WINTER 2013 SEMINAR SERIES

TITLE: The Ontario Agricultural College and the University of Guelph: Tensions and Resilience

SPEAKER: Dr. Terry Crowley

LOCATION: Room 1307-Thornbrough Bldg

TIME: 3:30 pm

DATE: Wednesday, April 3

ABSTRACT:
The Ontario Agricultural College holds a special place in the history of higher education in Canada. Begun as a school of the provincial department of agriculture in 1874, the college would be subsumed under the new University of Guelph in 1964 and expanded significantly in 1997 by civil service downsizing that took place under the Conservative government of Mike Harris. Basing my account on the book I wrote with Alex Ross under the title of *College on the Hill*, this talk will examine the OAC's history in three periods: 1. the civil service period up to the formation of the university that some see as glorious, but I argue that it contained significant drawbacks; 2. the period of transition that occurred during the unprecedented prosperity that followed World War Two that led directly to university formation and an attempt to retain OAC's independence nominally in, but not as intrinsically part of, the university; 3. then a series of decades of adjustment following 1964 when the agricultural college continued to have a special place in the Guelph constellation since it was situated in the only university in Canada created on top of an agricultural college. The relations of college to government and college to university make for an engaging and never ending tale.
Biography:

Terry Crowley is an award-winning historian and former chair of the Department of History at the University of Guelph. The author of a dozen books on Canada's history, he has received a Regional History Award and Clio Award of the Canadian Historical Association and the W.C. Good Writing Award of the Rural Learning Association for his book, *Agnes Macphail and the Politics of Equality*. In 1999 he co-authored with Alexander Ross *The College on the Hill: A New History of the Ontario Agricultural College, 1874-1999*, and the University of Toronto Press has published his book entitled *Marriage of Minds: Isabel and Oscar Skelton Re-inventing Canada* (2004) which won Honourable Mention for the Sir John A. Macdonald Prize as well as the Chalmers Award of the Champlain Society. A former editor of *Ontario History* - the journal of the Ontario Historical Society - Terry Crowley served as chair of the Guelph Civic Museum Board of Management in 1977 and 1978, president (1985-87) of the Edward Johnson Music Foundation (Guelph Spring Festival), and president of Musica Viva/The Guelph Chamber Choir (1995-7). He has received three community service awards, and at the University of Guelph he was the recipient in 2006 of the first W.C Winegard Faculty Award for Volunteer Contributions. Taking retirement in 2010, Terry was made University Professor Emeritus in the following year. He also received a Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2012 and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario's Heritage Conservation Award in 2013.

Terry Crowley
University Professor Emeritus
Department of History
University of Guelph
(519) 836-8775; tcrowley@uoguelph.ca