloquium and **Adrian Kelly '86** to the English department as part of the popular Writers Reading series at Trent. We also know that at least two of our alumni—**Joan Sangster '70** and **Jamie Benidickson '67**—attended the national Conference in Canadian Studies at Trent.

This continuous on-campus alumni activity is something that each of us in the Trent community can take pride in. Our university

is blessed with active and truly engaged alumni—and their impact is felt from the lecture halls and offices at Trent to important and exciting places all over the world. **Darren Huston '85**, corporate vice-president of Microsoft Co. Ltd. since 1993 and appointed president & CEO of Microsoft Japan in July 2005, is just one of many examples of alumni reaching great heights in the global marketplace. The success of alumni like Darren speaks to the meaningfulness of Trent University's new message: "The World Belongs to Those Who Understand It." And the diversity of experience and perspective of all of our alumni enrich everything about our university. **T**

Researching Global Change Biology at Trent University

BY LAURA COPELAND

Dr. Marguerite Xenopoulos, a biology professor at Trent University, is leading the way in research on global change biology.

The Trent University biology professor has created a laboratory to conduct research on the effects of environmental stressors on water quality and biodiversity. These stressors include climate change, ultraviolet radiation, acidification of waterways, water consumption and land use change.

All of these environmental problems are currently threatening aquatic ecosystems across Canada and, as a result, they are also threatening the well-being of Canadians, says Prof. Xenopoulos.

One of Prof. Xenopoulos' current projects involves a research partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. This research, which is a province-wide initiative, aims to determine the effects of climate change, hydro-power and dams on lake water levels.

Graduate student Michael White is helping Prof. Xenopoulos spearhead the project, which is examining how changes in annual lake levels alter biological processes near the shore line.

"We don't know much about the fluctuation of water levels in natural lakes whereas reservoirs can have huge fluctuations in water levels," she says.

According to Prof. Xenopoulos, preliminary results show that a natural lake's water level will usually fluctuate within one metre each year whereas reservoirs can fluctuate more than 10 meters in one day.

"The fluctuations in water levels in reservoirs appear to have a huge impact on aquatic biodiversity, fisheries and potentially on water quality," she says. "In the next

"Many river-dwelling fishes across the world will be on the path of extinction by 2100 if global warming and human consumption of water for agriculture and other activities continue unchecked."

few years, we will gather enough information to make scientifically-sound recommendations for water level regimes in reservoirs and, ultimately, understand how future climate change may affect water levels in all standing water bodies."

Prof. Xenopoulos is also working on research that investigates how agricultural land use affects the materials—particularly nutrients and organic matter - exported into streams in south-central Ontario.

Prof. Xenopoulos, with the help of undergraduate students and graduate student Henry Wilson, is studying 40 different streams. All of the streams have a different proportion of agricultural use within their catchments ranging from zero to 90 per cent.

"We found that the higher percentage of agricultural land, the more likely it is to have a higher concentration of pollutants, organic matter and nutrients flowing into nearby streams. More often than not, streams with more agricultural land use around them have more nitrogen and phosphorus in the water."

These changes in the amounts and types of materials exported have strong effects on organisms living in and adjacent to these streams, she says.

Prof. Xenopoulos feels that having the graduate students working with her is very important.

"I work on so many drivers that

it gives students many opportunities to think of projects independently and to develop their own ideas. Then they are happier with what they are doing, which works better for everyone."

Prof. Xenopoulos, who came to Trent in 2004, was one of more than 1,300 experts from 95 countries who contributed to the landmark Millennium Ecosystem Assessment.

The study, released in March 2005 and currently being printed, reveals that about 60 per cent of the ecosystem services that support life on earth are being degraded or used unsustainably.

She became involved in millennium assessment as part of her postdoctoral research at University of Notre Dame in 2001. Her research generally focuses on aquatic ecology and global change of freshwaters.

As part of millennium assessment, she assessed what could happen to freshwater biodiversity over the next 50-100 years. She and her colleagues use future scenarios of water availability to forecast future fish loss. This research was just published in the journal *Global Change Biology*.

"Many river-dwelling fishes across the world will be on the path of extinction by 2100 if global warming and human consumption of water for agriculture and other activities continue unchecked," she says.

Looking ahead, Prof. Xenopoulos plans to begin research into greenhouse gas emissions emanating from streams and lakes.

"Another avenue that I am hoping to explore is invasive species," she says. "Ontario faces an infestation of zebra mussels, round gobies, Eurasian water milfoil and rusty crayfish—all of these organisms are in the Kawartha Lakes right now and we don't fully understand what impacts they have on native fauna and flora." **T**

Farewell to John Syrett

The Trent University community was saddened to learn of the death of Professor John Syrett on August 17, 2005. John was a Professor of History at Trent from 1972 to 2002, and is fondly remembered by many former students and colleagues. The following is a collection of heartfelt tributes that poured in following John's death. We could think of no better way to remember him than by sharing these with you.

'A man of uncommon grace and humility'

BY ANTHONY RONZIO

The class Ann Bex wanted had filled, leaving only a course on U.S. history available in her time slot. John Syrett, a new professor at Coastal Senior College, would be teaching the course. "It doesn't sound too exciting," Bex remembered thinking at the time.

Then the wiry 60-year-old professor jumped onto his desk during a lecture, illustrating a vicious attack on Massachusetts Sen. Charles Sumner by an angry South Carolina Sen. Preston Brooks on the Senate floor in 1856.

"I'll always have this vision of him leaping on the desk," Bex, of Camden said. "He was the most exciting teacher I ever had. He inspired me to learn more. I thought if I had that man teaching me in college, I would have majored in history."

Friends, students and colleagues of Syrett remember him as the

consummate educator and devoted American historian, an eloquent public speaker and dedicated volunteer to the community. Syrett, of Owls Head, Maine, died August 17 in a sailing accident.

In 2002, Syrett and wife Katie moved to Owls Head, following his three-decade teaching career at Trent University in Ontario, Canada. The former chairman of the university's history department, Syrett was a respected voice on public issues, especially on U.S.-Canada relations, and appeared regularly on national radio programs.

Syrett spent summers in Owls Head as a child. He grew up in White Plains, N.Y., rooting hard at first for the Brooklyn Dodgers, but switching allegiances to the New York Mets after the Dodgers moved west to Los Angeles.

"He loved the New York Mets, something I could never quite fathom," said Olga Andriewsky, a colleague at Trent. "When my beloved Cleveland Browns moved to Baltimore, he confessed that he had been a Brooklyn Dodgers fan in his childhood."

After earning a doctorate from the University of Wisconsin, Syrett taught from 1968 to 1972, at Sarah Lawrence College in New York before going to Trent. Andriewsky said Syrett appeared to have been sculpted by the tumultuous times of that generation.

"[Syrett] was also one of the most ethical people I have ever met, a quality that I always associated, rightly or wrongly, with his coming of age during the Vietnam War," said Andriewsky.

"John...taught me two very important things, that democracy was about respect and fairness, not about always winning, and there was honor and dignity in small



John was a man who lived his pr grace, modesty,

tasks," said Andriewsky. "John was always the first to volunteer for thankless departmental work."

The investigation into Syrett's accident, which also claimed the life of his friend and neighbor, Peter Brauman of Owls Head and Pennsylvania, has revealed little except that the two men died of drowning.

Dozens gathered Sunday in Owls Head for a memorial service. Bauer said his passing was a shock, and has steeled her to redouble her efforts to account for his loss, and



of integrity inciples with and tenacity.

to honor his memory.

Trent University celebrated his passing by lowering flags to half-staff on the campus; a statement by the Dean of Arts and Sciences, Colin Taylor, said students who benefited from his courses and guidance, and his colleagues, will miss him greatly.

It's a feeling Andriewsky understands.

"John was probably the toughest grader and, at the same time, one of the most popular professors at our university—and that's a very,

very rare combination," she said. "John was a man of uncommon grace and humility."

Thanks to the Rockland Village Soup for permission to reprint the story above on John.

I am truly saddened to hear of the passing of Professor Syrett, a great teacher who inspired with patience and good humour. I vividly remember waking up happily at 7:30 am (a terribly early time for an arts stream Trent student) on Wednesday mornings so I could make the cold walks to Traill College and meet Prof. Syrett at 8:30 am for our 90-minute Vietnam War tutorials. He always made me think during those tutorials and truly ponder the significance of our assigned readings and history in general. He had the gift of making history come alive for his students. I loved going to Prof. Syrett's lecture because he was a teacher who made learning fun. Never monotone in his lectures, he was always excited whether he was discussing the Oil crisis of the 1970s or Ronald Reagan (the movie star, not the President) of the 1950s. He spoke with a candid frankness that made his lectures stand out from all others. If we were lucky, and if he was really excited, Prof. Syrett would occasionally even break into song and dance!

Outside class, he was a mentor and a friend. I could always come early and discuss/debate with him the issue of the day. He was an inspiration on whom I have modeled my own teaching practice, working hard to be a good listener, to have true enthusiasm for the material I teach, and to take a sincere interest in the well-being of every student I teach.

Professor Syrett was a great teacher and a great man. His death is a huge loss to the Trent community.

K. Sayed '96

Here is all I can say about the man: I had Professor Syrett for U.S. History in second and third

year. His were the only classes in my years at Trent, that I made sure never to miss, no matter what the time or location. He was simply the best teacher Trent had and is the only Professor I can still remember by name to this day, without a second's thought. My condolences,

Jason Kozar '90

In 2001, Professor John Syrett taught his final 4th-year Vietnam War History class at Trent University. A year later, he retired, perhaps to follow the dream he often shared with his class of bagging groceries at a local store in Maine—he had a great sense of humour.

I was fortunate enough to be one of his very last students and for that, I am very thankful. My life might otherwise have taken a very different course.

Professor Syrett had high expectations for his students, and after a poor first semester, he spoke to me one-on-one and challenged me to push myself further. He sparked a passion for excellence in me, and as a result of his encouraging words, I ended up writing the best paper I've ever written, exceeding even my own expectations. I was truly inspired by Professor Syrett, and I respected him tremendously.

It was largely thanks to him that I decided to pursue a Master's in History at U. of T. the following year, for which he served as my primary reference. John Syrett was the best professor I ever had, and I will forever remember the hefty contribution he made to my success at Trent, and to my life thereafter. He will be greatly missed.

Alex Gabrini '97

I am deeply saddened to hear of the passing of Prof. Syrett. I was a student of his in '93-'94 in his American History course and remember looking forward to every one of his lectures. He was a truly remarkable teacher and men-

John Syrett continued on page 10

CREATING CONNECTIONS AT TRENT

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tor. Not only did he inspire me during that time but his inspiration carried itself through to my post-graduate days when I decided to pursue Diplomatic Studies. His encouragement and assistance were invaluable and we have lost a great person. I know that he will be deeply missed by all of his former students, colleagues, family and friends. With deepest sympathy,

Sharon Siva '92

John Syrett: The Devil's Advocate

The sad news of August 2005 overwhelmed me with memories of Professor John Syrett. As the days went by, my sadness grew, but so did these memories.

From 1974 to 1978, John Syrett taught me four courses, from an introductory historiography class in my first year (long gone now) to his exciting fourth year class on the American South. I remember many things about him; he was a huge part of my Trent life and now of my Trent memories.

More than anything, I remember that he worked hard to ensure that his students always saw both sides of an issue. When we became too complacent, in our 20th century Canadian viewpoint of events of the century before, he would always say, "let me be the devil's advocate" and, at that point he would put forward the opposing view, ensuring that we saw both sides to a story.

My first memory of him was in 1974, as I timidly made my way from the "big campus", on the bus to Peter Robinson College. Like many first year students, I was reluctant to leave the security of a campus I was only beginning to figure out. As I registered for my various tutorials, and as all the tutorials on campus were fast filling up, I was persuaded (and trust me, I had to be persuaded) to venture down to Peter Robinson, to

take my tutorial from John Syrett. He would become my professor for that course and for three more, leading me from first year to my honours year, always teaching, always pushing and always making me aware of the world outside and the history that created the world I lived in. For those four years he was my mentor, and I rarely made an academic decision without consulting him.

He was an exhilarating lecturer, a thoughtful tutorial leader and a tough marker! His turn-around time on essays was remarkable, usually by the time of the next tutorial, essays were returned, filled with comments and suggestions and always with encouragements. He was consistently fair, and his notes throughout your essay were clearly indicative that he knew exactly who you were. A friend once said to me that John Syrett could tell you in his comments that you wrote a terrible essay, but by the last page, leave you with hope that you were not entirely a lost academic cause. He didn't tolerate late essays, which was only fair, since he was so prompt in returning them – you had to have a pretty good reason for being late, even with his consent. Without it, you were guaranteed to know the consequences of his fearsome markdown.

John Syrett taught me again in second year, following which I took a course from him during the summer of 1976. While that class consisted of a few Trent students, most were teachers upgrading their credentials. One memory remains particularly vivid of that summer. When the small class was somewhat unresponsive in a tutorial, he had a rare moment of open frustration: "You are teachers", he said, "you know what it's like to sit here with no response...so help me!" Having just completed my second year, I was feeling proud, (after all, I already had two John Syrett classes under my belt), to have been one of the people happily participating in the tutorial and thankful that

the criticism was not being leveled at me! Though his career at Trent was varied, he remained, before everything else, a teacher.

In my third year, he offered me invaluable advice. I had been ill in second year and by Thanksgiving of my third year, I was sick again, and my parents were strongly suggesting that I stop for the year. I went to see him (it was the only year I didn't take a course from him) and told him my tale of woe. After looking at various options (playing devil's advocate yet again), he made a very reasonable suggestion that I drop a course, and that if I were sick again by Christmas, I would withdraw for that year. An eminently sensible suggestion, only to my young mind, it created a horror, as it meant I would not graduate in June with my friends. I remember him so clearly telling me that I wanted to grow up too quickly: "You're not even 21," he said, "a few months won't make a difference in your life, and your friends will still be your friends whether you convocate with them or not." I took his advice (as I always did) and continued with no ill effects. My closest Trent friendships, most of which were created on that first weekend in 1974, have endured, just as he said they would.

I believe strongly that the value of a Trent education is measured by the opportunity we had to express our opinions and views. John Syrett once said that we were not to preface our statements in tutorial by saying "it's only my opinion", because our opinions were just what he wanted (sustained by the massive amounts of reading he assigned!) It is a lesson that all Trent students and alumni need to remember.

I regret so many things – that I never got to take his course on Vietnam...that I never really told him how important his support was to me during a difficult time...that I valued his opinion and that

Symons Seminar Series

Graduate Student Research

BY PAUL DELANEY '64

The Thomas H.B. Symons Seminar Series (formerly the Graduate Student's Association Speaker Series) was instituted to showcase research conducted by Trent's graduate students and share it with the community, including alumni. Each seminar features two presenters from different disciplines, and allows time for questions and discussion. Between presentations, there's a break for refreshments and socializing. The top presenter each year, to be named the Symons Student Lecturer, is chosen by a student panel. That person will present his or her paper at a gala in April and will receive the Symons Award of Excellence—as well as a \$500 stipend.

Colin Whitfield and Chris Warren, the two graduate students behind the Seminar Series, are careful to point out that many people made the series a reality. Too often at Trent, graduate students find themselves isolated and unknown to others on campus. They know their professors, but often feel disconnected from the rest of the academic community. The Seminar Series is a way of bridging that divide and the logo, which incorporates the Trent footbridge, reflects that.

Although the series itself is not new, the name is. This year, the organizers asked founding Trent president, Prof. Thomas H.B. Symons, to allow them to name the series of seminars after him. Professor Symons agreed, and has been to several of the presentations. This comes as no surprise to anyone who knows the man, either personally or by reputation. Tom Symons, for more than four decades, has encouraged scholarship at Trent and far beyond.

There is no charge to attend the seminars, but the organizers are keen to find donors or sponsors. If you are interested in helping, please contact either Colin Whitfield (cwhitfield@trentu.ca or 748-1011, ext. 5341) or Chris

Warren (chwarren@trentu.ca or 748-1011, ext. 1645). All talks are held in the Junior Common Room of Scott House at Trill College, and begin at 7:00 p.m. See below for the complete 2005-2006 schedule. All are welcome! [f](#)

Seminar Schedule

October 19, 2005

Liv Vors (Watershed Ecosystems) Woodland Caribou and Anthropogenic Landscape Disturbance in Northern Ontario

Martha Crealock (Theory, Culture and Politics) Ideas of intellectual history: representing the Christian God in film

November 16, 2006

Julian Haladyn (Theory, Culture and Politics) Introduction to Time Travel: An Archaeology of Marcel Duchamp

Melissa Page (Watershed Ecosystems) The role of himin the expression of the core histone genes in *Giardia lamblia*

December 7, 2005

Hida Manns (Watershed Ecosystems) Surface crop residue effects on soil fungi, aggregation, carbon and moisture

William Knight (Canadian Studies and Native Studies) "Where the Speckled Trout Abound:" The Canada Atlantic Railway, Angling Privilege, and Environmental Change in Algonquin Park, 1893-1917.

January 18, 2006

Kelly Harrison (Canadian Studies and Native Studies) You'll never believe what happened—How I got my PhD by watching TV

Christopher J. Reaume (Watershed Ecosystems) Fishing for genes: Fuzzy logic and the science that informs policy

February 15, 2006

Daniella Jofre (Anthropology) Namanchugo: Water and ritual in an Andean shrine

Stephen Horner (Canadian Studies and Native Studies) Graduate Program Capitalism and Indigenous values

March 15, 2006

Emily Bruusgaard (Canadian Studies and Native Studies) The Salvaged Thread: text and textiles in Laura Goodman Salverson's *The Viking Heart* and Martha Ostenso's *Wild Geese*

Helen Baulch (Watershed Ecosystems) Breathing Streams: understanding how global climate is affected by nutrients in streams

Derek Green: Helping to Save a Part of Peterborough's Past

BY TROY B. HAMMOND '90

One of only three National Historic Sites in Peterborough, Cox Terrace is a wonderful example of Second Empire-style architecture. It was built on Rubidge St. in the late 1880s as a seven-unit rowhouse for George A. Cox, a former Peterborough mayor, who had amassed a great deal of real estate in the city.

Jump ahead 125 years and the grandeur of Cox Terrace remains, thanks largely to a restoration project that reversed many years of neglect. In 2004, **Derek Green '88**, a local real estate agent himself, recognised the beauty and significance of the building and decided to purchase it. According to the Peterborough Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (PACAC), Peterborough City Council designated the building as a heritage site in 1988 to save it from the wrecker's ball, despite the poor condition of the building.

Derek initially attended Trent as a full-time student majoring in psychology, with minors in anthropology, physics, philosophy and math. He completed his degree as a part-time student over several years, taking the opportunity to pursue the social work program through Sir Sanford Fleming College as well.

In the mid-1990s, funding for social work was being cut and Derek decided then that the opportunity was ripe to embark upon a new career. He completed his real estate certification and, although he "never did explore any options in (his) field of study at Trent", he certainly learned very valuable lessons from his days there.

"I didn't appreciate it at the time, but the freedom to dedicate a handful of years to the sole purpose of expanding yourself intel-



Cox Terrace, one of only three National Historic Sites in Peterborough.



Derek Green and family.

lectually is an immense privilege. I lament the fact that on many occasions I made poor use of my time. If I were able to do it again, I would treasure every moment!

"When I finally finished my degree, I was working full time, married and had a daughter. The only time I had to study was every morning from 4 to 8 a.m. My work ethic was very slack for the first few years at Trent, so this (pursuing commercial real estate as a career) was exactly what I needed to whip me into shape!"

That work ethic and a love of learning new things were exactly what Derek needed for the restoration of Cox Terrace. As he put it, "I always loved the building", and that passion was reflected in the

detailed and painstaking renovations. The roof was completely rotten and needed replacing; exterior wood and brick required paint removal; the covered veranda needed rebuilding; and ornate wood brackets and mouldings had to be replicated and replaced. More cosmetic upgrades including interlocking brick walkways, the repaving of the parking area, interior painting and the addition of floor tiles all presented their unique challenges.

"The approach was different at some points because of the historic nature of the building. For example, when we removed the paint from the brick, we wanted to make sure the product we used was gentle on the brick. There were also issues with replacing certain items. Any part of the building that is identified as 'heritage' must be replaced with exactly the same item. So all the mouldings, trim work, balcony handrails, brackets, windows, doors and any other item that is a historical feature and needed to be replaced had to be custom-made. However, the people

Derek Green continued on page 13



This photo show some members of the early Trent Karate Club (this 1971 photo originally appeared in *Arthur*) lead by Yuwa Wong '71, now Dr. Yuwa Hedrick Wong of Singapore. Yuwa is on the left and moving right is Barry Nolin '68, Michael Levenston '70, James Mackinnon '71. We'd love to find other early members of the Karate Club who might have photos and memories of those days that they can share with us. Contact Michael Levenston: cityfarm@interchange.ubc.ca.



Lady Eaton College 1983-1988 reunion held during Head of the Trent, October 2005.

Derek Green continued from page 13

at city hall's heritage preservation office were extremely helpful in pointing me in the right direction."

Like George Cox, the original owner, Derek now treats Cox Terrace as a long-term investment property. It is his hope that the seven residential units on the upper level and seven commercial units on the ground floor will eventually allow Derek to become self-supporting and allow him to reduce the time he spends selling real estate. "Family life is very important to me and to my wife, so the plan is to continue to make changes that allow us to spend more time together."

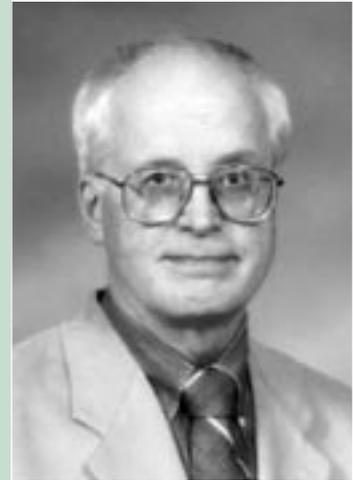
Now, after having completed more than 95 percent of the work on the building, Derek is quick to

say that he would attempt another such venture in the future.

"The Cox Terrace job was a great experience (and) I love historic architecture. I do have a keen interest in pursuing more historic rehabilitation projects in Peterborough and beyond." If Derek applies the same attitude that he did as a student—the completion of his Trent degree was largely a "principle of finishing what had been started"—it is likely that Peterborough's historical architecture is in good hands. **T**

Derek Green and his wife and four children reside in Peterborough. He can be contacted at (705) 743-9111 or by email at Derek.Green@Remax.net.

Elwood Jones Retires...



After 37 years at Trent and great service to the History Department and to Otonabee College, where he was Master for five years and Senior Tutor for six years, Elwood Jones is retiring.

The History Department and Otonabee College are hosting a retirement dinner in Elwood's honour on **Friday, April 7th at 7:00 pm**. Alumni are welcome to attend.

Speakers from the University and beyond will celebrate Elwood's great contribution to Canadian History, American History, Archives, local history and Canadian Church history. For more information, please contact Michele Sparkes, Otonabee College Assistant by phone at 748-1011, ext 5201 or by email at msparkes@trentu.ca

Tickets are \$30 including a prize in Elwood's name.

Returning to School: A Mature Student Perspective

BY FRANK FLYNN '04

The past academic year was an exciting and challenging one for me as I returned to university life after an 18-year absence. I had attended St. Francis Xavier University in 1986 for a single year, then returned to my hometown of Toronto to study acting. After several years of training and stage acting, I decided I liked acting but didn't love it. And you need to love it, if you're going to do it on a full-time basis. Not discouraged, I began studying playwriting at Ryerson University and that marked the beginning of a long involvement with theatre.

Between 1992 and 2005, I established a career in the federal civil service, ran a playwrights' co-op, had productions of my plays in five Canadian cities, became a member of the Playwrights Guild of Canada and lectured on the subject of playwriting and the creative process at the elementary, secondary and post-secondary levels. When I began lecturing to university students on my own work as a playwright, I began to realize that if I was going to continue on this path, obtaining a degree of my own would be valuable. That's when I decided to enrol at Trent University. My preliminary enquiries pointed me in the direction of Julian Blackburn College, the place for part-time students at Trent.

I must admit, returning to school after such a long absence was daunting. Could I do all the work? Could I keep pace with much younger students? Could I still write an essay? All of these questions ran through my mind. As I eased into student life again, the anxiousness and trepidation dissipated. After the first few classes, I found myself chomping at the bit, waiting for the days I

I relished the opportunity to share with my fellow students some of my experiences in both the professional and creative fields.

had lectures or tutorials. I was loving it. Certainly, there were awkward moments but for the most part, JBC proved to be a great fit for me. There was the first tutorial where some students greeted me with deep apologies for being late. Hmmm, thought I, do I tell them I'm not the professor? And there were certainly times when my life experience brought a different perspective to tutorial discussions. I really began to value being able to shed a different kind of light on the learning we were doing. For the most part, the other students paid me a kind of respect I had not expected. Their acknowledgement of my years of living came through in funny and interesting ways. It was really gratifying to have students—with whom I was a co-participant in the learning process—ask me questions and seek guidance about their own futures. I relished the opportunity to share with my fellow students some of my experiences in both the professional and creative fields.

Despite enjoying the wonderful collegiality of being back in school, there were definitely times when I realized just how different my academic experience was from that of most of the other students. The first distinction I noticed was that I wasn't particularly stressed about my academic performance. I mean, I wanted to do well but having a career, a home, a wife, children ... a life, really, kind of put the whole thing in perspective for me. It was interesting to see how seriously and how earnestly my fellow stu-

dents took the whole experience. They were experiencing a kind of pressure I barely remembered from my initial days of university in the mid-1980s. Not having that kind of pressure enabled me to really enjoy going to classes solely for the love of learning. I enjoyed every single book I read this year and would have read them whether they were on a curriculum or not. The opportunity to learn course material was a kind of intellectual catnip for me.

Aside from having a different kind of academic experience from younger students, I discovered great cultural shifts from my first go-round with university. Eighteen years is a long time, and things change. I was quite surprised to discover that many of the students had decidedly mercenary ideas about the purpose of a university degree. For many of them, obtaining a university degree was not so much an exercise in higher learning, as an investment purchase for future job prospects. Although I was dismayed by the pervasiveness of such sentiments, after thinking about it, I began to realize that my own initial arrival at university wasn't imbued with ideas about higher learning that were any nobler. I went because that's what all my friends were doing and it seemed like it might be a good party. I can honestly say, this time around, I think I'm at university for the right reasons: at a place like Trent, you're guaranteed to meet interesting people. As a JBC student, I've met plenty! **T**

Ottawa Chapter Talks Diplomacy

BY EMILY ADDISON '97

On September 22, 2005, the Ottawa Chapter of the Trent Alumni Association hosted the final evening of a very successful speaker series featuring various Trent graduates and professors. At Patty Boland's Irish Pub in the Byward Market attendees learned about life working in the foreign service, thanks to a talk provided by Trent graduate **Jennifer Rosebrugh '74**.



Jennifer Rosebrugh '74.

Jennifer spoke of her experiences representing Canada in regions such as Russia and sub-Saharan Africa, highlighting many of the lessons learned as well as how her Trent experiences informed her work. Of her posting at the Canadian Mission of the World Trade Organization, Jennifer made connections between her experience with Trent's tutorial system and organizing informal speaker sessions to educate representatives from African countries on banned products so that they could better position themselves in discussions with other nations.

Jennifer emphasized that her job has taught her that individuals can make a difference in the world, and that we all have the opportunity to affect the lives of others—a thought I hope many of us who are Trent alumni share! For more information on future Trent alumni events in the National Capital Region, please contact Holly Stardom at stardomh@ainc-inac.gc.ca. 

Do you miss taking courses at Trent?



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TRENT 
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CONTINUING EDUCATION

Clockwise: Brandon Smith '04, Susan Joy Scoffin '88, Keneisha Gardiner '03, Laura Perry '05, Matt Bremner '03



Student Profiles

BY JOHN MULLIN '03

"People at Trent want to see you succeed!" LEC student **Brandon Smith '04** cannot hide the enthusiasm in his voice as he describes his exploits at Trent. As the senior senator for Lady Eaton, he sits on several university-wide committees, is a don at LEC and is studying history and English along with participating in the concurrent education program.

"None of my friends believe all the things they hear about Trent until they come and see it for themselves." In fact, that is how Brandon decided upon Trent—he came for a campus tour and "fell in love" with the scenery and the atmosphere.

Brandon, a 19-year-old from Welland, told me that "I only applied to Trent as my third choice, but I am so glad I ended up here. I love running into people I know every time I cross the bridge."

He counts the small class sizes and accessible professors as the impetus for his success, both academically and otherwise. "Professors really wanted to get to know me, which took me by surprise," he says. "I was really glad that all the things I had always heard about Trent were true."

"You come to university to develop as a person." That is what **Keneisha Gardiner '03**, a biology and chemistry student

at Otonabee College, has to say about why she came to university in the first place.

And Keneisha knows the value of going to university, considering she came all the way from the Bahamas to be at Trent. Being an international student might seem like a pretty big obstacle when it comes to making a difference in your school community, but not for Keneisha. In the fall, she became the first-ever international student to be elected as president of the Trent Central Student Association.

"I only got involved out of a desire to have the chance to choose the right thing", she said. "And I want to see the right thing done because I love people."

Keneisha has a unique view of Trent – she came here without ever having seen the campus. What, then, is the international reputation of Trent? "I heard about Trent through things like the *Maclean's* magazine's university rankings. Trent's reputation has really changed; there is much more of a focus on science now", said Keneisha. "But I am very happy with the education I have received. I have no doubt it is top-notch."

Is there anything thus far about her Canadian experience that she has found difficult? "Well ... how do you people get through the cold?" she said with a laugh.



"Everyone is just so nice here!" That is the assessment of **Laura Perry '05**, a biology and anthropology major from Lady Eaton. "I love the beautiful campus, too."

Laura recently transferred to Trent University from the University of Guelph, looking for a smaller environment and more approachable professors. And she has found just that.

"It is remarkable to me how accessible the professors are," Laura said. She once found it hard to believe that, as the *Maclean's* annual university survey famously pronounced, one could actually call one's professors at home – "until I did!"

Like Keneisha, Laura has been involved in many aspects of stu-



dent life. She has two jobs, one at the library and another downtown, at Sadleir House. She is involved with *Absynthe*, the alternative student newspaper. She also volunteers with the Audio Library, recording books for the hearing impaired.

"There was just something about the environment at Trent that made volunteering and working so easy", she said. "People are more laid-back, and things come more naturally to me."

Laura also commented that many preconceived notions she had about the university were mis-

guided. "I was worried about the academics, and things like that. But now that I am here, I am very impressed. It is such a positive place to be."

"People who come to Trent are proud of who they are", said **Matt Bremner '03**, a third-year history and english major from Champlain College. "And the students who come here really love their school." Matt is not only a student, he's an integral member of the varsity curling team, which takes up a minimum of 18 hours a week. "Playing a sport really takes up your time, but it also makes your university experience that much better", he remarked. Along with enhancing his experience, Matt and the curling team have met with great success, finishing third among all Ontario universities last year. "It is even more impressive when you consider how many fewer students we have to form a team out of."

Matt came to Trent, as most do, primarily for its small class sizes and focus on academics. But "I was really surprised to find that when I came here, I began to care about things I had not noticed as much before. The environment, politics, music ... they were all under my radar." But, said Matt, he is now more acutely aware of these areas of life, both in academic and social terms.

Susan Joy Scoffin '88, from Julian Blackburn College, is one of the most unique students you will ever meet. Not only does she have degrees in sociology and education from Trent, but she is still a student!

Now doing a fourth-year honours thesis, Susan is working to develop strategies for early childhood learning, especially in the area of literacy. "I don't want my work to just sit on a shelf, though. I want to be someone who makes a difference."

Susan has the unique experience of having been a student here at Trent "back when you could actually find a parking spot!" She is not only doing a thesis, but also volunteers with the Peer Mentoring Program and helps students who are having trouble.

"I believe in lifelong learning. I also believe that a good professor should create a shift in how you understand the world." Susan remarked that she has had that experience with "at least three Trent professors."

An expert in early childhood education, Susan knows what works in terms of learning. She told me that there is a distinct effect on learning when class sizes "get too big." However, the small tutorial groups at Trent lead to a better chance of learning, coupled with a high level of interpersonal interaction with professors. **T**

he was the best teacher I ever had. In the 27 years since I left Trent, we were sometimes in touch, most recently in 2002 when he was retiring and in November of 2004 when, following the U.S election, I found an e-mail address for him on the Internet and took a shot. A quick response soon followed, he was glad to hear from me, happily enjoying life in Maine and protesting loudly that the Republicans had won yet again. He wasn't going to play the devil's advocate in that case!

The news of August 2005 closed yet another door on my Trent life, but the memories remain forever engrained in my heart. Farewell Professor Syrett, you will be greatly missed.

Lucile McGregor '74

John Syrett introduced me and hundreds of others to the field of North American women's history, when there was no one in the department with that specialization. At the time, it never occurred to me that it was strange that a man should be offering the course or that it was considered by many a marginal subject. After more than twenty years of studying and teaching in the field myself, that original experience continues to be a considerable gift.

All of Professor Syrett's students remember him as extraordinarily generous with his time. For example, during his seminar on Vietnam, he even organized movie evenings in the PRC Senior Common Room.

At least once I benefited personally from his generosity. I had taken a year off between third and fourth year and somehow missed applying for admission to the honours history program. I was back in Peterborough, my phone not yet hooked up, and painting a Water Street apartment in early September when John Syrett arrived at the door to alert me to my bureaucratic incompetence. He'd heard I was back in

town, realized I was not properly enrolled and as Department Chair took it upon himself to track me down. He somehow found my apartment, and sorted things out before I encountered a registration crisis. I can now barely imagine that a faculty member (let alone a Department Chair) in the general chaos of early September would make such a magnanimous effort. For me, he remains the model of bureaucratic compassion.

Suzanne Morton '80

I was deeply saddened to hear of the tragic death of John Syrett. For me, the lasting impact of being in his seminar was that I learned as much about myself as I did about the subject he taught.

John Syrett challenged us to explore our intellectual limitations, but also to express, defend and question our own values and assumptions – to develop into genuinely critical thinkers.

That said, he went about his craft in a singularly engaging way. His professorly appearance, I always thought, belied his colour and charisma. I fondly recall his self-deprecating humour and a matchless ability to surprise. He told us once how his mother had attempted to warn the soon-to-be Mrs. Syrett, before their wedding, that her son possessed the 'morals of an alley cat.' He feigned astonishment at the suggestion some academics might be out-of-touch, assuring us that he himself was not – because he did, occasionally, buy his own groceries. He solidified my endless fascination when he managed to slip the term 'cunnilingus' into a seminar on the history of the war in Vietnam (most amazing because it was perfectly appropriate in the context of the discussion – if no less startling!)

Compassionate, truly humble, forthright and admirably unapologetic, John Syrett was an extraordinary character – a gentleman of searing intellect and generous spirit. He has been, and will remain for me a rare and unflinching

model of manhood in what I continue to find a relentlessly perplexing modern world.

Joshua Rice '98

As is usual with a change of College head, we didn't quite know what to expect when Professor John Syrett came to Julian Blackburn College to be our new Associate Dean in the summer of 1994. We immediately learned that he was disarmingly honest and direct ("I haven't got a clue what I'm doing, you'll have to show me everything"). It was also quickly apparent that he was a high energy kind of guy. No matter the weather, he'd grab his apple and zip out the door at lunch time, going for a brisk constitutional to "clear his head". It came to be a joke with us that John never went anywhere slowly but would fly down the hall to the Registrar's Office or race off to meet with the Dean. Think "Roadrunner". Beep beep whoosh. That was John.

It also didn't take us long to figure out that our new Associate Dean had a deep streak of the madcap in him and a crackling good sense of humour. I can't hear the word "goofy" without thinking of John, not only because he could be wonderfully goofy but because it was one of his words ("that's really goofy"), said with that slightly gravelly, American East Coast accent.

Once classes began, another dimension of the man was revealed: he was a passionate teacher. His fourth year course on the Vietnam War was held in the JBC meeting room, a windowless little space which could only comfortably seat 10 but was stuffed to the rafters with about 14. Discovering that the room could get quite fetid during a two-hour class, John attempted to burn incense, succeeding only in kippering the entire class and overpowering the office with strawberry sandalwood or some such. Gales of laughter would roar out

of the closed door for two hours. Afterwards his students would linger to talk, following him down the hall into his office. They would come outside class time to talk with him as well, as will happen with those teachers whose students adore them.

As a co-worker, he was delightfully self-deprecating, modest and unpretentious. There were no airs about John. He was a quixotic mix of pepperiness and sensitivity. He didn't suffer fools gladly, yet could be endlessly patient if he saw someone really trying hard – staff or student. He would be the first to admit to a mistake and he was an excellent listener. One of the things I treasured most about him was his down East mannerliness, with an almost courtly, old-fashioned way about him, an inherent respectfulness.

When one of my lads was doing an essay in grade 11 on the Vietnam War, John came out to our home, sat in our kitchen and talked with passion about Vietnam, easily for a couple of hours. My son sat spellbound, almost forgetting to take notes. This was done on his own time, of his own volition (I had merely asked if he had any information on the subject which might help the essay take place) and he would accept nothing for his generosity in return. John wasn't an academic who hoarded his knowledge but shared it openly and gladly with any who asked.

When John visited the University last year, he went down to our satellite program in Oshawa as a guest speaker. I reminded the current Associate Dean, Murray Genoe, that John and I had worked together in laying the groundwork for the full-time studies program there when John was the Associate Dean. Murray made mention of this fact when he introduced John before his speech and it seemed to delight John to be remembered in this context, as something of the originator of full-time studies in Oshawa. We couldn't know that

just a few months later this would become such a poignant memory for us at J.B.C.

It's funny how you can work with someone for only a couple of years and yet their passing can leave such a hole. I feel this way about John. His untimely death has left a hole in the fabric of things. He had such energy and vigor, such a profound sense of decency and of fair play. He was an activist in the best sense of the word. It was devastating to hear of his death. My heart goes out to his wife, Katie, and his two sons Tim and Nick.

Tui Menzies '69

Professor John Syrett was the Associate Dean of Julian Blackburn College from 1 July 1994 to the summer of 1996, when he was seconded to be Acting Dean.

I had no idea what to expect when I signed up for Professor Syrett's class on America and the Vietnam War. Friends who'd taken classes from him in years previous told me he was "scary and brilliant" and that I'd better do my readings. I started out terrified, but I didn't expect that I'd be utterly entranced by him in only a few weeks. I didn't expect to laugh as much as I did.

I didn't expect Professor Syrett to call us "crazy peaceniks" when

John Syrett continued on page 21

The Symons Award for Excellence in Teaching



Call for Nominations

Students, faculty, alumni and staff are invited to submit nominations for the **Symons Award for Excellence in Teaching** to the Instructional Development Centre (Champlain College 113).

Nomination forms are available at all college, department, and program offices, as well at Bata Library and the TCSA office.

Nominations may also be made online at www.trentu.ca/idc/symonsnomination.html

DEADLINE: Friday, February 17, 2006

The Symons Award for Excellence in Teaching is named for Professor T.H.B. Symons, the Founding President of Trent University, and is made available through the generous support of Professor and Mrs. Symons. The Award is presented each year to a member of the Trent faculty or staff (full-time or part-time) in recognition of outstanding teaching in the broadest sense and, in the words of Professor Symons, "exemplary concern for students." The Award is made each year at the Spring Convocation. A faculty or staff member may receive the Award once during his or her career.

An Open Letter to Alumni with an interest in The Commoner

At the Nov. 19, 2005, Alumni Council meeting, the Council reviewed a Facility Audit Report of the Commoner Building, prepared in June 2005.

Many alumni will recall the Commoner's tenure as a popular and distinctive student pub, housed in an old brick building on the East Bank of the canal, close to the Peterborough Rowing Club.

The Commoner began as a student meeting place and pub in 1969, became a welcoming stop on the folk music circuit in the early 1970s, and continued to operate until February 1999.

At that time, a serious operating deficit led to the Commoner's clos-

ing. Later, the university reviewed its overall property liability. The Commoner fared poorly in this review, and the building was converted to use as a storage facility.

In August 2004, the "Peterborough Flood" badly damaged The Commoner. The basement areas were flooded and the old roof experienced extensive leakage—which in turn led to the collapse, in places, of the plaster ceilings and walls. The Audit report included many photographs of the extensive damage throughout the building.

The cost of repairs and upgrades to make the Commoner habitable for any occupancy, and to meet

municipal or provincial standards, is projected at \$500,000. The breakdown includes site remedial work (\$30,000); septic upgrades (\$10,000); building envelope repairs (\$150,000-200,000); building interior finish (\$70,000); access upgrades (\$40,000); mechanical and electrical repairs (\$77,500); and fees, permits, and taxes (\$94,500).

However, the Audit report concluded that the university would be unwise to fund the Commoner's renovation to use as a restaurant or pub facility. The building shell is over 100 years old and would require significant future care. The report further noted that the unheated building is also unsuitable for use as a storage facility.

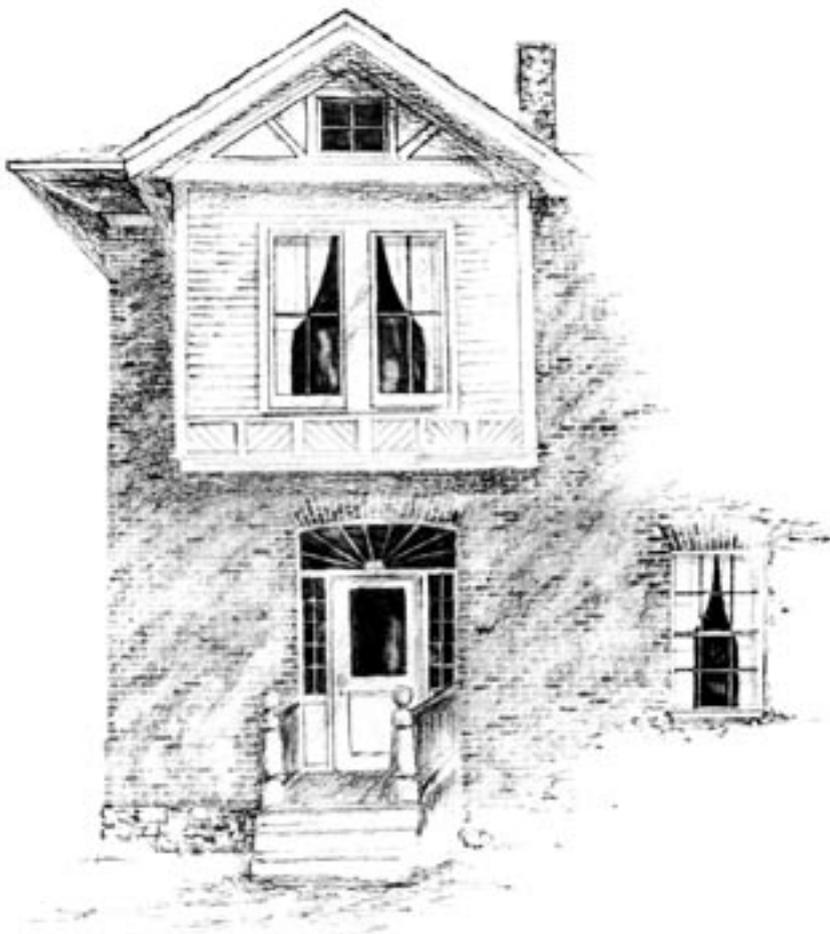
The university will be demolishing the building later on in 2006. The Alumni Association has offered to recover and care for any artefacts that are still salvageable until a permanent home in a "New Commoner" can be identified. One potential location is a future food and beverage facility in an expanded Athletics Complex, where, we are told, the history and spirit of the Commoner would be celebrated with pride.

The Alumni Association is willing to plan and host a Commoner Reunion. The building is not habitable (nor would we be able to tour it); however, we could stage a gathering in a tent setting on the grounds adjacent to the building.

We are very interested to know if alumni with affection for the Commoner would welcome such a reunion and farewell opportunity. Let us know your support for a Commoner Reunion at alumni@trentu.ca.

*Matt Griem '97, Alumni Council President
mattgriem@trentu.ca*

*Graeme Ross '86, Alumni Rep. to the
Board of Governors and Co-Manager of The
Commoner '88-'89 graeme.ross@rbc.com*



The Commoner 11/2007 2nd ed

LOUISE 11/2007

we took the side of the debate that was against American military action.

I didn't expect to hear him quoting couplets from Mao's Little Red Book. (Or was he making them up?)

I didn't expect to hear him defend America's actions by saying that of course they were going to

win, "because everyone knows that God wears star-spangled under-pants!"

I didn't expect that John—as my friends and I called him affectionately, when not in his company—would teach me so much, and come to mean so much to me in only one year.

He was one of those teachers

that I wanted to contact years later to tell him about the difference he made in my life, and how much I enjoyed learning from him.

I'm sure I'm not the only student of his who felt that way—and also not the only one who missed the chance to do so.

Stephanie Abba '94 



Come Celebrate 30th Annual Team Trend Alumni Hockey Weekend March 31-April 1, 2006

TEAM TREND ALUMNI will be rejoicing at the 30th annual hockey weekend (of which hockey is but a small part) March 31–April 1 in Peterborough. As is our tradition, the weekend combines spirited recreation with expert partying. "Honouring Our Own" will toast old friends from the west. Be there and help us rejuvenate. Please pass this on to others.

Friday, March 31 8 – 9 Kinsmen Arena, Alumni Hockey Warm-Up Game
9 – ? The Trend, Party Time

Saturday, April 1 1 – 2 Memorial Centre, Alumni Challenge Match
2 – 3 Memorial Centre, Family Skate
6:30 – 7:15 Traill College, Reception
7 :15 – Traill College, Dinner

ALL RESERVATIONS ON-LINE ONLY at trentu.ca/alumni/trend.html

Hotel: A block of rooms is being held at the Holiday Inn, until February 28. This is a 2-night rental at \$120/night (Cityview) and \$140/night (Riverview). Please make your own arrangements (1-866-258-5181 or 705-743-1144) and make sure that you mention Team Trend in order to secure the group rate.

Trent's School of Education and Professional Learning: Making a Real Difference Through Literacy

BY EMILY ADDISON '97

For many of us, reading an article like this is easy, but for some reading articles, newspapers and other forms of printed material is a daily challenge. Weak literacy skills not only have an impact on an individual's ability to read text but can also affect personal identity and confidence, the ability to succeed in employment situations and even the ability to socialize. For children who struggle early on in the development of literacy skills, these difficulties often persist throughout their school years, affecting their ability to learn and to succeed socially in a school environment.

Trent University's School of Education and Professional Learning is making a difference. With a major new focus on literacy in its consecutive Bachelor of Education program and the only program of its kind across Canada, it is already gaining recognition from the school level right to international circles and was featured at the Canadian National Literacy Forum in November 2005.

When I sat down with **Dr. Deborah Berrill '69**, director of the School of Education and Professional Learning, to talk about the School of Education's literacy initiatives, I already knew a fair bit about the program; however, the more I learn, the more I am amazed by the differences this program is making in the lives of individual students, new teachers and local schools.

What the Program Looks Like

As part of the consecutive Bachelor of Education program at Trent, both primary/junior (kindergarten to grade six) and

intermediate/senior (grades seven to twelve) teacher candidates take a course on supporting literacy and students with special needs, and complete a practicum placement focused on literacy. This means, for example, that if a teacher candidate is planning to teach secondary school biology, he/she not only takes courses on how to teach that subject and how to manage a classroom effectively, etc., but also learns how to support the kinds of reading and writing needed to learn science.

Reading Needs

In the supporting literacy course, teacher candidates learn how to diagnose reading needs, the kinds of reading interventions that are appropriate for a particular student and how to plan instruction that works for an individual student's learning-style preferences. Literacy is not seen as linked solely to reading fiction, but rather as something that also includes reading non-fiction, tables, illustrations, textbooks, magazines and newspapers.

Two weeks into their B.Ed. year, teacher candidates begin learning firsthand how these reading challenges play out for students when they start their supporting literacy school placement. Each teacher candidate tutors two students twice a week for 45 minutes during the first four months of school. Working with students in grades 2-3 or 8-10, teacher candidates apply what they learn in their courses to their placement. They bring the challenges that they face in the tutoring back to Trent, where they talk with their fellow undergraduates about how to address students' needs through professional

dialogue unique to this Trent context.

In describing what happens during a tutoring session, Dr. Berrill states: "In the tutoring program, we are trying to build habits of mind. Therefore, regardless of whether the student is seven years old or 15, we work on habits such as having the student look at text before starting to read, activating vocabulary so that as the student reads, they are already looking for certain kinds of words. We then try to develop good habits so that while the students are reading, they are making sure that they understand what they read. Struggling readers read word for word and aren't able to make bigger meaning out of the text. Meaning-making is at the heart of all reading and the habits being developed support meaning-making before, during and after reading."

Last fall brought an exciting new component to the supporting literacy program. In August 2005, the School of Education and Professional Learning received a one-year grant of \$405,000 from the Ministry of Education and the Council of Ontario Directors of Education to support future developments of the program linked to technology. Most of the funding has been allocated for the purchase of approximately 130 laptops for partner elementary schools and 30 laptops for the School of Education and Professional Learning. These machines will enable tutors and students to work with Kidspiration, a graphic organizer program that lets the children go back and forth between brainstorming ideas and manipu-

Literacy continued on page 23

“In the tutoring program, we are trying to build habits of mind.”

lating those ideas into prose format. The grant also enables faculty to conduct research on the impact of using this type of computer-assisted instruction on literacy development.

Program Successes!

The supporting literacy program boasts many successes, the first of which is the impact on the students being tutored. Approximately 800 students in schools around Peterborough, Lindsay and the Lakeshore area receive literacy support from over 400 teacher candidates on an annual basis. They are students who Dr. Berrill says “... may be doing just well enough to not qualify for ministry-supported initiatives but not doing well enough to succeed at grade level.” In addition, teacher candidates not only support the students in developing their literacy skills but also the development of positive self-esteem. Dr. Berrill points out that the students in this program are usually those rarely chosen for anything, but with this program

“they have an individual who is giving time to them twice a week ... just to them ... The tutors are older people who constantly tell the students that they are valued, that they have intelligence and that they can succeed.”

Dr. Berrill is quick to acknowledge the importance of partnerships with local schools and district school boards in making the supporting literacy program possible. “From the beginning, this program has been seen as a win-win situation for the district school boards and their schools, as well as for the Trent University School of Education.” Additional spinoffs at the school level have occurred as new literacy knowledge and resources become available at the school level. There have also been shifts in school culture, especially at secondary schools where volunteers are rare. The literacy program and the contributions of the teacher candidates are greatly valued.

For the faculty working with teacher candidates, it is exciting to see how the literacy program sup-

ports the training of future teachers. Through this program, teacher candidates are exposed to special needs and literacy knowledge and experiences that simply don't happen in most other teacher education programs. Gaining knowledge and skills can lead to a shift in a teacher candidate's attitude, one which really delights Dr. Berrill. “Our own research shows that as well as developing literacy intervention skills, our teacher candidates come to more deeply understand students who are not achieving at grade level. They come to realize that these students don't come to school wanting to fail; that they don't come to school with belligerent or aggressive attitudes but that they are looking for somebody who has empathy and who knows how to teach them.” It is these kinds of initiatives that interest me, on so many levels, when I hear of individuals and groups making a difference at the School of Education and Professional Learning and at Trent University. [T](#)

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Sunshine Sketches

1966

David Barron and Tandy Muir-Warden are second-time grandparents. Danika Elizabeth Barron was born to Jonathan & Kristina Barron on June 27, 2005 in Ottawa.

1981

Andrew Petriw has had a busy year! He accepted a new position as a surveillance technician at Casino Niagara, purchased a new home and sent his daughter (photo 1) off to school. "Since I never got drafted by the NHL, I have joined the Oldtimer's team.

1983

Eileen Haller and her husband, Colin McGillicuddy are thrilled to announce the birth of their son, Conor Francis (photo 2), born on June 25, 2005—a brother for Erin.

Laura Mattice married Mark Newton (photo 3) on September 25, 2004. It was a glorious sunny, outdoor ceremony. Trent Alumni attending included **George Davie, Dennis Parker, John Mille, Wendy Mills** and **Julie Cayley**. Laura is living outside Midland, Ontario and is enjoying her work as an Employment Counsellor at the Midland YMCA. Amy's long-lost Rent friends are welcome to get in touch at marklaura@sympatico.ca.

1986

After completing her PhD at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of

Toronto, **Camille Rutherford** was appointed project director for the Distributed Leadership Studies at Northwestern University.

Eric Smigielski and wife Tina, are thrilled to announce the birth of their first child, Karli Christine (photo 4) on April 20, 2005. Eric lives in Courtice, Ontario, and would love to hear from old friends at tinaeric1996@hotmail.com.

1988

Kelly (McBane) Bertin and her husband Tom are thrilled to announce the safe arrival of Abigail Elizabeth Mae (Abby, photo 5)—a sister for three-year old Noah.

Kevin Whetter received tenure in the Department of English at Acadia where he teaches courses on heroism and Tolkien. Kevin and his wife Ann have a 15-month-old daughter with the appropriately mediaeval name of Eleanor.

1990

Eric Wuest finished his first novel, about an ambitious ape-language research project, and gave a copy to famous primatologist Jane Goodall when she recently visited Magdeburg. Eric finally gathered the courage to propose to Antje, his partner of six years in a gondola in Venice on her birthday. They were married in Wernigerode Castle in Germany in July (photo 6) and will honeymoon in Switzerland this winter. Eric can be reached by e-mail at: ericwuest1@aol.com.

1991

Jeanne Buckley graduated in June 2005 from the University of Alberta with a M.Ed. degree, focusing on

Teacher-Librarianship. Jeanne presented a paper at the International Association of School Librarianship conference in Hong Kong in July. Her mother, **Norah (Shannon) Buckley '65** joined her for a vacation in Beijing (photo 7).

1992

Tara Gudgeon and Rob Pade are excited to announce the birth of their first child Hunter Kenneth Gudgeon Pade (photo 8), born September 25, 2005 in Hamilton. Welcoming Hunter into the world are first time grandparents Bill '65 and Pam Gudgeon. Save a room at Champlain for Hunter in 2023!

1993

Miles Edwin Foote was thrilled to join his parents Matthew and **Janice (Skalicky) Foote** on February 21, 2005 (photo 9). After a busy summer of camping and picnics, this little man couldn't wait to see the leaves turn colour. We are having a blast!

1994

Cheryl Murray and **Jeff Hicks** were married on July 23rd, 2005 in Hamilton (photo 10). Guests included **Chad Sewter '96, Christina Westcott '95, Gretchen Rosenberger '95,** and **Jenna MacIntosh '03**. Cheryl and Jeff live in Thompson Manitoba, where Jeff works in Air Traffic Services and Cheryl teaches elementary school.

1995

Ron and Sarah (Keys) Wells are thrilled to announce the birth of their daughter, Evelyn Sarah (photo 11), on March 8, 2005. The happy family would love to hear from friends at sarahdwells@yahoo.ca



The Perambulations of Uncle Paul

BY PAUL DELANEY '64

I was back at Trent for a few weeks last fall as one of the alumni-in-residence and took advantage of the good weather and the spectacular natural surroundings to do as much walking as possible—with camera in hand. Having been asked by the editorial team of *Trent* magazine to do a short story with photos of new developments on both sides of the Otonabee, I set out on my quest. I should also mention, very briefly, that P.S.B. Wilson and Bill Byrick (the only athletic directors Trent has ever had) provided the inspiration for me to do it on foot. I have added a couple of photos of things I found during my wanderings that were not “new developments,” and I should also add that “Uncle Paul” is what many of the international students (and my niece, Alison, who is at OC) call me.

For many, the most exciting new developments at Trent have to do with athletics. There is a magnificent new multi-purpose field made with artificial turf, already completed and in use both day and

Bill Byrick and his team deserve much credit for bringing this dream to reality ahead of time

night. Yes, there is new lighting, too ... and a very handsome fence, gateway and bleachers.

One need not look far to find survivors of the old field who tell stories of visiting teams refusing to play, patches of mud appearing especially when it rained or late in the fall, and scraped limbs caused by stones protruding through the worn and bumpy surface. Like many of us, it was good in its day, but had become worn out!

Apart from the faint scent of rubber tires, one cannot help but be impressed by the new field. The ribbon-cutting was on October 19, 2005, a brief but impressive ceremony open to all and attended by an enthusiastic assemblage of student athletes and student politicians, senior administration, faculty and staff. After the speeches were made and the whole crowd ran, walked, jogged or wheezed around the track, everyone was invited back to the Athletic Complex for cake and other refreshments.

Incidentally, this scribe witnessed the fact that Tony Storey himself was the last person to run around the track before the ribbon was officially cut. It is also true that Tony was one of the first Trent alumni to make use of the new Health in Motion Physiotherapy and Sports Health Clinic that has shared space in the P.S.B. Wilson Athletic Complex since early September.

Bill Byrick and his team deserve much credit for bringing this dream to reality ahead of time—a rarity in the history of this great university! One of the first groups

to make use of the new field and track was the Trent International Student Association (TISA) when the first-ever Tisalympics were held on Thanksgiving weekend. P.S.B. Wilson, a legend in his own lifetime, gave an inspiring “Charge to the Athletes” at the opening ceremony. This new facility, paid for in large part by current undergraduates through a student levy, is being used by virtually everyone, including alumni.

The east bank of the Symons campus is also a place where exciting things are happening. Hidden away (but surprisingly accessible) between the Rowing Club and Peter Gzowski College and surrounded by trees, two new natural-turf fields and a softball diamond are already being constructed.

Up behind Otonabee College, there’s a great deal of noise and dust. Construction of the DNA Cluster complex is going ahead at seemingly great speed. The old parking lot is gone but a new one has been built at the south end of OC. This reporter tried to get details but had trouble making contact with those in charge. (For those who are more curious than I, the construction command centre appears to be the portable at the north end of the college.)

There are many new and exciting developments at the Symons campus, but sadly there appear to be none at Catherine Parr Traill College. As a Trent alumus for close to 40 years, I must confess that it is at Traill that I feel most at home. It is at Traill that alumni will still find faculty having tea in the Senior Common Room, sitting on chairs that have been there since the days of Principal Marion Fry, and it’s not uncommon to find undergraduates chatting with founding president Tom Symons. The spirit of Trent is alive and well at Traill, but there are no signs of hard hats, bulldozers or blueprints. **T**

STOREYLINE



TONY STOREY '71

Look for Storeyline online at www.trentmagazine.ca. Click on the John Syrett issue bonus material link.

The East Bank



The DNA Cluster Complex under construction east of Otonabee College (OC to the left, Science Complex in centre and CC to the right in the distance).



New alumnus Nimod Narayanan with TIP staffer Kate Eames at TISA-lympics.



And how many campuses have their own heritage power generating station?



Alumna Paula Drew prepares to throw a javelin on the new east bank athletic field (Gzowski in the distance).



In Memoriam

MICHAEL BRACHT

Michael Bracht '90 died in a plane crash in July near Squamish, B.C. Beloved son of Ed and Libby, cherished brother of Lindsay and Andrew. Following a few years of working and living in Toronto, Michael moved to Vancouver where he passionately pursued his dream in life and got a job flying a King Air 200 turbo prop plane with a B.C. company. His dream came crashing down after rescue crews found wreckage of a plane on a B.C. mountainside.



JANINE LOUISE (WILLIAMS) KILBURN

Janine Louise (Williams) Kilburn '84 died suddenly on October 12, 2005 at the age of 40 years- loving wife of Stephen Kilburn. Janine is lovingly remembered by her mother Carol Williams and her husband Bert M'Queen of Etobicoke and survived by her father Gary and his wife Elizabeth Williams of Kingston. Revered by her sister Julie Williams and her husband John Flemming and their children Rachel and William all of Guelph, and her brother James Williams and his family of Vancouver. Sadly missed by her stepsisters Kerri M'Queen and her husband Geoff Turner and their children Jessica and Mitchell all of Newmarket and Kelly Keith and her husband James and their son Matthew all of Brampton. Daughter-in-law of Myrla Kilburn and Paul Kilburn both of Toronto. Always missed by her aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews, in-laws, colleagues and friends. Janine was devoted to family and an ever-growing circle

of friends because she knew that when you gave love it returned to you tenfold. Professionally, she dedicated herself to preserving and strengthening rural communities. As a volunteer, she was passionately involved in public service projects through membership in the Shelburne Rotary Club. Through her compassion, empathy and unwavering pursuit of joy she challenged us all to be our best selves.



CYNTHIA THOMSON

Cynthia Thomson '94 was surrounded by family and friends when she passed away on November 25, 2005, at Lakeridge Health in Oshawa, from pancreatitis. She is survived by her loving parents, Pat and Garry and her sister, Adrienne. Cynthia completed her Undergraduate Degree, in Geography, at Trent University and continued her studies at Sir Sandford Fleming College where she obtained her Geographical Information Systems (GIS) certification. There was a 'Celebration of Life' held on January 14, 2006 where her family, fellow Trent grads and friends gathered to commemorate Cynthia's life. She will be dearly missed by all but will live in our hearts forever.

EDWARD (TED) WILLIAM HADLEY TREMAIN

Trent University students, faculty and staff were saddened to learn of the death of Edward (Ted) William Hadley Tremain, honorary member of the University's Board of Governors, on December 24, 2005. Mr. Tremain served two terms as a member of Trent University's Board of Governors, retiring in June 2005; he was a valued member of the Board's Investment and Audit Committee, and was appointed an honorary Board member on December 2,

2005, in recognition of his contributions and continuing commitment to Trent.

As co-chair of the Campaign Planning Committee and deputy chair of the *Beyond Our Walls* Campaign from 1996-2001, Mr. Tremain was integral to the leadership of the most successful capital campaign in the University's history. A campaign total of \$17.2 million was announced on September 28, 2001. Trent president Bonnie Patterson commented on Mr. Tremain's considerable contributions to the University. "In every way, Ted was truly a friend of the University," said President Patterson. "He led by example as a highly active Board member, a leader in fundraising, and a consistent supporter of Trent's unique mission. The *Beyond Our Walls* Campaign involved 150 volunteers and resulted in a variety of benefits throughout the Trent community including 97 new scholarships and bursaries, the installation of high speed Internet access to the University, new classrooms and enhanced facilities. The consummate gentleman, Ted always managed to combine effectiveness with congeniality. Without a doubt, his name and legacy will be warmly remembered at Trent University."

A chartered accountant raised in Montreal, Mr. Tremain graduated from RMC and worked in Toronto since 1971. Following a career as a senior executive with Consumers Gas and Hiram Walker Resources, he founded his own consulting firm providing consulting services to small, family-owned companies. Mr. Tremain was actively involved in Ontario's volunteer sector having served as Chair of the Clarke Institute of Psychiatry and Chair of Bishop Strachan School, and as a member of the boards of a number of other non-profit organizations. Mr. Tremain is survived by his wife Diana (Dunbar), his two children Julia and Anthony and grandchildren Clare and Graeme Tremain, all of Toronto.

SCOTT YOUNG

Acclaimed journalist and author **Scott Young** died on Sunday June 12, 2005 at his home in Kingston, Ontario. He was 87 years old. Scott Young was born in 1918 in Cypress River, Manitoba. He started his writing career at age 18 for the Winnipeg Free Press in 1936. He was soon writing sports columns in Winnipeg, and later Toronto, and in 1949 published the first of 45 books. He wrote a number of autobiographical books such as *Neil and Me*—a book about his son Neil Young—and *A Writer's Life*. Young produced thousands of articles for *The Globe and Mail*, *The Telegram*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Maclean's* and other magazines during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. Young served in the Royal Canadian Navy during World War II (1944-1945). He received numerous awards and a Doctorate of Letters, Honoris Causa, from Trent University on October 20, 1990. Many of Mr. Young's papers are held in trust by Trent University's Archives. The citation for his honorary degree paid tribute to Mr. Young's accomplishments as an author and the diversity of his body of work. In the citation, Prof. Michael Peterman emphasized how "Scott Young has distinguished himself by his instinct for a story, his research, his fairness and careful presentation."

Trent is published three times a year in June, September and February, by the Trent University Alumni Association. Unsigned comments reflect the opinion of the editor only.

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PRINTING AND BINDING

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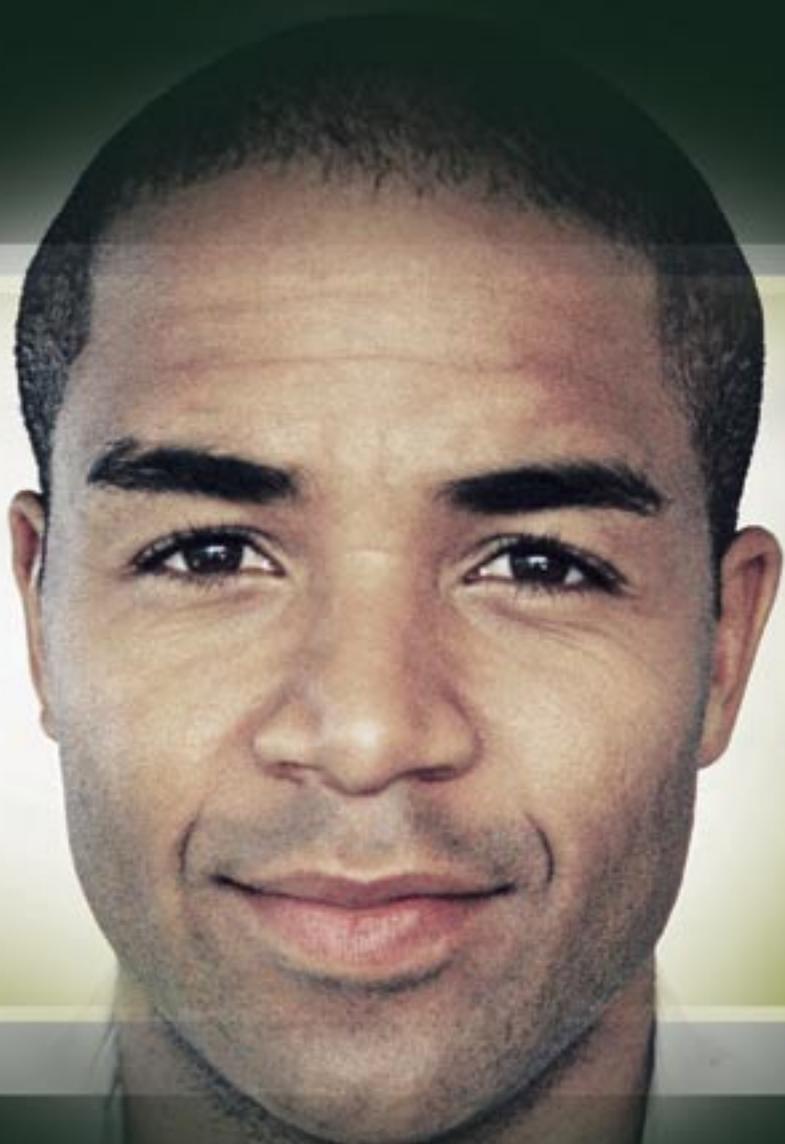


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