

In service of others

When John Sweeney died on July 7, 2001 at the age of 70, after a lifetime of sharing his heart with his community, the public outpouring of sadness and warmth was a measure of how many lives he had touched.

Appointed the first lay chancellor of St. Jerome's University in 1991, he began his third term in 1999. "The role of chancellor is largely titular, a public and symbolic representation of the values and ethos of higher education," says St. Jerome's President and Vice-Chancellor Michael W. Higgins. "The chancellor is an ambassador for the institution, a spokesman for its traditions and goals, and in these functions few, if any, could surpass Sweeney."

Others might have performed the duties as conscientiously, but he delighted in them, Higgins adds. "He threw himself into the role of chancellor with the same level of commitment and energy as if it had been his first job as a teacher."

Deborah Pecoskie, St. Jerome's Board Chair, recalls that he worked hard on the board and committees right up until his last illness. "He was an extraordinarily active and popular chancellor," she says. "And he brought something extra to our meetings. He was a gentlemanly man, with an elegance of demeanour that was his essence, not just a persona, and a sophisticated ability to convey his ideas."

The key to John Sweeney was integrity. He believed the meaning of life was to be found in service to others and he did his best to live in accordance with his belief. Neither credulous nor cynical, "he was a man of hope," Higgins says. "He believed in institutions, but understood that they are flawed."

"More than most, John understood absolutely what St. Jerome's is about as a Catholic university," says Douglas Letson, Past-President of St. Jerome's. "He not only understood, he was committed to the vision." In memory and gratitude, this fall St. Jerome's presented the first annual Chancellor John Sweeney Award for Leadership in Catholic University Education.

But John Sweeney did not belong only to St. Jerome's. He began his career as a teacher, and education at all levels remained a focus in his life. He was the first superintendent of Kitchener's separate schools and, after overseeing the formation of the Waterloo County Roman Catholic School Board in the late '60s, became its first director of education. As Liberal MPP for Kitchener Wilmot and as a member of the Peterson cabinet, he built a reputation as a minister who really cared about the people his departments—Community and Social Services, and later Urban Affairs and Housing—were meant to serve. He kept working to create more affordable housing and to improve the prospects of people on welfare.

After 15 years in politics, he retired from the legislature in 1990 only to plunge into full-time public service. He served on the board of St. Mary's Hospital, chaired Habitat for Humanity, and worked with Big Sisters of Kitchener-Waterloo to establish a home for young street people. He served on the Premier's Council on Health, Well-Being and Social Justice and chaired the Waterloo Regional Government Review and the Ontario School Board Restructuring Task Force. He also taught at the University of Waterloo's School of Planning.

For the last 49 years the true heart of his life was his family: his wife Kay, their ten children, and 21 grandchildren. In 1997, the newly acquired women's residence was renamed Sweeney Hall in honour of Kay and John.

"As husband and wife, as father and mother, and as simply good people, John and Kay epitomized the best of our Western Christian culture," Letson says. "People who put the needs of others before their own. People with a genuine interest in those less fortunate. People who obviously love life, their family, their friends, and their community, and who clearly love one another." ☪

St. Jerome's Chancellor John Sweeney devoted his life to education, politics, and public service.

Photo: Belair Studio, Kitchener

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The next stage of evolution

by Michael W. Higgins

Our much respected Chancellor, John Sweeney, died this past July. He was a friend and a trusted advisor. I had many occasions to seek his counsel, to explore new possibilities for post-secondary Catholic education in the Province of Ontario, and to debate in an always honest and supportive way the issues and priorities facing university education. A devout but not credulous Catholic and a professional but not cynical politician, John sought both in his public life and in his private life to embody the simple and radical witness of Jesus in his time and in his place. He did this without fanfare and he did it with integrity. He was a worthy chancellor and a forthright friend. The entire St. Jerome's community treasures the many years of service he provided and will remember him for many more years to come.

John would be particularly proud of the developments I am about to speak of because he was a critical player in planning and effecting the strategy that will bring St. Jerome's University to a new threshold in its life as an institution of higher learning in the Roman Catholic tradition.

We are all conscious of the many changes that have occurred and continue to occur in the Catholic world. The post-Second Vatican Council church is a vibrant one, full of challenge and grace, but not without division and crisis. One of the challenges facing the Roman Catholic Church is the need to educate future Catholic leaders for positions of governance and responsibility in their community. With the decline of clerical and religious personnel over the last two decades, many of our Catholic institutions lack the public signature of Catholic identity. In turn, responsibility has increasingly shifted to the laity with numerous pressures and demands on their time and competence. It is the responsibility of Catholic universities to undertake the task of educating at the post-graduate level those Catholic professionals eager to contribute their service and skills to positions of leadership in the Roman Catholic community.

Two years ago, at a specially convened meeting of the Mission Committee of the Board of Governors of St. Jerome's, I reported on my efforts to find strategic alliances, university co-operative partnerships, and satellite arrangements with various theological institutions in order to respond to the growing demand in the Hamilton Diocese for post-graduate training in theology. John Sweeney, an active member of this committee, as indeed he was an active member of so many initiatives at St. Jerome's, asked me point-blank why it was that St. Jerome's University could not offer our own degrees in theology. John encouraged me to pursue this possibility because he felt strongly that it was the next stage in St. Jerome's evolution as a university serving the Catholic community in the Province of Ontario and, to

put it boldly, if we didn't do it, who would. With the encouragement of the Mission Committee, the Executive Committee of the Board of Governors, College Council, and the Board of Governors, I proceeded to do precisely as John suggested.

Working out the legal challenges was a comparatively easy undertaking. We then turned our attention to the far more demanding issue of funding. As you may know, provincial funding for a theological program is not directly available, so it would be necessary to secure external funding to enable our theology program to evolve. We worked assiduously with several Catholic partners in the Diocese of Hamilton to determine precisely the level of support we could be guaranteed.

We met with all six Directors of Education in the Diocese of Hamilton and received from them solid endorsement for our fledgling proposal for a master's degree in the Roman Catholic tradition. As well, we met with several CEOs of the hospitals in the Catholic diocese as well as leaders and CEOs from Catholic social services, religious orders, and other Catholic organizations in the larger community. We heard from these leaders, as well as many other individuals we canvassed during the course of the last two years, a common refrain: if you provide us with the resources and the opportunity we can assure you that various individuals will come forward to be candidates for the graduate degree.

The master's program will be phased in over several years as we undertake to raise money to ensure that we have the resources, secure financial basis, and expanding constituency to sustain this post-graduate undertaking. The full amount to be raised is between 2.5 and 3 million dollars and will include the establishment of a Chair in Catholic Theology. We have developed a three-part strategy that involves the raising of \$600,000 as phase one (this allows us to begin the program), moving on to the establishment of a visiting professorship in theology as phase two (an interim undertaking that would allow us the opportunity to bring established scholars to the St. Jerome's campus to make themselves available for a year at a time), and culminating with the establishment of the Chair as phase three.

As graduates and friends of St. Jerome's University you have a special role to play in this next stage in the evolution of your alma mater. If you wish to help us financially, to provide us with names and ideas that you think would be helpful in our campaign, or to consider enrolling yourself in our new program, please do not hesitate to contact either Harry Froklage, Director of Development and Graduate Affairs, or myself and we would be happy to speak to you about this pioneering moment in the history of St. Jerome's.

And this all started with a committed Chancellor's simple query. ☪

Photo: Ron Hewson



Michael W. Higgins is President of St. Jerome's University.



New graduate program at St. Jerome's will prepare Catholic leaders

“Great and momentous things are happening in the Church, and lay people have to be theologically literate to be ready for them,” says Michael W. Higgins, President of St. Jerome's. Priests are aging and retiring; new vocations are not keeping pace with attrition, while parish populations are growing. As a result, responsibilities are falling more and more on lay people in hospitals, on school boards, in counselling services.

“There are many lay people filling these roles and they are wonderful, well-educated people. But most are not educated to a level in theology that makes them competent to provide leadership in the Catholic community. At St. Jerome's we have a vital role to play in this time of change. Our job is to educate the leaders and potential leaders and to provide an enlightened direction for Catholic education in Ontario and perhaps beyond.”

To this end, St. Jerome's is proposing to offer a graduate-level program in the Roman Catholic tradition. St. Jerome's University will activate its degree-granting rights to establish the new program. (St. Jerome's waived its degree-

granting rights at the time of federation so that its students would graduate with a University of Waterloo BA or BMath. The activation will not affect undergraduate degrees.)

An endowment of \$600,000 is required to launch the proposed program and a total of \$2.5 to \$3 million will be needed to realize it fully. With founding pledges of \$250,000 from the Congregation of the Resurrection and \$100,000 from the Diocese of Hamilton, the private phase has gone very well. Now the public phase begins.

“Because of the generosity of the Resurrectionists and of the Bishop, one prominent Roman Catholic philanthropist has pledged several thousands of dollars to our graduate program, though he has requested anonymity in the matter of his gift,” says Higgins. “We also have several other individuals and communities who are currently reflecting upon our request for support.

“It is my sincere hope that the entire Catholic community in the Diocese of Hamilton will rise to this most exciting venture of collaboration, learning, and service in our history as an academy.” ☪

A night of feasting and firsts

September 28 was a night for announcing new and exciting initiatives, including what St. Jerome's President Michael W. Higgins describes as “the most dramatic change for St. Jerome's since federation with the University of Waterloo in 1960.”

The first St. Jerome's Feast for Catholic University Education, part of the celebrations for the feast day of St. Jerome on September 30, was held to celebrate post-secondary Catholic education, not just at St. Jerome's but across the province and the country. Higgins took the opportunity to announce the launch of the public phase of a fundraising campaign to endow a proposed St. Jerome's graduate program in Catholic theology. It was also the first formal announcement of the program, which is intended to develop informed lay leadership for Catholic institutions. It will be the first graduate degree program ever at St. Jerome's.

Underscoring the theme of the feast, the first annual Chancellor John Sweeney Award for Leadership in Catholic University Education was presented during the evening to the order that founded St. Jerome's in 1865: the Congregation

of the Resurrection. The award recognizes the person or group that has made an outstanding contribution to Catholic post-secondary education,



Fr. Lorford Keasey, Provincial Superior of the Congregation of the Resurrection, accepts the first Chancellor John Sweeney Award for Leadership in Catholic University Education from St. Jerome's graduates Deborah Pecoskie, Chair of the Board of Governors, and Ken Lavigne, former registrar of St. Jerome's.

Photo: Ron Hewson

“so it makes perfect sense that the first recipient should be the Congregation of the Resurrection,” Higgins says. The 260 people who attended rose in a standing ovation to honour the CRs as they accepted the award.

The name of the award, a tribute to John Sweeney's long and distinguished record of service to St. Jerome's as its first lay chancellor, was decided while he was still in good health, Higgins noted. Since his death it has become a memorial to him.

Special guests at what will be an annual event included Bishop Anthony Tonno of the Diocese of Hamilton; Elizabeth Witmer, Environment Minister; Karen Redman, MP for Kitchener Centre; Kay Sweeney and members of her family; and representatives of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, the Sisters of St. Joseph (Hamilton), and school boards and hospitals across the province. Although the scope of the Feast for Catholic University Education this year was diocese-wide, Higgins says, in future the feast could become a national event. ☪

To be continued

Peter Sweeney, son of former Chancellor John Sweeney, delivered the eulogy at his father's funeral on July 11, 2001 at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Kitchener. The following is an excerpt from that eulogy.

It was a sunny spring day, the anniversary of Nanny Sweeney's death, and Dad and I made a trip to the cemetery to say hello. We reminisced about the great lady who had given everything to the son she adored. And then Dad asked me to keep a promise. He had his epitaph chosen and asked me to relay it to the rest of the family and have it engraved on his tombstone after he was gone.

I remember thinking, here's a man who has accomplished so much, touched the lives of so many; his wisdom is legendary. Would it be advice, like “Measure twice, cut once”? Would it be an order: “Never pack up without whisking the tent”? Or would it be his patented suggestion, his way of telling you that you weren't quite on the right track: “You know what you could do”?

No, it was nothing like that. In typical selfless, thoughtful fashion, Dad wants his epitaph to simply read: “To be continued.” Imagine that. With all of the boasting he could have done, he chose instead to remind us all that life is a constantly evolving story.



Meet (from left to right) Carol Acton, Maureen Drysdale, Danine Farquharson, and Sue Brubacher.

Photo: Ron Hewson

Four new faces at St. Jerome's

Carol Acton

Carol Acton joined St. Jerome's as an assistant professor of English this September, but she's no stranger to either side of Laurel Creek. For the last 11 years she's been lecturing in English, researching the literature of war, and developing and teaching courses on communications for the Mathematics faculty.

Born and raised in Ireland, Acton received her first degree from Trinity College, Dublin. Her PhD thesis (Queen's) was on Wilfred Owen and First World War poets, an interest since age 18, when she discovered Owen in a classmate's poetry book. Later she began exploring the "life-writing" and poetry of women in the First World War as well as the neglected area of the writings of women in the Vietnam War.

This year she'll teach courses in Canadian children's literature and in communications in mathematics and computer science. As a full-time faculty member she'll also serve on committees, a prospect she welcomes. "It will give me a much better sense of being a part of the SJU community," she says. "I also hope that being permanent will mean I can see students throughout their time at St. Jerome's."

Maureen Drysdale

The route from geochemist to educational psychologist may not seem obvious, but it was a natural progression for Maureen Drysdale. Raised in the Maritimes, she moved west in the late '70s, completed a BSc in geology and became involved in professional development while working in the oil industry. There she discovered her real interests.

"I want to understand how people learn," she says. "That's a very wide field, when you realize that almost everything has an impact on learning. My particular focus has been on the differences in cognitive learning styles."

After completing a PhD in educational research at the University of Calgary, Drysdale came to St. Jerome's this July as an assistant professor. She will teach courses in developmental, adolescent, and educational psychology, and on the emotionally disturbed child.

Her interest extends to adult learners and post-secondary students as well. In Calgary she worked

with teachers and teachers-in-training, and conducted workshops on learning and assessment for the City of Calgary Fire Department and the city's Emergency Medical Services Department. She plans to establish similar links with school boards and first-response services in the Waterloo area. At St. Jerome's she would also like to develop workshops on testing methods and skills for academic success.

Danine Farquharson

Danine Farquharson's grandmother emigrated from Northern Ireland and she herself grew up in a family that loves to argue politics over the dinner table. That's the only personal history the Alberta native brings to her special research interest in the Irish Troubles. It was a "phenomenal" University of Alberta course in Irish drama that really ignited her love of Irish literature. She pursued it at Memorial University in Newfoundland before coming to St. Jerome's as an assistant professor of English this July.

Conflict is at the heart of Irish literature, Farquharson says. (Her PhD thesis dealt with the gunman in Irish fiction and film.) "There's an intoxicating paradox at work between the dangerous, violent propensities and the other side, the romance and beauty."

Among the courses she will teach—Women in Literature, Criticism, British Literature 1885-1918—she's nettled but not surprised to find Joyce (one of her favourites) and Yeats listed as British. "In future I'd like to develop courses on Irish literature. At St. Jerome's, there should be plenty of interest."

Beyond academics, "my great love is film." She was delighted to find a repertory theatre in Waterloo. Plans for an Irish film weekend at St. Jerome's are already brewing.

Sue Brubacher

Sue Brubacher's first day on the job as Assistant to the St. Jerome's Registrar and Coordinator of Recruitment was August 13, 2001. It was also Student Life 101, and thousands of prospective students and their parents were swarming across the campus.

When the dust had settled she could still say how much she was looking forward to the new term, when students would bring the campus back to life. "I love working at the University, and I love the students," she says.

She fills the position vacated by Barb Weber, who is pursuing a degree in education at the University of Western Ontario. Brubacher came to St. Jerome's from Conrad Grebel College, where she spent five years as Administrative Assistant to the Academic Dean. At St. Jerome's, she oversees recruitment: working with two liaison travellers, coordinating their schedules, and speaking in local schools herself. In matters related to admissions she works with professors and staff and is the front-line contact for students and parents.

It helps that she's also been a student at St. Jerome's. While working towards a BA in psychology, she found a great source of help in Andrea Charette, a former assistant to the registrar and now Director of Student Services at St. Jerome's. Which means Brubacher can say that when it comes to student relations, she's seen both sides now. ☺

Religion is on his agenda

One Sunday last year, Richard Gwyn had just settled into his pew in the Newman Chapel in Toronto when he noticed Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and his wife Aline arriving. "Until then, I hadn't thought of Chrétien as a Catholic," he wrote in his column in the *Toronto Star* a few months later. The prime minister's religious practice had never been of particular interest to the media.

"Canada is an extraordinarily secular country, compared to the United States," says Gwyn, who has been covering the political scene as a journalist for more than 40 years. For at least that long, or longer, religion has been off the radar of most mainstream Canadian journalists.

Gwyn was one of the first to mention in print the surprising fact that every prime minister for the last thirty-odd years has been Catholic, with the exception of Kim Campbell. "I made a point of this," he says, "only to make the point that nobody was making the point."

But even in Canada the climate has changed. In the last few years, religion has come out of the closet and re-entered the mainstream of public discourse. This was Gwyn's theme when he delivered the inaugural Somerville Lecture in Christianity and Communications at St. Jerome's Centre for Catholic Experience 2001-02 season, was sponsored by the *Catholic Register*.

Gwyn was the natural choice for inaugural speaker. A veteran journalist (his first major assignment was the Springhill mine disaster in 1958), best-selling author (*Smallwood; The Shape of Scandal; The Northern Magus; The 49th Paradox; Nationalism Without Walls*), he's been honoured by the national newspaper and magazine associations and named by his peers in the press gallery as the columnist they all felt they had to read.

For most of his career, religion was off his radar, too. Raised in an English Catholic family with a tradition of military service, he was educated at Stonyhurst, a Jesuit school in Lancashire, and at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst. "As a boy I had been a fairly serious Catholic; I'd thought about the priesthood." But it seems he wasn't meant to be either a priest or a Gurkha, his other choice. He dropped out of Sandhurst and emigrated to Canada, where he started work for British United Press in 1957 at \$43.50 a week. He married Sandra Fraser the following year.

Gwyn lapsed from Catholicism in his mid-twenties, but his upbringing continued to influence his attitudes to moral issues, and about five years ago he was drawn back to the Church. "One factor was simply age. As you get older, you're like an elephant: you go back to where you were born. The second was that Sandra was seriously ill. I suppose I was looking for consolation. She died a year ago of breast cancer." But of his return to Catholicism he adds, "I believe it would have happened anyway."

Thinking about religion, he also thought about the alternative, and found it both bleak and absurd. "It seemed to me that it's more sensible to believe in religion than not, since the alternative is to


believe in nothingness, and randomness, and accident. Once I had made that transition, I could say, 'I believe in the basic tenets of Catholicism, and that's where I take my stand.'"

His faith began to influence his commentary. On a foreign affairs panel discussing George Bush's initiative for financing faith-based charities, "I somewhat surprised my fellow panelists by defending this proposition, because the alternative, excluding faith-based charities from federal funding, surely was not defensible. While making that argument, I was aware that two or three years earlier I would not have done so."

The Northern Magus: Pierre Trudeau and Canadians enchanted readers in 1980. If he were writing the book today, Gwyn says, he would have probed more deeply at some points. "In terms of the way Trudeau behaved, his value system, I believe his Catholicism was important to him. But I didn't examine that very much at the time, because it wasn't as significant to me then as it would be now."

He expects to have plenty to write about in future. There's a growing sense among Canadians that something has gone wrong with our values, he says, and this unease has pushed moral and ethical issues higher on the agenda. Another factor is the growing strength of immigrant religions such as Islam and Sikhism, that are raising the energy level of the debate. Finally, the advances of science and technology are forcing us to face ethical questions that would have read like science fiction 20 years ago.

"I think that our Church has something to say about fundamental moral issues," Gwyn says. "And those that catch my attention are the ones that touch that most sacred of all issues: what is a human being? The claim is being made that the first human being will be cloned in a few years' time. All the polls show that the vast majority of people—something like 80 per cent—don't want human cloning. And the same polls show that the vast majority of people assume this is going to happen, that whatever science can do, it should do, and anyway it's going to do."

But not without a debate. Richard Gwyn, for one, will be warming up his keyboard. "My writ is to write about politics," he says. "But it's a broad writ, and issues of meaning will come up more in my writing than they have in the past." 



Journalist Richard Gwyn spoke at St. Jerome's on October 12.

All things human—all things new

Events still ahead in the St. Jerome's Centre for Catholic Experience 2001-2002 season

November 9

Kathleen Keating
Women and the Church

December 3

Jean Vanier
Becoming Human: Living for Others

(We regret that all available spaces have been reserved.)

December 14

The 9:30 Choir
Song: A Celebration of Community

January 25

Lucinda Vardey
Beyond Words: The Language of the Feminine Spirit

February 8

Lee Cormie
Reading the Bible: Hope and History

March 1

Douglas Letson
Power and Peril: The Perils of Writing About the Power of the Church

April 5

Reginald Bibby
Restless Gods: The Renaissance of Religion in Canada

For details visit website www.sju.ca/services/stju_centre

Or call (519) 884-8111, ext. 259 to request a brochure.

Family stories

In some families, choosing St. Jerome's is becoming a tradition

“We encouraged the children from the time they were toddlers to aim for university,” says **Liz Hoover (née Walsh, BA '75, Geography)**. “Of course we hoped they’d do well academically. But more than that, it was such a positive experience for us. We would never trade those years for anything, and we wanted very much for them to share that joy.”

When the time came for daughter Amy to decide on a university, Liz and her husband **David Hoover (BA '74, Religious Studies)**, tried to step lightly. “We never overtly tried to influence Amy’s choice,” David says. “We really left it up to her.”

“But when she chose St. Jerome’s, we were delighted,” Liz adds.

David’s earliest memory of St. Jerome’s features the Registrar of the time, Brian Eby. “I had some scheduling problems when I arrived and he told me to go to the gym and take it easy for a few hours. When I got back it was all worked out. He really went out of his way to make us welcome.”

“I never felt lost at St. Jerome’s,” Liz says. “Coming from a very close-knit family and circle of friends, I was nervous when I first visited the

qualification courses for religion. They both feel that the integration of spiritual and academic life at St. Jerome’s influenced their career choice. Not that Liz needed much encouragement, coming from a family in which teaching is “just something you do naturally.”

Amy and her younger brother Jeff heard all about St. Jerome’s from their earliest years. At family get-togethers, especially with Liz’s sister, **Margaret Bak (BA '78, English)** and brother-in-law, **Michael Bak (BMath '77)**, memories were aired and photo albums handed around.

The children heard about how their parents met at a football game and got acquainted while making preparations for Sunday evening Mass. They liked hearing how their father played basketball for St. Jerome’s and had friends on the national-championship-winning Waterloo team.

“They did some crazy things,” says Amy, now a third-year English student. “They both took part in floor runs—the guys sneaked into the girls’ residence and grabbed things, and the girls retaliated.”

The Hoovers have returned at least once every year to revisit their old haunts. Amy recalls those trips with fondness. While still a very small child, she became familiar and comfortable with the campus. Early on, she made up her mind. “I always said I’d go to St. Jerome’s.”

By her final year at high school, however, the decision wasn’t so cut and dried. “Choosing a university, Waterloo was third on my list,” Amy says. “But after taking tours of all three, it moved up to first.” The deciding factor was the community atmosphere at St. Jerome’s. “I’m a very social person, and at St. Jerome’s people seem to be really interested in you and glad to see you.”

Marian O’Connor (née Van Berlo, BA '80, English) and **Frank O’Connor (BA '80, English)** also encouraged their daughter Jessica and son Justin to aim for university. “We always told them what a great time we had at St. Jerome’s,” Marian says. “We told them what a wonderful experience it was, both academically and for the sheer fun of it. But when Jessica was choosing a university, Frank and I tried not to say too much. We were afraid that if we tried to encourage her too much, she might decide against it.”

Like David and Liz Hoover, Frank and Marian O’Connor met at St. Jerome’s and lived in residence. “Visiting between rooms in residence was very important: the talking, the making friends,” Marian says. “I knew people who had lived off campus and then moved into Notre Dame, and they found residence a much more enjoyable life.”

“What I remember is how easily you could walk into the lounge or into a room in residence and strike up a conversation,” says Frank, who was a prefect in third and fourth years. “You could find something in common with almost



David and Liz Hoover were delighted when daughter Amy (center) chose St. Jerome’s.

Photo: Ron Hewson

college on March Break. So many people—how could you ever be a part of that? But St. Jerome’s had such a wonderful community spirit, I felt at home from the start.” Later, as a student ambassador, Liz made other potential students feel welcome.

After graduation Liz and David earned BED degrees and went to teach in Durham Region. Liz is now teaching junior kindergarten in an Oshawa Catholic school, while David, at Monsignor Paul Dwyer high school, is Head of Religious Curriculum and director of additional

everyone, though they came from so many different areas."

Following graduation in 1980, Marian earned a BEd and taught for a year after marriage. She and Frank moved west to share the position of Executive Director of Serena Saskatchewan, then came home in 1985 when Frank accepted the post of St. Jerome's Director of Residence. Five years later he went on to earn his BEd and now both O'Connors are teaching in Brantford. Frank is at North Park Collegiate in the public system, while Marian began this year at St. John's College, a Catholic high school, after 13 years teaching in elementary schools.

Over the years they kept in touch with old classmates. "And we're constantly meeting other people from St. Jerome's, people who lived in residence," Marian says. "We always find we have things to talk about, no matter how many years they were there before us or after us."

Of course Jessica, like Amy, heard all about St. Jerome's from an early age. "The mantra she always heard was that it was the best time of your life, a time with a great deal of freedom and not a great deal of responsibility," Frank says. Marian adds: "We talked about the community life at St. Jerome's, the positive atmosphere, how you're a face there, not just a number. The fun of frosh week, the small classes, the fact that the profs all know you."

Because her father was residence director in the late '80s, Jessica remembers playing with the dons and having St. Jerome's students as babysitters. She also recalls family friends teasing her by insisting she just had to go to St. Jerome's—she had no choice.

But for Jessica, it was not an easy decision. "Not all students want to go to the same university their parents went to," St. Jerome's Registrar Dana Woito points out. "At this time in their lives, kids often want to establish some distance from their parents, to forge their own path."

"I believe she was concerned that she would be living in our shadow," Frank says. "But I don't think it hurt that when we attended the distinguished grad award reception for Rob Donelson last November, Jessica was inundated with welcome and encouragement from people like Dana Woito and Harry Froklage, the Director of Graduate Affairs."

"It was neat to know that I was wanted, that people already knew who I was," Jessica admits.

She was still considering another school, because it had the program she wanted. Then she toured its campus. "I always liked the St. Jerome's campus, with the creek and the trees. I'm from the country and I like the outdoors, so it was important to me to be in a place where you could enjoy yourself outdoors. The other school just didn't have that feeling. I knew that if I was going to live somewhere for four years, I needed to like where I was living."



The day her parents drove her up to move in, her mother met an old friend and started reminiscing. "There were all kinds of stories," Jessica says. "About talking in the hall till all hours of the night, about how my dad broke a lamp goofing around, all really positive stuff. As my mom left she said, 'I don't feel bad, because I know you're going to love it here.'"

Less than a week later Jessica had already volunteered to be a fire marshal and was talking to her don about being floor rep. She hopes to be a frosh leader in orientation next year.

Day by day, Jessica is storing up memories—like Amy Hoover, who, as a third-year student, has made a good start at collecting her own stock of stories. Amy has been actively involved in the life of St. Jerome's, serving as second-year student representative last year, acting in a skit in the college coffee house, enjoying the proms. Last year she helped organize some of the events of the annual Charity Run. There's a family connection here, too: her uncle Michael Bak was one of the originators of the first Run, back in 1976.

Liz says she has an advantage over mothers whose children go to different universities or colleges. "When Amy tells me what she's been doing, I can picture it. I've been there."

And David says: "She brings it back to us." ☺

Helping daughter Jessica (centre) move into residence brought back memories for Frank and Marian O'Connor.

Photo: Ron Hewson

Walking on holy ground

Joan Grundy (BA '84, Religious Studies/English) admits that in her effort to stay true to her Catholic vocation, "I have done things on occasion that others felt was pushing the envelope." When AIDS was just becoming known in the '80s, Joan and a fellow teacher invited a man with AIDS to speak to her senior religion class "so that they could move beyond a label and meet a person." The speaker later died, but the educational video he helped make is still being used in the Waterloo

Catholic District School Board (WCDSB) to help students understand AIDS.

Joan has been named the 2001 winner of the Fr. Norm Choate Distinguished Graduate Award. The award honours the St. Jerome's graduate who has made an outstanding contribution to his or her profession, community, or church. For Joan, her commitment to her profession is also her contribution to her community and her church. "I really believe that being a Catholic educator is a vocation and that teaching, in any capacity, is ministry," she says. As a teacher in the Waterloo Catholic school system since 1985 and as Religion Consultant and Faith Formation Consultant over the past six years, Joan says her position makes her feel privileged. "Talking with people about their life and their faith," she says, "is walking on holy ground."

Her commitment to Catholic education has made a deep impression on co-workers and students. "As a Christian within the Catholic tradition and a woman of faith, Joan demonstrates a level of religious and spiritual maturity that provides superb role modelling for staff and students alike," says Patricia Brannigan, now retired as the board's superintendent of program services. "Her passion for meaningful liturgy, her love of scripture, her careful attention to reflection and prayer and her compassionate, joy-filled presence never fail to call others forth."

During her five years as religion consultant, Joan reshaped and refocused all elementary and secondary religious education programs and adult faith formation programs in the Waterloo Catholic

school system, with great success. She dedicated a large part of her time to spiritual development programs for staff, especially teachers. "Joan's authenticity and openness about her own spiritual journey and her deep respect for the spiritual journeys of others have contributed significantly to the increased level of interest in faith formation and spiritual development among staff in WCDSB," Brannigan says.

In her current position as Religion and Faith Formation Consultant, Joan is a spiritual leader in the school system, says Sue Morrison, Head of Religious Education at St. Benedict Catholic Secondary School in Cambridge. The retreats she facilitates are well attended, "and many people cite Joan, and the gifts she brings to these experiences, as the main reason for wanting to return time and time again." Morrison, who first met Joan as a student, describes her as the teacher who inspired her to study religion at university and to become a teacher herself. "She is a consummate professional who continues to bring her passion, love, and spirituality to those adults she teaches today."

"I wear my St. Jerome's graduation ring on my right hand with great pride," Joan says. She has maintained her connection with St. Jerome's and serves on the University's advisory board. Some of her commitments include helping to

identify speakers for the Centre for Catholic Experience, coordinate the St. Jerome's/WCDSB lecture series, shape policies for student residences, and plan the St. Jerome's/WCDSB Catholics in Public Life Conference.

While working as a teacher and consultant, she continues to be a student herself, earning credentials so that she can "more directly help people to help themselves." If that, on top of all the rest, sounds like a lot of work, it is. But Joan's agenda is fueled by a work ethic instilled by her parents as well as by a high level of energy and enthusiasm. "My parents taught me to not only work hard but play hard, too," she says. "I laugh easily and I thoroughly enjoy people. I like to think that's what helps me keep a balance in life."

The Norm Choate Award will be presented on November 16 in Siegfried Hall in St. Jerome's, followed by the 2001 Graduates' Association Lecture delivered by Associate Professor Emeritus Peter Naus, identified by Joan as one of the professors who influenced her most at St. Jerome's. In a talk entitled "Transforming Taboos," Naus will share the insights harvested from his more than 20 years of teaching on sexuality, aging, and death. The lecture is co-sponsored by the Sexuality, Marriage and the Family Program based at St. Jerome's. ☪



Peter Naus, one of the professors Joan Grundy says most influenced her, will be speaking at the award presentation on November 16. For more details, see page 12.

Photos: Ron Hewson

Joan Grundy, winner of this year's Distinguished Graduate Award, wears her St. Jerome's grad ring with great pride.

Call for nominations

The St. Jerome's Graduates' Association established the Father Norm Choate Distinguished Graduate Award to recognize graduates who have made outstanding contributions to their professions, their communities, or the Church.

To nominate a graduate for this distinction, please contact Harry Froklage, Director of Development and Graduate Affairs, for a nomination form. An electronic nomination form is also available. Please send e-mail to froklage@uwaterloo.ca or call (519) 884-8111, ext. 255.

The deadline for nominations is Friday, March 1, 2002.

Continuing CONNECTIONS

Sister Celeste takes on the world

by Harry Froklage

The wide smile that greets me betrays nothing of the challenges faced by Sister Celeste Reinhart in the five years since she departed Notre Dame College. It is simply warm and welcoming. Only later, as I leave, do I discern there the resolute energy that sustained her through a re-visioning of her life's mission and a personal ordeal that became very public.

Six years ago, as the Dean of Women, Celeste oversaw the withdrawal of the School Sisters of Notre Dame from Notre Dame College. The difficult decision was taken because of the decline in the number of Sisters. "But," she adds, "St. Jerome's needed to be under one leadership for the sake of the community."

Celeste found immediate opportunities to further the School Sisters' continuing mission: to educate for social change. She travelled to Turkey to attend a UN conference on building sustainable communities, observing an emerging appreciation for women's ability "to challenge prevailing values around critical areas and put them all together on the global agenda."

That experience motivated her to return to Canada to pursue her master's degree in theology at Regis College in preparation for further service.

Then she received a call from Foreign Affairs in Ottawa informing her that her brother had been kidnapped by guerrilla forces in Colombia.

In an action that won widespread praise and media attention, her brother, Norbert, had volunteered to take the place of his employee who was being held for ransom by FARC, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia. Celeste, applying her experience with Amnesty International and ecumenical social justice coalitions, "travelled by phone, fax, and email to human rights offices across the globe, to FARC guerrilla headquarters, to radio and television interviews, to embassies."

The greatest challenge was the confusion of messages about Norbert's circumstances. She witnessed government reluctance to jeopardize bilateral relations and the media's willingness to render complex issues as simple melodrama. Her dilemma was compounded by personal issues of conscience around the inequities being highlighted by the insurgents, especially the social injustice of major corporations. For Celeste and her family, the emotional crisis became encapsulated in the question, "Where is truth?"

Happily, she was successful in securing Norbert's ransom and release and won, through the ordeal, "a passion for never turning back."

She applies that passion to her present work in St. James Town, a densely populated immigrant area in downtown Toronto, near Jarvis and Bay streets. Working with the parishioners of Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Celeste helps new immigrants access the resources of community groups, agencies, and businesses, community development work that is undertaken "through



the eyes of Catholic social teaching." She works with immigrants from Latin America, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Africa, Korea, and China: "wherever there is conflict." These people face traumatic issues ranging from feelings of loss, alienation, and suspicion of authority to anger in the face of diminished prestige and power.

Celeste calls what she does "worldwork." The outcomes are profoundly practical: a "cottage industry" permitting immigrants to barter goods and skills and acquire crucial work experience; liaison work with community policing; education programs about civil rights and parenting in a new culture; collaboration with businesses so that immigrants can showcase their goods. Celeste is planning a daycare suited to the working schedules of new Canadians, and is negotiating with a credit union to provide small loans and offer credit counselling and instruction in budgeting and savings.

Her passion and commitment to this work, and her delight in its human-scale successes, are palpable. "I'm creating a safe place where people can come with their need and be respected." Her only requirement is that participants share what they have learned with others in their community.

Celeste is equally committed to the School Sisters' efforts to publicize and eradicate the international traffic in women and children. "Next to militarism and drugs," she notes, "the sex trade is the third largest industry in the world." She invites the women who lived at Notre Dame and other St. Jerome's students to join in national and local action to end violence against women or, as the Canadian SSND's are doing, by joining in the Purple Rose Campaign, an international effort to end the sex trafficking of Filipina women and children.

"How well I remember your growth into confident young men and women, preparing for your own version of worldwork. I have never forgotten you and I often pray for you and wish you a future full of hope and all good things!"

Sister Celeste welcomes reconnections at celeste.reinhart@sympatico.ca.

"Sustainable communities require sitting in the fire of diversity," says Sister Celeste Reinhart. Her approach to community development encourages people of many cultures to work together towards creative solutions. It is deep democracy."

Photo: Ron Hewson

We want to hear from you!

As part of an ongoing review of our publications, events, and services to the St. Jerome's community, we sent out a brief survey to a number of graduates and friends in August. Many of you have responded and we thank you for your participation. We encourage those who have not replied to please take a moment to provide your assessment and ideas about SJU Update and the activities of the Graduates' Association. Thank you.

CLASS notes

'65 Gwen McGrenere (née Nowak, BA '65, English) says she enjoyed the spring/summer issue of *Update*, except for an error in Classnotes. The correct form of Gwen's name is above. To find out more about her recently published book, visit the website www.miriamofnazareth.com. Friends can reach Gwen by e-mail at info@cortleighhousepublishing.com.

'74 After working for nine years at Draxis Health Inc. as a warehouse manager and a production/planning specialist, Kevin Droughan (BA '75, History) was let go as a result of downsizing in March. Luckily, he was prepared. During the previous year Kevin had been studying website design and the Internet. He now has his own business, 14 Peaks Consulting, operating out of his home in Toronto (East York). He also teaches website design at Seneca College and the Computer Institute. Kevin is still in the photography business (the website is www.dartsphoto.com) and he's been the drummer for the R&B band Rocket 88 for three years. (He studied music at Humber College and has been serious about percussion at least since his university years.) Kevin can be reached at (416) 422-2218, or through his website, www.14peaks.com.

'76 Kevin Phelan (BA '76, History) has worked for Hewlett-Packard in various capacities for the last 21 years. In 1998 he moved with his family to Chicago, where he is now the company's area customer support manager. He writes: "My wife, Sandra (née London, BMath '76, UW) is now a stay-at-home mom (meaning she works her backside off but does not get a paycheque for it). We have twin daughters, Deanna and Robyn, who are 10 years old and very active in competitive figure skating. While at SJC I spent a great deal of time playing hockey, but I finally decided to retire the goal pads

last year, and now dedicate my free time to aviation and my Cherokee 140." Classmates are invited to contact Kevin at cdnpilot@voyager.net.

'77 Patrick J. Greaney (BES '77) and Kathy Greaney (née Carpe, BA '73, UW) celebrated their 30th anniversary in August. Pat retired from the Canadian Armed Forces in 1991 with the rank of major after 20 years of service, and spent five years with United Van Lines' head office in Toronto. Next came three years in Edmonton, Alberta, with KPMG. In 1999 Pat formed his own consulting company, C2 Logistics Inc., specializing in transportation and logistics. After all those moves (nine in all), another might be on the agenda, with Pat's work taking him to central Canada so often. Of their eight children, six (ranging in age from the five-year-old at kindergarten to the 19-year-old entering the University of Alberta) are still at home. The two oldest girls are married and living in Alberta.

'78 To mark 25 years of singing and recording to raise money for charity, Mark Curtis (BA '78) has launched his 12th recording, *The Bridge to Us All*. Proceeds from the sale of his recordings go to the Rose Cherry Home, a hospice for chronically and terminally ill children. For more information, call (905) 876-3379 or e-mail wordsong@globalserve.net.

'90 Anne Roth (née Stalker, BA '90, History) and her husband Jason Roth (MAcc '92, UW) welcomed their second son, Joel Adam Roth, on April 30, 2001. Anne, who has been teaching in a Brampton elementary school in the Dufferin-Peel Catholic school system, is planning to take a year off to be home with Joel and Alex (4), who is starting junior kindergarten. Jason is working as director of logistics in the Mississauga head office of Heidelberg Canada.

Award-winning graduates

Academic Dean Kieran Bonner (left) and President Michael W. Higgins (right) congratulate the recipients of the two most prestigious medals awarded at the Spring 2001 Convocation. Ayl Lapkoff (second from the left), who graduated with a BA in Philosophy, was awarded the Alumni Association Gold Medal for the highest standing in Arts this year. At the same time, the Governor-General's Gold Medal, for the highest standing in all undergraduate programs, was awarded to LauraLee Haas (second from the right), who graduated with a BA in Geography.



CLASS notes

'91 Britta Bia, (BSc '91,) sends word from England that she received her PhD in biochemistry from Oxford University in June 2000. "My latest news: I just had a beautiful little girl named Saskia Francesca Orr. My husband, Stuart Orr, and I are thrilled. She was born on April 3, 2001 in London, England." Friends may reach Britta by e-mail at britta_bia@hotmail.com.

"No, I haven't dropped off the face of the earth," writes Julie Roberts (BA '92, English). "My son, Luke Johnson Roberts, was born on May 28, 2000 and I've been busy ever since! You know what it's like when you first fall in love with someone and they consume your every thought and waking moment? That's where I've been!" Julie took an extended leave from her job at Kitchener Public Library until July. "Luke is an absolute joy... Clint and I are having a great time!" Friends are invited to get in touch with Julie at clint2001AD@aol.com.

'93 Elaine Demaiter-Boyd (BMath '93) and her husband Paul Boyd (BHK '95, Windsor) are proud to announce the arrival of Emily Elaine on April 26, 2001, a sister for James (5) and Brian (2). When

Elaine returns to teaching in February she'll be going to a new school: Holy Trinity High School in Simcoe, Ontario.

'95 In 1998 Darren Giavedoni (BA '95, History) and Stephanie Jacklin (BA '95) went to work for Nova Group's English language schools in Japan. "We have lived in Kobe for the past three years and thoroughly enjoyed the experience," Darren writes. "Initially the culture shock threatened to overwhelm us, but we quickly learned the Japanese way of doing things and have even mastered the Japanese railway system as well as basic Japanese." Stephanie now works in Nova's head office in Osaka and trains teachers and develops curriculum for Japanese school boards, while Darren manages a school in Kobe with a staff of eight teachers and is an assistant teacher trainer. "We work with teachers from around the world and have made a lot of friends." They've also been able to satisfy their travelling bug, climbing Mount Fuji at night to see the sun rise, skiing at Nagano, visiting Korea and Vietnam, riding elephants and bamboo rafts in Thailand, and visiting the temples at Angkor Wat in Cambodia. Darren and Stephanie plan to return to Canada in October, get married in Hamilton in January 2002, and then leave for Australia.

SJU grads kick up their heels

On Saturday, July 14, St. Jerome's grads and other members of the St. Jerome's community joined over 80 local Irish dancing devotees at A Midsummer Night's Ceili. The infectious music of the Grand River Ceili Band and the encouragement and instruction of caller Maureen Mulvey transformed them into capable Irish dancers by evening's end.

Before the dance, grads gathered in the quad for a Buffet St. Jerome's, sharing memories and stories of their post-SJU lives. Besides those pictured, Steve Caron (BA '81), Mike Mosca (BMath '95), Maryanne Rose (BA '95), and Patti Tusch (BA '80), attended.



Genevieve Anderson (BA '94), Christina Ronzio (BA '97), and Sarah van den Enden (BA '95) dig into the buffet



Katie Donohue (BA '93), cuts a caper at the Ceili.

Special thanks to Genevieve Anderson (BA '94), Lyn McNiffe (BA '81), Stella Paola (BA '87), and Marianna Worth (BA '96) who helped organize the event.

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)

Please do not publish this info in SJU Update.

Please return this form to:

Harry Proklage
Director of Development and Graduate Affairs
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You can also send e-mail to:
proklage@uwaterloo.ca

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Enthusiastic about the truth?

St. Jerome's grads can look forward to the publication of *Enthusiasm for the Truth* in spring 2002. The comprehensive history of St. Jerome's University by Fr. Jim Wahl, Gerry Stortz, and Ken McLaughlin includes a large,

richly illustrated section devoted to campus life. For information on how to order the book, please contact Harry Froklage, Director of Development and Graduate Affairs, phone: (519) 884-8111 ext. 255, e-mail: froklage@uwaterloo.ca.



It's been at least ten years since St. Jerome's frosh last pulled each other into Laurel Creek, at least in an organized way. This orientation week tug-of-war took place in 1974.

Photo: St. Jerome's University Archives

Upcoming events

Homecoming 2001: SJU Trivia Challenge

Friday, November 2, 7:30 p.m.
St. Jerome's University—Community Centre

St. Jerome's second annual evening of tournament trivia is part of the University of Waterloo Homecoming celebrations. Tables of trivialites share those bits of otherwise useless information, competing for prizes and the right to be enshrined on the SJU Bragging Rights Trophy. Free pizza and munchables; cash bar. Cost: \$12.00 per person; \$20.00 per couple; \$75.00 per table of eight.

Tell me more!

For more information on these and other events, please contact Harry Froklage, Director of Development and Graduate Affairs. Phone: (519) 884-8111 ext. 255 • e-mail: froklage@uwaterloo.ca.

Father Norm Choate Distinguished Graduate Award Presentation and Graduates' Association Lecture

Speaker: Peter Naus
Topic: "Transforming Taboos: Reflections on the Teaching of Sexuality"
Friday, November 16, 7:30

The winner of the Father Norm Choate Distinguished Graduate Award for 2001, Joan Grundy (BA 84, Honours Religious Studies and English), identified Peter Naus as one of the professors who most influenced her at St. Jerome's. In this talk, co-sponsored by the Sexuality, Marriage and the Family Program at St. Jerome's, he will reflect on sexuality and his teaching about sexuality for some 20 years. A reception will follow the presentation. Admission is free but pre-registration is appreciated.



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