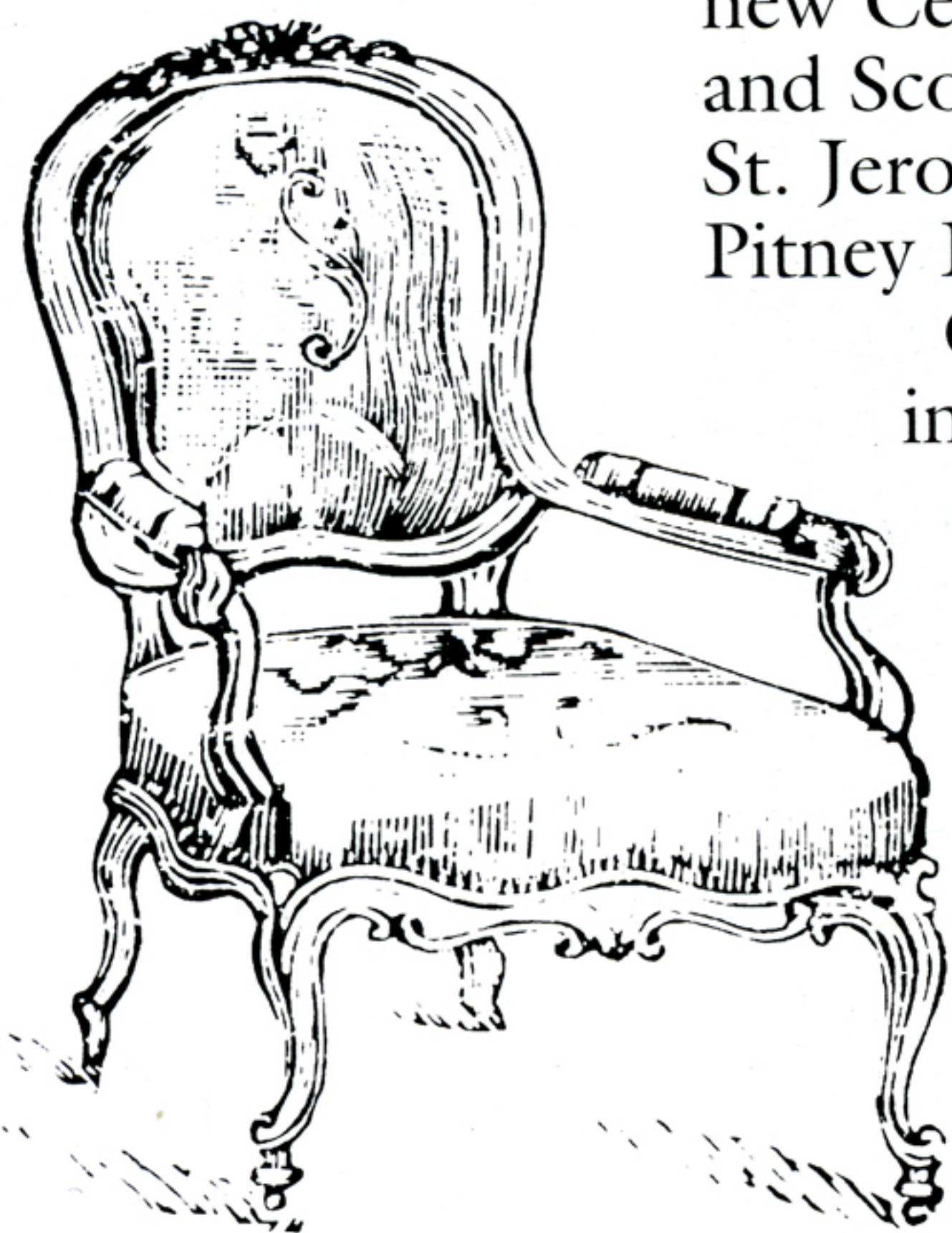


From time to time, faculty and staff at St. Jerome's get new office furniture, but that's not what we're talking about here. Two new chairs in cryptography were recently established as part of the University of Waterloo's

## Scott Vanstone gets a new chair

the traditional written signature. A number that is a function of the information that



new Centre of Applied Cryptographic Research, and Scott Vanstone, a professor of mathematics at St. Jerome's, has been appointed the NSERC/Pitney Bowes chairholder.

Cryptography—the art of writing and solving codes—has been the focus of a great deal of media attention recently because of the central role it plays in securing electronic communications and data transmissions. Before electronic communication, society had developed an elaborate but workable system that revolved around the written signature to deal with security issues.

Today, as more and more information is transferred digitally, electronic alternatives to the written signature are becoming increasingly important.

As holder of the new chair, Vanstone will focus his research on public key cryptography, a sub-discipline of cryptography that addresses

privacy, data integrity, and non-repudiation—the guaranteed acceptance by an electronic system of valid data. Vanstone says the big recent breakthrough in his field is the development of the digital signature, the electronic equivalent of

accompanies it, a digital signature can be computed only at source, and only by the individual who originates, but it can be recomputed and verified at any destination.

Before accepting his new chair, Vanstone held the Mobius Chair in Cryptography at St. Jerome's, which was established in 1995. In addition to teaching at St. Jerome's, Vanstone holds cross-appointments in two Waterloo departments: Computer Science and Combinatorics and Optimization. He is also chief cryptographer at Certicom, a leading provider of cryptographic technologies for computing and communication companies.

Vanstone is enthusiastic about the new centre at Waterloo, which he expects will attract the best graduate students, excellent postdoctoral fellows, and distinguished professors. "The centre will create a critical mass of cryptographic research," he comments.

## Out of darkness

"I keep setting myself the task (sometimes on purpose, sometimes not) of speaking about that experience where my words break down, where I'm faced with trying to write through the unspeakable, the untellable," says Charlene Diehl-Jones. "I'm fascinated by what happens at that juncture: where language faces its own failure."

A professor of English at St. Jerome's and an accomplished poet, Diehl-Jones recently completed "the most difficult task (I hope) I'll ever find for myself as a writer." *Lamentations*, published by Trout Lily Press of Stratford, Ontario, grew out of the pain of losing a child, Chloe Diehl-Jones, who lived just a week.

"It's scary work," says Diehl-Jones. "When you let yourself experience the full impact of grief, some part of you gets so lost that you're never entirely sure you'll find your way back again. To grieve, if you're strong enough to do it fully, is to take up residence in the dark places, even as you lean toward the daylight you know still exists someplace nearby."

A brave book, *Lamentations* is a record of her journey through the dark places toward the light. "What I find in these pieces, much to my surprise, much to my delight, is that

they're nowhere near as dark as I'd anticipated," says Diehl-Jones. "When I finally let go of trying to tell what I thought was untellable, when I gave up and just listened for the threads that spun around me in the quiet of my sadness, I found myself writing a garden. Gardens have a magic about them: the energy that presses them into greenness every year, the odd logic of growth and decay and regrowth."

Getting to that garden, however, was hard work. "I wrote the prairie winter pieces first," Diehl-Jones recalls. "All I could really hang onto in those first weeks was those great sweeps of space, the way the frozen prairie somehow spoke all the wordlessness that had overtaken me." But most difficult to write were the pieces in the "lullaby" section. "It's where I braved speaking into the abyss, speaking to a child who was already gone from me, who can only hear my heart, and not my voice."

Her courage has been rewarded with the publication of a handsome book. "I love the look of it," says Diehl-Jones. "I like that it's so spare inside, it feels like the words are speaking to the white space, the wordless space. The book is a kind of living story of Chloe that moves through space and time with me."



Photo: Ron Hewson

*the flax bobs blue  
reminds the sky to wake  
the poppies this  
is the garden you should  
know my child the blaze  
of grape hyacinth dying  
to another year's promise*

from *Lamentations*  
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Trout Lily Press  
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