

Pomp and... bird calls?

The installation of a new president is always a memorable occasion

Resplendent in his new presidential robes, Dr. Michael W. Higgins solemnly crossed the platform at the front of Siegfried Hall, took his place behind the lectern, adjusted the microphone, and spoke his first words as president of St. Jerome's University: "You can erase the panic from your faces," he told the assembled audience. "I don't intend to dance."

Such a reassurance is not ordinarily required at the beginning of a presidential address, but nothing about the installation of St. Jerome's new president on Sunday, September 26, 1999 was ordinary.

Words of welcome by Chancellor John Sweeney, an opening prayer, and a reading were followed by the performance of a canticle composed by Alfred Kunz and sung by a small choir. A pair of dancers spread the music around the room, dancing up the centre aisle and onto the platform, in and around the seated dignitaries.

Then followed the official installation ceremony and the robing of the fifth president of St. Jerome's since the school federated with the University of Waterloo—only the second lay president in St. Jerome's history and the first president not to have been taught by members of the Congregation of the Resurrection.

A professor of English and religious studies, Higgins was born in Toronto. He received his primary school education at St. Thomas Aquinas School and his secondary school education at Vaughan Road Collegiate Institute. He then studied at St. Augustine's College of Philosophy, University of Ottawa, and completed his bachelor of arts degree in English and philosophy (magna cum laude) at St. Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia in 1970.

He went on to pursue graduate studies at York University, receiving his master's degree in English in 1971 and his doctorate in 1979. In addition, he completed a bachelor of education degree with a theatre arts specialization at the University of Toronto in 1974 and graduate studies in theology at the University of St. Michael's College, Toronto.

Higgins came to St. Jerome's in 1982, and has since held almost every administrative position at the university. He has co-edited and co-authored numerous books with his



Photo: Ron Hewson

colleague Doug Letson, as well as editing and co-editing other books and journals, including *Grail: An Ecumenical Journal* for 12 of its 14 years.

Higgins recently published an award-winning biography, *Heretic Blood: The Spiritual Geography of Thomas Merton*, and a new book, *The Muted Voice: Religion and the Media*, will be published early in the new year. Higgins has an extensive media record as a columnist, commentator, scriptwriter, narrator, researcher, and consultant.

Dr. Kieran Bonner, St. Jerome's new academic dean, presided over the presentation of greetings from across the country, as well as from just across the creek.

Dr. Jim Kalbfleisch, vice-president academic and provost at the University of Waterloo, noted that St. Jerome's was almost 100 years old when it began its association with Waterloo. Founded in 1865 in a log house near St. Agatha by the Reverend Dr. Louis Funcken of the Congregation of the Resurrection, St. Jerome's federated with the University of Waterloo in 1960. "Despite the age difference," noted Kalbfleisch, "ours has been a fruitful and harmonious union."

Dr. Gail Cuthbert Brandt, principal of Renison College, brought greetings from the same side of the creek. "I could not help but notice the particularly auspicious, and obviously intentional choice of dates for this ceremony," she commented, "September 29th being the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels, and September 30th, the festival of St. Jerome. Clearly with two such important patron saints on his side, the new president should be empowered to meet every challenge that comes his way."

The presentation of greetings was followed by a musical interlude by Leonard Enns and the

Da Capo Choir. Among the pieces they performed was a haunting honour song in the tradition of the Mi'kmaq, an Aboriginal Maritime people, complete with bird calls and wolf howls—a marked contrast to the formal, measured words of greeting just offered the new president.

Then Higgins delivered his presidential address, in which he described St. Jerome as "the quintessence of the struggling Catholic intellectual and a worthy patron for our institution of higher learning." St. Jerome, Higgins noted, was also a good model for the president of a Roman Catholic university. "To be president of such an institution is as daunting a challenge these days as removing a thorn from the paw of a lion." ☪

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ST. JEROME'S

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St. Jerome's: Part of a living tradition

by Michael W. Higgins



Photo: Ron Hewson

On September 26, 1999, Michael W. Higgins was installed as president and vice-chancellor of St. Jerome's University. Here are excerpts from his installation address.

You can erase the panic from your faces: I don't intend to dance. Nor, as I survey the rows of academic heads so uniformly arrayed before me, am I inclined to break out in an operatic version of my grandmother's favourite: "O, What a Lovely Bunch of Coconuts." It is important, after all, to have a sense of moment.

Mr. Chancellor, honoured dignitaries—civic, academic, and ecclesiastic colleagues, guests, and family—friends all of St. Jerome's. Permit me a few moments of reflection on the discrete but interconnected topics of St. Jerome and the Catholic university.

First, St. Jerome. By any yardstick, this denizen of the wilds with a stratospheric I.Q. is a phenomenon. Charismatic, intense, fiercely

"We are part of something much bigger than ourselves, defined not by political boundaries or ethnic histories, but by a tradition of centuries of shared conviction, a spiritual and intellectual commonwealth, that has something to offer us all"

resolute, and sublimely intelligent, St. Jerome has his admirers and his detractors. Like any serious scholar. But he was a scholar in the rough, no scriptorium, no manuscript-lined cloister, no eager platoon of monkish secretaries. Jerome was a loner, that is when he was not supported by an entourage of independent-minded women. If he was a misogynist, he was an unusual one.

Although one of the pillars of the early Christian centuries, along with Ambrose, Gregory and

Augustine, Jerome's reputation is essentially associated with the single, though admittedly Promethean, task of translating the scriptures into the language of Empire. Not a figure to trifle with.

Icons, portraits, frescoes, and even tapestries, abound with images of Jerome. Often in a cave, parchment and quill at hand, frequently in a cardinal's vesture—note the flair for anachronism—gaunt, wiry, and decidedly old, Jerome has haunted the Christian imagination for generations.

I recall a course I had on the nineteenth-century luminary John Ruskin in the early 1970s. I was assigned the task of leading a seminar on one of Ruskin's books of art criticism in which he concentrated his commentary on the Venetian Renaissance painter, Carpaccio. As it happens, Carpaccio had painted three pictures featuring St. Jerome for the Scuola Degli Schiavoni: St. Jerome in his Study; St. Jerome and the Lion; The Death of St. Jerome.

I returned to these paintings recently to see what they now say to me, specifically about St. Jerome. In the first painting—St. Jerome in his Study—the mood is contemplative. Carpaccio paints a scene of exquisite order—unlike any professor's study I have occupied—the room is expansive, luminous, uncluttered, and while Jerome sits gazing out a window with something less than mystic rapture he, in turn, is gazed upon by a perfectly poised Maltese puppy. Jerome is a relatively young man in the picture and the room—with both its many inanimate objects and two living subjects—is suffused with serenity and light. It is, as I say, contemplative.

The second painting—St. Jerome and the Lion—features a very old Jerome in a monastery courtyard, bent over, long of white beard, clutching a cane, standing beside a lion—legend has it that Jerome extracted a thorn from its paw and tended its wounds until it healed. The lion, as a consequence, became his inseparable companion. Not unreasonably, however, the other monks are less enthusiastic about the lion's presence, especially around dinnertime. In fact, they are pictured, many of them (clearly there was not yet a vocations crisis) scurrying in many directions as Jerome and the majestic feline look on. The mood is one of intellectual and moral steadfastness, at least in relation to the Saint and the Lion.

The third and final canvas—The Death of St. Jerome—pictures Jerome, much diminished and gloriously supine, his body surrounded by kneeling and dutifully pious monks. But, although the scene has the appropriate components of such a solemn moment, Carpaccio has introduced various elements that undermine that very solemnity—for instance, a lizard in the foreground of the picture just inches from the corpse of the saint is used as a prop holding up a card with the

signature of the painter. Now that is marketing. The humanized Jerome of Carpaccio would approve. The mood is playful and subversive.

These Hieronymian qualities—contemplation, steadfastness, and humour—are all vital ingredients that make for an ideal university environment.

Other artists have portrayed Jerome—Caravaggio, El Greco—as the angular ascetic, the severe intellectual wrestling with his own violence, the aging desert-dweller with a yearning for heaven. But I prefer the Jerome of Carpaccio—affectionate, searching, the rough edges made tender with the passage of time. Not a bad model for a president of a Roman Catholic university. To be president of such an institution is as daunting a challenge these days as removing a thorn from the paw of a lion.

The Jerome of history, the Jerome of tradition, the Jerome of legend and art, fascinates as well as he repels. For me, he is the quintessence of the struggling Catholic intellectual, and a worthy patron for our institution of higher learning.

St. Jerome's University is a community of the mind and of the heart. It seeks to ground intellectual inquiry in a context of shared learning, in disinterested pursuit of the commonweal, and in generous solicitude for the needs of the person.

This is ideal, of course, and we fall short of it as often as we embody it. But it is the spirit that animates us, the tradition that roots us in a history.

St. Jerome's University must not fear to raise questions about itself; there is no comfort in timidity. Issues of culture and faith, justice and equality, honesty and value, must be debated in a forum that respects diversity and abhors censorship. The Catholic tradition demands no less than this: to be faithful to itself.

St. Jerome's has no monopoly on good teaching, serious scholarship, and social concern. The University of Waterloo and the affiliated colleges share with us a commitment to excellence and the desire to create and indeed sustain a nurturing and probing environment of learning and personal growth.

We are the Catholic voice in higher learning at the University of Waterloo and we are a proud part of the Ontario university system, but we are also a part of the Canadian Catholic university community.

We are part of something much bigger than ourselves, defined not by political boundaries or ethnic histories, but by a tradition of centuries of shared conviction, a spiritual and intellectual commonwealth, that has something to offer us all.

St. Jerome's University is a critical part of the mosaic that is the University of Waterloo. Our voice is but one of many, but our contributions are legion: in teaching activity, in service to the community, in scholarship and research. Our presence is irreducible and ineradicable. We are part of the history, the fabric, the tone, the memory, the future that is Waterloo and that part is defined by our Catholic identity, an identity itself enriched and deepened by the presence of so many non-Catholic participants in, and shapers of, the reality that is St. Jerome's.

Now, back to the saint. I am not St. Jerome. I don't have much of a hankering for caves; I don't have the look of one disposed to rigorous fasting; I don't willingly seek the companionship of carnivorous beasts; my Latin is weak; I can only dream of wearing a cardinal's robes; but I am part of the tradition that Jerome brilliantly served.

In the capacity of serving that same tradition, I will seek as president to build on the strengths of my predecessors—three priests of the

Congregation of the Resurrection and one lay person—to build on the resourcefulness of Cornelius Siegfried, the gentleness of John Finn, the pastoral sensitivity of Norman Choate, the administrative acumen of Douglas Letson. To be Roman Catholic is to be part of a living tradition. To live well is to flex, to grow—atrophy of the intellect and of the spirit has no place in a vital tradition.

St. Jerome's as a university is more than an amalgam; it is a community; it is more than a centre for the acquisition of information, it is a locus for wisdom.

To use the words of short story writer Stuart MacLean when speaking about the Vinyl Cafe on the CBC programme of the same name: "We may not be big, but we're small."

And that is as it should be. Small, potent, and irreplaceable—one treasured voice on the Canadian landscape. ☪

Photo: Ron Hewison



A lovely bunch of coconuts? Dignitaries and honoured guests listen to the new president's inaugural address. They are, from left to right: Dr. Jim Kalbfleisch, vice-president academic and provost, University of Waterloo; Dr. Gail Cuthbert Brandt, principal of Renison College; Prof. John M. Wilson, representing University of Trinity College, Toronto; Dr. Bud Paré, president of Assumption University, Windsor; and Dr. Brian Hogan, dean of the Faculty of Theology, St. Michael's College, Toronto.

All the presidents

1865-89

Louis Funcken, C.R.

1890-91

Theobald Spetz, C.R.

1891-1905

John Fehrenbach, C.R.

1905-19

Albert Zinger, C.R.

1919-26

William Beninger, C.R.

1926-29

Leo Seiss, C.R.

1929-36

Robert Dehler, C.R.

1935-42

William Borho, C.R.

1942-48

Michael Weller, C.R.

1948-51

Cornelius Siegfried, C.R.

1951-1955

Peter Graf, C.R.

Jerome Arnold, C.R.

1955-1965

Cornelius Siegfried, C.R.

1965-72

John Finn, C.R.

1972-79

Cornelius Siegfried, C.R.

1979-1989

Norman Choate, C.R.

1989-1999

Douglas Letson

1999-

Michael W. Higgins

New faces



Deb Adesso is the new library assistant.

Deb Adesso

Deb Adesso, the new library assistant at St. Jerome's has primary responsibility for cataloguing. A University of Guelph grad (BA '86, Psychology), she also holds a Library Techniques diploma from Sheridan College. After working at the University of Guelph library and Kitchener Public Library, she finds St. Jerome's very different. "You get to know the people you're working with and serving," she says. "I think we can give the students more one-on-one attention, and they tell me they really like studying here."

Carolyn Dirks, who served as assistant librarian at St. Jerome's for nine years, has moved into "the fishbowl" – the glass-sided librarian's office.



Harry Froklage is St. Jerome's new director of development and graduate affairs.

Harry Froklage

"My goal is to create a community of interest in St. Jerome's University," Harry Froklage says. His second goal, tied in with the first, is to help the university find the resources it needs for special projects, scholarships, and bursaries. Froklage started work in September as St. Jerome's new full-time director of development and graduate affairs, responsible for fundraising, community and media relations, and maintaining relationships with St. Jerome's grads.

A Galt native who attended St. Benedict High School, Froklage holds an MA in English from the University of Waterloo and an MLS from the University of Western Ontario. For the last ten years he has been manager of marketing and community relations at Kitchener Public Library, where he helped establish the Edna Staebler Writer-in-Residence program and administered the Dorothy Shoemaker Literary Awards. An active community member, he chairs Kitchener's Arts and Culture Advisory Committee, serves on the city's Millennium Steering Committee, and is a member of the board of directors of United Way for Kitchener-Waterloo.

When other commitments allow, Froklage pursues a special interest in popular fiction as both a reader and a writer. For several years he has been the Kitchener-Waterloo *Record's* mystery fiction reviewer; he has published a short story, and a novel—a mystery—is in the planning stage.



Mike Mosca has returned to St. Jerome's as a professor of mathematics.

Mike Mosca

In 1993-94, Michele (Mike) Mosca was an undergrad studying mathematics and a prefect in the J.R. Finn Residence at St. Jerome's. He finished in 1995 as valedictorian. Four years and two degrees later, he's back as a professor.

This swift trip was kick-started by two work terms doing research with Scott Vanstone and Ron Mullin. His interest in cryptography and number theory piqued, Mosca travelled to Oxford, where he acquired a taste for rowing (he's now a member of the UW Rowing Club), a D.Phil. in Mathematics, and a firm idea of what he wanted to do. Being an academic "allows me to interact with students (which working in a



BJ Rye has joined the psychology department.



Barb Weber is the new assistant to the registrar.

research lab in industry does not offer) and gives me the freedom to do research I find interesting."

Mosca will teach undergrad courses in Combinatorics and Optimization and Mathematics and a graduate course in his research focus, quantum computing. An approach to computation based on quantum physics, "it's a fundamentally new mode of computing, not just a faster way of doing the same thing." Because it can solve problems once thought intractable, like factoring large numbers, quantum computing threatens the security of today's cryptosystems; but it could also lead to more efficient and secure exchanges of information.

BJ Rye

After more than 10 years in Upper Canada, BJ Rye (she prefers BJ to Barbara June) still thinks of Saint John, New Brunswick, as home. But the St. Thomas University alumna has a special fondness for small universities with low student-to-professor ratios.

And there are other reasons why she finds St. Jerome's a good fit. Until 1999, she was working at the Addiction Research Centre and teaching part time at King's College and UWO. "While I enjoyed the research, I liked teaching. St. Jerome's offered me both. What's more, St. Jerome's offered me the opportunity to work in the area in which I am trained: human sexuality."

Rye teaches courses in sex education, sexuality, and gender issues. Both teaching and research fit well into the Sexuality, Marriage, and the Family program. Her current focus is on intersexuality (hermaphroditism) and on attitudes toward people who are intersexual.

"I've always been interested in sex research," Rye says. "I think it's a very important area of life that often is left in the closet. I also feel it's important to raise awareness about attitudes toward sexual minorities in an attempt to reduce prejudice and discrimination."

Barb Weber

Barb Weber says one of the big attractions of becoming assistant to the registrar at St. Jerome's, after several years in the Office of Research and the departments of Chemistry and Physics on the main campus, was the chance to do high school liaison. "The public speaking component was something that attracted me, though I'd never done it before," she says. Weber, who is a graduate of Waterloo's Social Development Studies program, started work in May, attended training sessions in August, and in September plunged in. This fall she spent half her time talking to students and parents at local high schools.

These days she's back in the office, guiding students through administrative mazes, setting up special events, and helping registrar Dana Woito with the thousand details involved in producing publications. "With our small staff, we do a bit of everything." **Andrea Charette** (née Fryer), who formerly held Weber's job, is St. Jerome's new director of student services. ☺

William Needles awarded honorary degree

St. Jerome's resident drama expert Ted McGee (left) was on hand to congratulate one of North America's foremost Shakespearean actors, William Needles, on being awarded an honorary degree from the University of Waterloo at fall convocation. A member of the Stratford Festival's first company, Needles (son of Ira G. Needles, one of Waterloo's founders) has performed at Stratford for 41 seasons. ☪



Photo: Ron Hewson

Charity runners brave the storm

The first day of fall brought cool, sunny weather, perfect for the opening ceremony and symbolic first lap of the 24th annual St. Jerome's Charity Run. First came prayers and greetings by student co-chairs April Lim and Christine Watters, President Michael W. Higgins, and local dignitaries. Then Sarah Mounstevan, a second-year student in religious studies, sang "It Takes More Than Hammers," a song she'd composed for the occasion.

The beneficiary of this year's event was Habitat for Humanity Canada, the Waterloo-based organization that constructs affordable houses for families who otherwise could never own their own homes. Chancellor John Sweeney (a past chair of Habitat for Humanity Canada), helped Fr. Jim Link and Associate Chaplain Melinda Szilva light the thick white Charity Run candle, which stayed lit despite the breeze. Then, after the blessing and the Lord's Prayer, Sweeney pronounced the run "in force,"

and a group of students set off holding their fluttering banner.

During the week of the event, student organizers raised money with an ice cream social and barbecue, a movie marathon featuring new releases like *The Matrix*, a very successful spaghetti dinner, a pool tournament, and a 24-hour fast during which 10 students raised \$180.

The actual run took place on the weekend of October 1 to 3. About 100 people turned out to run in relays for 48 hours in the cold and rain of an autumn storm. The Ring Road—the Charity Run's traditional route—was a river of dirt and construction machinery, so the runners had to detour across campus. Despite the discouraging conditions, the 24th Charity Run raised a total of more than \$7,000, Watters says. In other years the proceeds averaged about \$6,000.

"One thing hasn't changed in 24 years, and that's the commitment of the students," says co-chair April Lim. ☪

Compassion and Solidarity

The world we want

The 1999-2000 season of the St. Jerome's Centre for Catholic Experience offers "a look at the sort of world we'd like to live in during the next millennium," says David Seljak, director of the centre. He borrowed his theme from the 1991 encyclical, *Centesimus annus*, in which Pope John Paul II, writing about finding an antidote to the will to power and greed that dominate values at the end of the century, called peace "the fruit of solidarity." The Centre presents this line-up of speakers in the winter term:

February 16, 2000

Eileen Schuller, OSU, professor of religious studies at McMaster University and internationally recognized authority on the Dead Sea Scrolls, will speak on *The Jewish World of Jesus: The Evidence of the Dead Sea Scrolls* at the St. Jerome's-Waterloo Catholic District School Board Education Workshop.

January 21, 2000

Nancy Nason-Clark, professor of sociology from

the University of New Brunswick and founder/coordinator of the Religion and Violence Research Team at UNB's Centre for Family Violence Research, will speak on *Betrayed Trust: Sex, Violence and the Christian Church*.

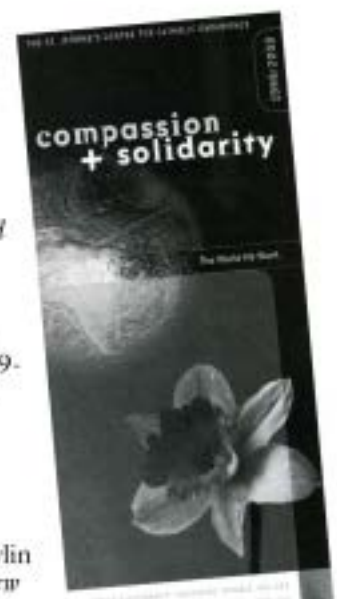
March 3, 2000

Kieran Bonner, sociologist, academic dean and vice-president of St. Jerome's, will give the 1999-2000 School Board Lecture on *Parenting and Power: An Analytic Story About Power and Powerlessness*.

April 7, 2000

John Wilkins, editor of *The Tablet*, England's prestigious Catholic weekly, will deliver the Devlin Lecture on *The Next Pope: The Papacy in the New Millennium*.

All lectures and workshops are free, and everyone is welcome. Lectures are held in Siegfried Hall at 7:30 p.m.; workshop times will be announced. For more information contact David Seljak, (519) 884-8111, ext. 232. ☪



For a copy of this brochure, call (519) 884-8111, ext. 259.

A taste of the fun and bustle

Last year, when the St. Jerome's Student Union executive desperately needed an extra pair of hands in the office, they had an idea. Why not recruit a high school student in need of a community service project?

Then they put a twist on it. Why not bring in students who don't want to go to university? "Working in the office for three hours a week, they experience the fun and bustle, the pressures of exams, and how people cope," says Union president Crystal Price. "We make them non-voting members of the Union. They sit in on council meetings, imbibe a little school spirit."

The Union has recruited only two high school students so far, but one of those students did turn his ideas around and enrolled at St. Jerome's.

A term to remember

by Patricia Bow

Jen Hepditch and Tom O'Brien groan in unison when they think of going back to high school after a taste of university life. "It will be painful," Tom says.

With 64 other students from Catholic schools in Waterloo Region, Jen and Tom are taking part in the University Co-operative Education Program (UCEP), an 11-year-old enrichment program run by the Waterloo Catholic District School Board in collaboration with Wilfrid Laurier and Waterloo universities. They are not the only high school students to be seen at St. Jerome's: thousands visit on Campus Day and other tour days; hundreds worship with their families at the University Catholic Community. Many attend campus ministry conferences and English skills workshops, and high school students fill Siegfried Hall at special sittings of lectures by popular speakers.

But the UCEP students go a long step further. They spend the entire fall term of their OAC year on campus, where they take a university course for credit, as well as one or two OAC credits and a career skills course. They also do 220 hours of co-op work.

Jen, a student at Resurrection High School, is registered in second-year Introductory Cell Biology ("Not as hard as I'd expected!"), OAC English and Physics. Tom, from St. David's, chose second-year Fundamentals of Microbiology and OAC English and Calculus.

"It's very different from anything they've done before," says Rae Crossman, a teacher from Resurrection who is one of the program's monitors. "It's very flexible, with lots of choice and independence." Some students thrive under those conditions. In one French class, a UCEP student received the highest mark the professor had ever given. Some also get lower marks than they are used to—but this, Crossman points out, can also happen to first-year students.

Crossman teaches three OAC English courses at St. Jerome's. There's no book list, and at any time the scheduled class could make way for a reading by poet Russel Smith, a performance of the University of Waterloo's popular orientation play *Single and Sexy*, a concert at Conrad Grebel College or Wilfrid Laurier, or a lecture about Hiroshima. "We look at the university as our



Rae Crossman, a teacher from Resurrection High School, leads an OAC English class—at St. Jerome's. This fall, 66 OAC students from Catholic schools in Waterloo Region spent the fall term at St. Jerome's, taking a university course for credit, as well as one or two OAC credits and a career skills course. The students also did 220 hours of co-op work.

curriculum," he says. "The idea is to broaden their cultural experiences, to make the most of the university experience."

The events become a springboard for writing—any kind of writing. Jen wrote her report on a presentation on logging in British Columbia, *The Women of Clayoquot Sound*, in the form of a poem. "I don't think you can do your best writing unless you're passionate about it," she says. "We get to go to events we're really interested in. We don't have to write about them, and that makes it easier to be creative."

The students spend 16 to 18 hours a week in co-op work at the university. Crossman and two other teachers, Rose Wilson from St. Mary's High School and Janet Lienhardt from Resurrection, arrange the placements according to the students' interests and keep track of their progress.

One of Crossman's students is proofreading for the *New Quarterly*; another works in production in the Drama department. Jen's placement is with Fred Desroches, a sociology professor at St. Jerome's. She edits his records of interviews with drug traffickers in prison, something that relates to her plans to study psychiatry. Tom is working with a professor in Civil Engineering, testing ways of treating contaminated waste water by running it through a bioreactor.

Neither Jen nor Tom would look out of place anywhere on campus. Jen, 18, has met plenty of students her age. Tom says the only thing that singles him out is that at 17, "I can't have a beer in the Bombshelter." ☺

Magnetic North/True North

Thomas Merton at St. Jerome's

by Patricia Bow

Thomas Merton came back to life at St. Jerome's last June. *Beyond the Shadow and the Disguise*, Kevin Burns' multi-media biography of the American Trappist monk, poet, critic, and contemplative was one of the high moments—some called it *the moment*—of the sixth general meeting of the International Thomas Merton Society.

For the next two days people kept approaching Burns, an Ottawa-based freelance producer, to ask questions. Some were interested in the technical details—the 66 slides, two projectors, laptop and PowerPoint program—others were fascinated by the fresh portrait of Merton. Many were deeply moved. "It had an emotional weight and resonance, an intensity, that caught them unawares," says Burns.

That intensity was the cumulative effect of Burns' carefully chosen text, sounds, and images. Apart from quotations from William Blake (an important influence on Merton) used to flag section breaks, the words came entirely from Merton's books, journals, letters, and poems.

Four local people spoke the text: Rae Crossman, Lynn Karges, and two recent St. Jerome's grads, Jarrett Morrison and Megan Shore. They were chosen for the mix of timbres—two male voices, two female; two younger, two older—but also for their ability to convey the material in a sensitive way. The script varied in tone and tempo: a painfully honest journal entry followed, for example, by an exuberant account of Merton driving a jeep for the first time, then by poetry expressing deep spiritual yearning.

Only one of the images that appeared on the screens behind the speakers depicted Merton. The rest, many of them taken by Merton himself, chronicled his childhood in France and England, his discovery of America and religion, his life as a monk at the Abbey of Gethsemani in Kentucky, his vocation to solitude as a hermit who, paradoxically, was internationally famous. Then came images evoking the love affair that tested and confirmed his vocation, and the final journey to discover the Buddhist east.

Burns chose images of actual places, and images that evoked states of mind and spirit: a skeletal tree, a cathedral nave, a weathered stone. Moving with and against the images was music ranging from the lyrical jazz of Keith Jarrett to Gregorian chant sung by French monks. Only the spare account of Merton's death in Bangkok

appeared on the screen without voice or music.

"I have learned to listen to an audience, and there was pin-drop silence during the event," Burns says. "They were completely engaged."

The conference, *Magnetic North/True North: Geography Beyond Boundaries*, was held at St. Jerome's from June 10 to 13. It was the first time the Merton Society had ever held its general

meeting outside the United States. "I think they really felt they were taking a risk," says President Michael W. Higgins. "They don't think that now." The success at St. Jerome's helped to swing the decision that the 2003 conference will be held in Vancouver at the University of British Columbia, in addition to other sites.

The academic sessions, though valuable, could have been held anywhere,

says Higgins. What made the conference stand out was the strong local signature. As people left for home they were still talking about the performance by Leonard Enns' Da Capo Mennonite choir and the concert by Alfred Kunz's Music Alive and Nith Valley Singers and the Kitchener-Waterloo Philharmonic Chamber Choir. Other highlights were the keynote address by author and social activist Mary Jo Leddy on the "luminous consciousness" of the northern landscape, and the dramatic dialogue between the Mennonite theologian John Howard Yoder (played by Tom Yoder Neufeld of Conrad Grebel College) and Thomas Merton (played by Michael W. Higgins).

"The most fascinating thing was, as Canadians, we were able to present a character back to an essentially American audience in ways they found recognizable and challenging," Burns says. "This was a Canadian perspective on an American cultural figure." ☺



A detail from the interior of the hermitage on the grounds of Gethsemani Abbey where Merton lived towards the end of his life.

Photo: Merton Legacy Trust

Many of the images Kevin Burns chose to illustrate his multimedia presentation *Beyond the Shadow and the Disguise* evoked states of mind and spirit.



Photo: Kevin Burns

The topic of this year's Ignatian Lecture, delivered by Fr. Philip Shano, was *Ignatian Spirituality and the Ecological Crisis: The Spirituality of Simple Living*

Ignatian spirituality: A path out of the ecological crisis

by Linda Kenyon

The day after Thanksgiving, workers at a cemetery in the north end of Guelph noticed a strong ammonia smell in the air and notified the authorities. Police and fire crews warned people to stay inside with their windows closed while they investigated, but the eye-irritating chemical cloud dissipated before its source could be determined.

This sort of event, says Fr. Philip Shano, a Jesuit priest and director of the Guelph Centre of Spirituality, is tangible evidence of a growing ecological crisis. Just a few days after the incident in Guelph, Shano visited St. Jerome's University to deliver the 1999/2000 Ignatian Lecture. His topic, *Ignatian Spirituality and the Ecological Crisis: The Spirituality of Simple Living*, drew a large crowd, including students from several local Catholic high schools.

"Your presence here is a clear statement that you are concerned about our world," Shano began, listing several reasons we should all be concerned. In addition to such things as the unidentified chemical cloud that passed over Guelph, other signs of the current ecological crisis include the disappearance of many species of animals, insects, birds; strange weather patterns, global warming; a growing scarcity of water; collapses in the fisheries; increasing dependence on genetically modified food; and the spread of tropical diseases into northern areas.

Our growing awareness that the planet we live on is becoming increasingly inhospitable has serious spiritual implications, says Shano. "We cannot



Fr. Philip Shano lives as simply as he can at the Guelph Centre of Spirituality, where he leads retreats, workshops, and classes on Ignatian spirituality.

Photo: Ron Hewson

Suggested reading

The Ends of the Earth: A journey at the dawn of the 21st century, by Robert Kaplan

Environment, Scarcity, and Violence, by Thomas Homer-Dixon

The Warrior's Honour, by Michael Ignatieff

From Jihad to McWorld, by Steven Barber

Ecology as Politics, by André Gorz

Living Downstream: A scientist's personal investigation of cancer and the environment, by Sandra Steingraber

have a narrow and restricted notion of 'ecology' and the 'ecological crisis.' We are talking about a crisis that threatens the very heart of who we are, a crisis that threatens our sense of belonging and home and security, a crisis that has the potential to do us all in—in a very real way, but also at a spiritual level."

Shano subscribes to Thomas Moore's definition of ecology as "the mysterious work of providing a home for the soul, one that is felt in the very depths of the heart. In the world, that

work necessarily includes care of one's own life and soul as well as tending carefully to one's house, family, neighbourhood, town, region, country, the planet, and other bodies of the universe. Neglect or abuse of any of these parts of home threatens the soul's need for security and place."

Paying attention to ecological matters, then, becomes a kind of "sacred homemaking." But the prevailing attitude in our culture is one of alienation from the natural world. "Land is not seen as sacred; it is real estate," notes Shano. "Insects become pests as opposed to pollinators. Water and food become commodities that we trade and use as weapons in a war."

What is needed in order for us to find a path out of the current ecological crisis, says Shano, is a shift towards a sense of intimacy with the natural world. He suggests that the spiritual insights of St. Ignatius of Loyola, who founded the Society of Jesus in the 1500s, can be instructive in this matter.

"My own experience is that Ignatian spirituality offers a way of being engaged with the world. It does not allow people to run and hide—a natural temptation in the face of today's ecological crisis. Rather, Ignatius invites us to love the world, to come to know it in an intimate way, but also to learn how to go about having an impact upon the world."

A man of the Renaissance, Ignatius encouraged people to reflect on their own experience, their own lives, their way of "being with themselves." "Ignatian spirituality invites us to a kind of mindfulness and intentionality in relationship to ourselves," observes Shano. "It invites us to look within ourselves and see something sacred and of value." Ignatius understood the value of self-knowledge, of recognizing the patterns in your own history, of knowing which experiences enrich your life and which ones diminish it.

Ignatius also encouraged people to contemplate the world around them and their relationship with it, to consider their way of "being in the world." Taking "a long, loving look at the real"—at the effects of consumerism on the environment, for example—can be painful. But only by paying attention to the world around us can we begin to know it in an intimate way. "If I come to know and love a piece of land," says Shano, "I will be reluctant to see it as merely a

piece of real estate which is a commodity." And only then can we begin to name what is important in our lives. "My experience is that more and more of us want a simple way of life. We desire simplicity in areas of time, our living and working space, possessions and commitments."

Once we've named what's important in our lives, Ignatian spirituality encourages us to put



Photo: Ron Hewson

Many of us are disconnected from the natural world, says Shano, which causes us to think of food and water as mere commodities. Developing a sense of intimacy with the natural world is essential if we are to find our way out of the current ecological crisis.

these desires into action. It is not passive, says Shano. "It is not monastic and it is not contemplative in a sense that separates people from the world. Ignatius invites us to be people of discernment, to be intentional and focused in how we live our lives. For Ignatius, holiness is not a withdrawal from life but an invitation to delve more seriously into all aspects of life—politics, the environment, and all other issues that affect our daily living and the decisions that we make."

Ignatius does not have all the answers, acknowledges Shano. "What he provides is a process, a way of being attentive to your experience, of sorting through it and making informed and intelligent decisions about how you will live your life."

Neither is Ignatian spirituality the only path out of the ecological crisis. Any system of belief that encourages us to be attentive, to reflect on our own experience, to make sense of what we see, and to find a way of living in the world is valuable.

"Whether we use Ignatian dynamics or any other tool, what is essential is that we move toward an ecological and sustainable way of life and that we be engaged with the world." ☪

Intimacy with the world

The evening of his lecture, Fr. Philip Shano led a workshop in the Common Room at St. Jerome's which provided people with the opportunity to reflect on their lives. He invited the 30 people who attended to consider how they could make their lives simpler, to think about concrete steps each one of them could take to shrink the size of their own "ecological footprint."

"The workshop provided a quiet space and a chunk of uncluttered time for people to reflect upon their values and how to live out those values in a confusing, distracting, 'fast-forward' society," comments David Seljak, director of the St. Jerome's Centre for Catholic Experience. "There was time for discussion in groups of three to four people about things in life that really matter: how I spend my time, how I spend my energy, how I spend my money.

"We usually don't ask each other these very serious questions. We are quite private about such 'personal' choices. But as Fr. Shano pointed out, in the light of the ecological crisis, a private choice to buy a gas-guzzling sports-utility vehicle, for example, has consequences for the general public."

As director of the Guelph Centre of Spirituality, Shano regularly leads retreats, workshops, and classes on spirituality. For more information on the Centre, call (519) 824-1250.

Brenda Kenyon wins Norm Choate Award

The Father Norm Choate Distinguished Graduate Award winner for 1999 is **Brenda Kenyon (BA '87, Psychology)**, adjunct professor of psychology at the University of Guelph and director of the university's Centre for Psychological Services. Brenda, who also holds a PhD in clinical psychology from Concordia University, established the non-profit centre in 1997 after seeing too many children whose families could not afford counselling for learning disabilities and other problems.

The driving force behind the centre is "the commitment I made at St. Jerome's to always try to live out what I believe." One of the things she believes is that psychologists have an obligation to use their scholarly knowledge to help people deal with the problems of everyday life.

Her popular course on death and dying for the University of Guelph's Office of Open Learning became the basis for a television documentary, *Death: A Personal Understanding*, which aired in Canada and in the United States in 1998.

The Distinguished Graduate Award will be presented to Brenda on Friday, February 18, 2000 at 7:30 p.m. at St. Jerome's. For more information, call Harry Froklage at (519) 884-8111, ext. 255.

Continuing CONNECTIONS

Margaret Voll, BA '74

by Patricia Bow

Margaret Voll has a vivid memory of her first board of governors meeting at St. Jerome's as a community representative. "That first meeting, I walked in early and found nobody else had arrived yet. I remember looking around and thinking, 'I was here when I was 19, and here I am sitting down with the elite of the institution. What an honour to be involved at this level!'"

A lawyer with a practice in family law, Voll became chair of the board in 1999, after a two-year stint as vice-chair. She's one of nine alumni currently serving on the board of governors, the body that hires presidents, approves budgets, and shapes statements of guiding principles.

"Over my time on the board I've seen board members speak out more, challenge issues on the agenda—in a constructive sense—and really participate in a meaningful way," Voll says. "That's why it's so interesting and rewarding."

Voll came to St. Jerome's in 1970 from St. Mary's High School in Kitchener, the oldest of six brothers and sisters. Three of the others also have degrees from St. Jerome's: Robert (BMath '79), Kathleen (BA '79), and Rosemary (BMath '82). Cecile and Karen attended for one or two years before finding other directions.

Voll's direction was law, as she'd known since Grade 7. Armed with a degree in philosophy, she graduated from Osgoode Hall Law School in 1977 and was called to the bar in 1979. She practiced criminal and family law in partnership with her husband, Colin Westman, until he became a judge in the Ontario Court in 1990. After that, Voll phased criminal law out of her practice to make certain that conflicts of interest would not arise. Now she shares a family law partnership with Ana Santos, a graduate of McGill's law school. It was not until after the two women met as lawyers that they discovered they have something else in common. Santos is also a St. Jerome's alumna — BA '80.

Family law can be demanding, Voll says. "The cases can be very emotional, and I think I have a sensitivity to the emotional distress of people. But to be an effective advocate requires objectivity as well. I have to be mindful of the legalities, I have to marshal evidence, organize materials, and present the case in an effective manner." It's a difficult balance that only comes with experience.

Voll had a busy schedule as a volunteer: president of the board of Catholic Family Counselling, member of the board of Parents for Community Living and other non-profit agencies. But when her son Ryan was born (he is now seven and Sara-Margaret is four), she decided to restrict her volunteer commitments to her parish church of St. Francis, Kitchener, where she is a lector, and to St. Jerome's.

Looking back over her eight years on the



Photo: Alan Hewson

A lawyer with a practice in family law, Margaret Voll, BA '74, continues her connection with St. Jerome's by serving as chair of the Board of Governors.

board, she singles out as highlights the Dean's Search Committee, which she chaired, and which brought Kieran Bonner to St. Jerome's; acquiring Notre Dame College and transforming it into Sweeney Hall; and building the new community centre/dining hall. "The new centre creates a welcoming atmosphere for all students, not just those in residence."

She is proud to have had a hand in implementing the Report on Governance, which reshaped the board itself, and in developing a Mission Statement for St. Jerome's, a document that will be especially important in the near future, when St. Jerome's will have to accommodate larger numbers of students, while remaining committed to Catholic values.

Voll recalls the 1970s as a tumultuous time to be a Catholic and a student. "Everything was being challenged then. It was really important to me that St. Jerome's reinforced and confirmed at a very early age the values that had been instilled in me at home. I appreciate the impact St. Jerome's had on my life at a critical age, and I'm glad to be able to help others who are at that age now." ☪

'67 Carl Cuneo (BA '67, MA '68, PhD '73, Sociology) is a professor of sociology at McMaster University, with a special interest in technology-based learning and the social implications of the Internet. He is also the national director of EvNet, an umbrella for research into the effectiveness of educational and training technologies. He and his wife Hanna live in Dundas, Ontario.

'74 August 22, 1999, was the 90th birthday of **Elsie Veronica Ewald** (BA '74, English). A special mass was said at St. Mary's Church in Kitchener on the big day, with a luncheon party following the service.



'78 Mark Curtis (BA '78) has recorded a new CD, *The Angels Still Sing*, which was released in September. Some of the proceeds from the sale of the CD will support Rose Cherry's Home, Ontario's first hospice for chronically and terminally ill children, located near Milton.

'80 Pamela M. Fergus (née Clark, BA '80, English) and her husband Stephen are happy to announce the birth of their first child, McGarry Thomas Fergus, on June 13, 1999. Pam is a member of the English department at Assumption College School in Brantford.

'81 Frank De Palma (BA '81, English) and Maryanne De Palma (née Lasovich, BA '79) are living with their six children in Nova Scotia, where Frank was recently appointed deputy managing editor of the *Halifax Chronicle-Herald*, *Mail-Star*, and *Sunday Herald*. Frank went from Waterloo to journalism at the University of King's College, Halifax, then into the newsroom in 1982. Since then he has worked as a reporter, Toronto correspondent, assignment editor, news editor, and assistant managing editor, and written a column on family budgeting. Of their six children, "five kids are in school now, with only three-year-old Nicholas still at home with Maryanne," Frank writes. "Four of them are playing basketball." Frank coaches minor basketball in Bedford.



'91 Leslie Cummings (née Perrault, BA '91, English) reports that she's living happily near Chesley, Ontario, with husband Gord and children Heather, 6, Kelly, 4, and Heidi, 2. Leslie is working as an occasional teacher for the Bruce Grey Roman Catholic School Board.



Touring in Grand Style



Thirty SJU alumni and friends toured Pillitteri Estates Winery on October 2. The Third Annual Wine Tour was organized by the Graduate Association Executive Team, and Patti Tusch in particular.



She shoots! She scores!

Bridget Bates (BA '94, Religious Studies) has been honoured as one of the foremost university-level female athletes in Canada. In March she received a national TSN award for outstanding achievement in hockey, academics, and community involvement

by a varsity women's ice hockey player. The prize was a \$3,000 scholarship, which Bridget used to work at the British Columbia Children's Hospital to fulfill the field work requirement for her Master of Divinity degree.

In her four years with the Varsity Blues, Bridget has been among the Ontario University Athletics association's top scorers in women's ice hockey. In her last season she overcame illness and a back injury to lead the league in game-winning goals. When ice was not available, she played roller hockey and field hockey. At the same time she managed the Varsity Blues women's volleyball team, supervised U of T's summer in-line skating camp, and contributed to many university sports publications. Off campus, Bridget was involved in the community as a student chaplain and a lay pastoral visitor at Mount Sinai Hospital in Toronto. And she still maintained a B average. In recognition of these achievements, she won the University of Toronto's Clara Benson Award for outstanding ability in athletics and scholarship.

Now that she's graduated, Bridget has started her own company, Competitive Shot Photo-Graphics, and does all photography for the university's Faculty of Physical Education and Health. She still volunteers at the Hospital for Sick Children, and she continues to boost women's sports through her newspaper and magazine writing.

Hey SJU grads!

Have you moved? Changed jobs? Married? Any additions to the family? Help us keep your fellow grads informed by filling out and returning this form. We'll publish your news, along with a photo, if there's room, in SJU Update.

Name (Please include birth name)

Address

Telephone

e-mail/WWW

Degree/Year/Programme

Are you working?

Job title

Employer

Address

Telephone

e-mail/WWW

Are you married?

Spouse's name

Degree/Year/Programme

What's new in your life?

(Enclose additional sheet if necessary)

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Please return this form to:

Director of Development and Graduate Affairs

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You can also send e-mail to:

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'93 **Elaine Demaiter-Boyd (BMath '93)** and her husband Paul Boyd are happy to announce the birth of their second son, Brian Paul, on February 8, 1999, a little brother for James. Elaine adds that in fall 1998 she began teaching math for the Brant Catholic School Board at Assumption College School in Brantford.

'94 **Genevieve Anderson (BA '94, Religious Studies and Psychology)** attended St. Michael's College, University of Toronto, from 1995 to 1997 to complete a Master of Religious Education degree. She then worked for two years facilitating grade 8 retreats for the Waterloo District Catholic School Board. She writes, "I'm now in my dream job as the new chaplain at Resurrection Catholic Secondary School in Kitchener (I love my job!) and enjoy living in Waterloo again. I'd love to hear from any old friends; they can e-mail me at genanderson@hotmail.com."

'95 **Karla Lang (BA '95)** is studying at Antioch New England Graduate School in Keene, New Hampshire. She is working towards a master's degree in applied psychology with a concentration in marriage

and family counselling. In May Karla was awarded an Antioch New England Reader's Digest Fellowship. At Antioch's recent Community, Nature and Spirit Conference, she presented "Following the Heart Song," and helped organize the first group in the area for children of parents with mental illness. Karla, who has studied traditional Native American and Canadian healing methods, spent last summer in Australia, studying and working with Aboriginal Australians.

'98 **Last June, Dianne Fisher (BA '98)** defeated Canadian amateur golf legend Marlene Stewart Streit to win the Westmount Women's Blazer Charity Invitational Tournament, and in July she placed in the top fifth at the ladies' Ontario Amateur Tournament. Dianne started playing golf about ten years ago and soon knew she wanted to turn pro some day. After completing a business major with a minor in golf management at Methodist College in North Carolina, she came back to Waterloo for her BA—"one of the best decisions I've ever made." A four-handicapper, she says golf is still definitely part of her future. "Once you've had that perfect shot, it's so encouraging—if you're at all competitive, you'll keep going. And I've made wonderful friends across the country and in the United States."

Introducing UW's Alumni E-Community

The University of Waterloo is offering two new services to graduates: an e-mail forwarding service and an electronic alumni directory. The new e-mail forwarding service provides grads with an e-mail address which is yours for life. No matter how often your current e-mail account changes, UW will forward messages sent to your UW address to the e-mail account of your choice.

UW is also offering a new electronic alumni directory, which lets you look up other UW grads world wide, right from your computer.

Both of these services are offered free of charge exclusively to UW alumni. For more information, visit www.alumni.uwaterloo.ca, send e-mail to alumni@alumni.uwaterloo.ca, or call 1-800-408-8715.

Upcoming grad events

Family Skating Party

The Graduates' Association is organizing a family skating party at the Columbia Ice Fields on Saturday, January 8, 2000 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Admission is free. Call Harry Froklage at (519) 884-8111, ext. 255 for full details.

Distinguished Graduate Awards Presentation

The Fr. Norm Choate Distinguished Graduate Award will be presented on Friday, February 18, 2000 at 7:30 p.m. at St. Jerome's University. For more information, call Harry Froklage at (519) 884-8111, ext. 255.



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