

OAC '58 Came Calling

Recently a delegation from the OAC Class of '58 met with dean Rob Gordon and faculty and staff from the college to better understand the strategic direction that OAC is taking in its teaching and research activities.

Bill Stevens, who was accompanied by classmates Jim Wilcox, Bev Gloin, Tip Haagsma and Charlie Gracey, explained that graduates of his generation had witnessed dramatic transformations in agriculture during their lifetime. Those who have worked in agriculture are convinced that intensive, highly productive and efficient agriculture is the only way we will meet the challenges of feeding a growing world population.

The group wanted to know if the OAC dean's office, and by extension the OAC faculty, shared that conviction and that it was reflected in research and teaching programs throughout the college. They expressed some concern that too much emphasis was being placed on reduced-input organic production systems, and that while this should remain a choice for agricultural producers, the future food supply clearly depends on science-based production practices.

"We received welcome assurances that OAC has not strayed from its longstanding tradition of 'science in agriculture,'" said Stevens, "but I think this is the beginning of an important dialogue between alumni and their alma mater."

Charlie Gracey, OAC '58

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Students line up for books in the campus co-op bookstore in 1947.

Guelph Campus Co-op Turns 99 This Year

By students, for students – as relevant today as it was almost 100 years ago when seven students pooled their resources and created the OAC Students' Co-operative. Now known as the Guelph Campus Co-op and located in the basement of Johnston Hall, the business marks its 99th year in 2012, which was declared the International Year of Co-operatives by the United Nations General Assembly.

From 1913 to 1989, the co-operative was the major retailer on campus, providing books, housing, a pharmacy and food services. The Massey Coffee-shop, dug out of the basement of Massey Hall in only three evenings by OAC, OVC and Macdonald Institute students, was a popular gathering place for students until its closure in 1998.

In 2007, the Guelph Campus Co-op partnered with the Central Student Association's affordable housing initiative to redevelop 7 College Avenue West as an accessible and affordable housing co-op. Today the Guelph Campus Co-op bookstore and housing continue to provide students with cost-effective and convenient alternatives, serving more than 5,000 members per year.

By Nancy Orso

CHANGING LIVES
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Get to Know OAC

“Welcome back! Well the names have all changed since you hung around, But those dreams have remained and they’re turned around.”
(“Welcome Back Kotter” lyrics by John Sebastian)

As winter gradually loosens its grip, the theme of “welcome back” can apply to many things we like to see again, from the arrival of spring to another season of planting.

We welcome all new grads to the *Alumni News* and hope that you enjoy reading about what’s happening around OAC and with some of your classmates.

Events are constantly occurring at all of the OAC campuses, and I encourage everyone to take the time to attend at least one of them. In addition to our support of several award-winning student teams, your

OAC Alumni Association is proud to support many student activities on campus, including the OAC winter games, careers night, CanAct dinner and the “grand daddy” of them all, College Royal.

Every time I return to campus, I am amazed at the changes, the vibrancy and the growth that has occurred since I graduated. But one thing always remains the same: the warm reception I get from everyone and the positive “can do” attitude of the students.

So take the time to come back and reacquaint yourself with your campus. Come out to the OAC golf tournament Sept. 7 and “welcome back, welcome back, welcome back.”

Rob Hall, B.Sc.(Agr.) '84
OAC AA President



Agri-food Sector Grows Jobs

“Commissioned research shows strong demand for graduates to serve Ontario’s agriculture and food sector.” This is the headline of the summary report of a study released this past winter by OAC.

Findings from its first-ever industry poll of the human resource needs of the agri-food sector – the single most important economic driver in the province – send a clear and positive message to graduates of the Ontario Agricultural College. Employment opportunities for OAC grads abound!

The OAC Alumni Foundation was proud to be a founding partner in this “Planning for Tomorrow” project, which sought to understand and quantify the

current and future market demand for graduates with diploma, degree and post-graduate education. Drawing on an extensive alumni network throughout the sector, this in-depth study provided quality data from which the college can confidently and strategically structure its academic programming and new student outreach strategies, as well as forward planning for faculty and facilities in line with future market needs.

This project relates directly to the foundation's long-standing vision: leadership talent that drives a prosperous, sustainable and leading-edge agri-food system in Ontario.

Through the development and stewardship of endowed and expendable funds, the foundation provides direct support to leadership development, which in turn strengthens the agri-food system. At this year's annual general meeting, we will be reporting our total contributions to student scholarships, outstanding faculty, lectures and learning trust grants of more than \$57,000. In addition, thanks to the vision of two OAC classes, our investment in student outreach to attract bright new minds to the college will double in 2012 to \$20,000.

As alumni, many of us have enjoyed the great privileges and opportunities provided by careers in the agri-food sector. While the industry continues to evolve, strong and knowledgeable leadership is as essential as ever. Knowing that employer needs will be increasing by up to an estimated 20 per cent over the next few years reinforces the message that opportunities are abundant, and an OAC education – across all programs – continues to be an excellent choice.

Linda Hruska
B.Sc.(Agr.) '85, M.Agr. '88
Chair, OAC Alumni Foundation



Dean Rob Gordon, left, with members of the Class of '03, winners of the Year 33 Trophy for Highest Scoring Junior Team at the OAC curling bonspiel. The winners are, second from left, Geoffrey Kyle, Scott Grant, Adam Ireland and Russel Hurst.

OAC Builds its Future

This issue of *Alumni News* will be coming to you at a very busy time – the excitement around our convocation and graduation ceremonies and the camaraderie of alumni reunions.

As alumni, we are bound together by shared experiences and a common support for our alma maters. We remember our time as students, whether the fun of College Royals or the challenges of final exams.

When the Province of Ontario brought agricultural education, research and service together under the umbrella of the University of Guelph through the Ontario Agricultural College, we were presented with challenges and opportunities. Today, some 15 years later, I can say with confidence that we continue to offer our students at all levels hands-on experiential learning opportunities and the best in research and innovation in food, agriculture, the environment and our rural communities.

As alumni, we also share a responsibility to be advocates and ambassadors for our college, particularly during these challenging times facing Ontario. I ask you to do what you can to support OAC, in whatever level of commitment you are able. Whether by volunteering your time or expertise, or sharing the benefits of your education and experiences with the next generation of leaders, you can benefit the important sectors that OAC supports.

I encourage you to stay in touch – in person, by following us online and with *Alumni News*. These are exciting times to be part of OAC – rich in tradition and setting new paths in education and research. As alumni, you always have a place to come back to and celebrate lifelong connections.

Robert Gordon, PhD '96
OAC Dean

College Royal Then and Now

College Royal made its debut in 1925 as an agricultural and livestock show organized by OAC. It has grown from a half-day affair to an extravaganza for 30,000 visitors.

Entirely student-run, College Royal is a 12-day event culminating with Open House Weekend and is the largest university open house in North America. Kemptville

has its own College Royal tradition, and Ridgetown celebrates with Spring Expo.



1 ■ The egg drop in the University Centre was a messy event in 1992.

PHOTO COURTESY U OF G ARCHIVES

2 ■ Sixty years ago, a student and his steed participate in College Royal 1952.

PHOTO COURTESY U OF G ARCHIVES

3 ■ Matthew Reesor, agriculture diploma student at Ridgetown, is ready for the dairy calf show to begin.

PHOTO BY LIZ MEIDLINGER

4 ■ Where there's a College Royal, there are ribbons for the multitude of events. At Kemptville Campus in 2012, they included livestock and equine shows. There was also a fundraising calf sale and, on the entertainment side, a Farmers' Olympics.

PHOTO BY MAC JOHNSTON

5 ■ College Royal offers fun for the whole family.

PHOTO BY MAGGIE MCCORMICK

6 ■ Megan Wharin of Collingwood, a first-year bachelor of bio-resource management student, rode Hudson, her four-year-old chestnut gelding, in a jumping demonstration during College Royal at Kemptville Campus.

PHOTO BY MAC JOHNSTON

7 ■ In 1940, crowds turned out for Farm Home Week.

PHOTO COURTESY U OF G ARCHIVES



8 ■ Alyssa-Marie Turgeon of Mississauga, a second-year bachelor of bio-resource management student at Kemptville Campus, participated in a riding demonstration at College Royal with her horse Avery.
PHOTO BY MAC JOHNSTON

9 ■ These lumberjacks are cutting-edge.
PHOTO BY MAGGIE MCCORMICK

10 ■ At the Guelph campus, square dancing is a perennial favourite.
PHOTO BY MAGGIE MCCORMICK

11 ■ The 2012 Kemptville Campus College Royal king is Ryan Garner, an agriculture diploma senior from New Liskeard. The queen is Amber Archibald, an agriculture diploma senior from Bethany, who also earned an agriculture equine option diploma in 2011.
PHOTO BY MAC JOHNSTON

12 ■ In 1962 OAC had a Winter Carnival – and snow!
PHOTO COURTESY U OF G ARCHIVES

13 ■ Everyone's welcome at College Royal!
PHOTO BY MAGGIE MCCORMICK

14 ■ The sign says it all.
PHOTO BY MAGGIE MCCORMICK

15 ■ Dean Rob Gordon squeezes his way to second place in the celebrity milking contest at the 2012 Kemptville Campus College Royal.
PHOTO BY MAC JOHNSTON

RIDGETOWN

Students Host Spring Expo

It's a smaller version of College Royal, but Spring Expo at Ridgetown Campus offers all the same learning opportunities for youth. The student-organized open house features campus tours, equipment displays, livestock shows, plant and food sales, a formal banquet and dance, and plenty of visitors.

Students work together with community stakeholders to host the annual open house for family and friends. "It's a fantastic optional project to get involved with," says Lydia Noordegraaf, student Spring Expo co-chairperson.

Everyone involved learns something new, including how to organize and deliver an outdoor BBQ lunch, how to fundraise, how to show a dairy calf or beef steer, how to host a successful plant sale, and the list continues. Time management, team-building, problem-solving and creativity are all skills that students can further develop in putting the open house together.

More than 200 members of the community and students came together to conclude Spring Expo with a Sunday morning breakfast that raised more than \$1,000 for next year's event.

By Liz Meidlinger



Senior agriculture diploma students John Urquhart, left, and Gerald Fess co-ordinated an attractive display of farm equipment and were delighted with industry participation.

PHOTO BY LIZ MEIDLINGER

KEMPTVILLE

Kemptville Opens its Doors



Blake Ralph, 2, tucks into her food at Kemptville College Foundation's pancake breakfast during the 2012 College Royal at Kemptville Campus.



Prof. Tim Rennie grades a scale model of an animal housing design during College Royal 2012 at Kemptville Campus. It was one of a number of building projects on display from the farm structures and environment class.

The Kemptville College Alumni Association and the foundation were both active during the 83rd College Royal at Kemptville Campus March 5 to 10.

Doors to the student-run event were open to the public on Friday, the day the alumni hockey tournament was held at the Municipal Centre, and Saturday, when the foundation's pancake breakfast was held at the Agroforestry Centre. The hockey tourney drew 11 teams, two of them composed of students, while the pancake breakfast

attracted 281 diners and net proceeds of \$1,821 for the foundation's student bursaries and scholarships.

The two organizations each had a display at College Royal and shared space in the Kemptville Campus booth at the annual Ottawa Valley Farm Show from March 13 to 15 at the new CE Centre in Ottawa, where alumni had their usual hospitality suite for two hours one day, with foundation participation.

By Mac Johnston

PHOTOS BY MAC JOHNSTON

CAMPUS D'ALFRED

Alfred Alumni Celebrate Homecoming



From left: Jean Dubois, liaison officer at Campus d'Alfred, who provided the entertainment for the evening; Renée Bergeron, director of Campus d'Alfred; and Sylviane Bégin, a 2004 agricultural technology graduate. Bégin is the vice-president of the Fédération de la relève agricole du Québec.



Tous le monde a table! Nothing but real maple syrup is served in a traditional French Canadian cabane à sucre meal. More than 250 guests attended the homecoming event at Campus d'Alfred on March 31.

On March 31, Alfred's alumni gathered for the first time in five years. The last event was held during the 25th anniversary of the college. The get-together was a joyful event, featuring a sugar shack supper and entertainment provided by one of Alfred's staff members. Liaison officer Jean Dubois and his band rocked the gymnasium!

One of the priorities for Campus d'Alfred in the coming year is to develop a closer relationship with its alumni.

The homecoming provides a good opportunity to reconnect and to organize alumni activities in the future. One of the highlights of the evening was the appreciation of the contributions of the past 30 student council presidents.

The homecoming event is one of many activities that were scheduled during the 30th-anniversary program of Campus d'Alfred, which will wrap up at the graduation on May 26.

By Nicole Tessier

CAMPUS D'ALFRED

Retrouvailles pour les anciens d'Alfred

Le 31 mars dernier, les anciens se sont réunis au Campus d'Alfred pour la première fois depuis cinq ans. C'est au 25^e anniversaire du collège que les anciens avaient eu l'occasion de se retrouver la dernière fois. L'événement peu formel offrait à ses convives un repas style cabane à sucre dans une atmosphère de joie et de surprises! L'un des membres du personnel, Jean Dubois, agent de liaison pour le Campus d'Alfred, et son band ont fait en sorte que la salle, le gymnase, était électrisant.

L'une des priorités pour le Campus d'Alfred dans l'année à venir est de développer une relation plus étroite et plus durable avec ses anciens. Revenir au collège, c'est aussi reconnecter avec ses anciens amis collégiaux et planifier de futures activités. Un des faits saillants de la soirée a été la présentation de l'hommage aux anciens présidents et présidentes des 30 derniers présidents.

L'événement est l'un de nombreuses activités du programme du 30^e anniversaire du Campus d'Alfred, qui se terminera à la remise de diplômes le 26 mai 2012.

Par Nicole Tessier

Jean Dubois, officier de liaison au Campus d'Alfred, qui a fourni le divertissement de la soirée; Renée Bergeron, directrice du Campus d'Alfred; et Sylviane Bégin, diplômé en technologie agricole en 2004. Bégin est le vice-président de la Fédération de la relève agricole du Québec.

Tous le monde a table! Il n'y a rien que du vrai sirop d'érable qui est servi aux traditionnels repas cabane à sucre canadiens-français. Plus de 250 invités ont assisté aux retrouvailles des anciens au Campus d'Alfred le 31 mars dernier.



Philip Shaw

Grad Brings Social Media to Class

You can find Philip Shaw, B.Sc.(Agr.) '81 and M.Sc. '89, on Twitter as @agridome discussing commodity prices and the latest in farm machinery. This term, you could also find the senior grain analyst in the farm-planning class at Ridgetown Campus, sharing his career insights with students.

"I was invited to discuss with them the opportunities that come with a career in agriculture," he says. "My message was to have a vision for where you want to go and how you're going to get there."

While Shaw normally uses the social media site to help farmers market crops by tracking the going rates for corn, wheat and soybeans, for his in-class presentation he went live, asking nearly 2,700 followers what he should be telling the students. It was a unique angle, and to his knowledge, a first using the technology in the Ridgetown class.

"Twitter lit up," he says. "It was an incredible experience – I think for them and certainly for me. A pin could drop – the students were transfixed.

"Hope is in short supply," he continues. "This was a giving-back thing I was happy to do. My educational experience at Guelph was the most dynamic thing I ever did. It taught me there are no limits. As an older person, giving hope and vision to young people is incredibly valuable."

New Name, Same Tradition of Fun

On Feb. 3 and 4, a record number of students from all four OAC campuses descended upon Guelph for the 2012 Ontario Provincial Agricultural College Games. Almost 300 students participated in various sporting events, showing pride for their own campuses and for OAC.

At the awards banquet, where winners of the individual sports were announced, all four campuses were well represented. The Alfred campus took home the top award: the Plough. This award is presented to the campus that displays the most team and OAC spirit.

Showing true collegiality, the students approved renaming the games to the OAC Winter Games, reflecting the college's four-campus strength.

By Duncan Ferguson, OAC 2012

UPDATE ON CLASS PROJECTS OAC '59 – Travel Awards

OAC '59 continues to reach towards this project's \$500,000 goal. Already many OAC students have benefitted from the OAC '59 Travel Awards.

A 2011 recipient wrote in a note to the class: "I wanted to say a huge THANK YOU again for the OAC scholarship you provided me which went towards my trip to the U.N. Climate Change Conference in Mexico... I am positive this experience will lead me to continue my academic studies in a topic closely linked to climate change, as well as be a strong motivator in continuing the environmental activism I am involved in." Although the travel awards are being distributed, the endowment still needs funds to grow.

Upcoming Events:

June 15 and 16: Alumni Weekend

Sept. 7: OAC Alumni Association Golf Tournament

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