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FINDING THE STORY WORTH RETELLING

We are a country of immigrants. When some of our ancestors arrived in an emerging forested landscape in the 1800s, they tried to cling to and replicate whatever home country culture they could for their own comfort. The wilderness offered none. They brought with them their belief systems and definitions of what was considered civilized and uncivilized behaviour. They built churches and schools. Sometimes communities and institutions worked, others things went terribly wrong — like the story of the Black Donnellys near Lucan, just north of London. On the 130th anniversary of the Donnelly massacre and trial, we bring you a feature story with several Westerners, most of them being the story-tellers of the university, in faculty and alumni, who have penned their own versions of this tale. As an institution with a rich library and archival system, we house many “Donnelly Family Documents.” Cold pieces of aged paper and bloodstains on the massacre victims, property deeds, court documents and arrest records.

Western and the Donnellys share some history together. The university was founded only two years after the murderous night near Lucan. As reason waned and anger waxed, what civilized community had formed in Biddulph Township in a few generations, was torn apart in flames, clubs and axes that February night in 1880. And we’re still talking about it. We’re still trying to reason.

It should be no surprise that curious intellectuals who have taught here and attended here continued to revisit one of Canada’s most intriguing myths. Not everyone likes to turn over the stones to see what’s underneath. In trying to discover the meaning of those events we learn a little more about ourselves. Tolerance, acceptance, community, trust. And their polar opposites.

We have to tell stories. It’s in our nature. For entertainment, education, history, habit, myth creation, politics, propaganda, religion and nurturing young minds. But it’s not all bloodshed and violence that is worth repeating. We have grown here at Western for 132 years from an institution offering arts and medicine to local learners, to an internationally recognized institution with leading researchers attracting students from around the world.

We have our own stories to tell. We have neuroscientist Adrian Owen coming to join us in January. Owen is emigrating from England. He will bring with him his wife Jessica Grahn who is also a neuroscientist, a team of researchers, and other things he is familiar with to the wilderness of research at Western. We have already cleared the trees, made the roads and built the structures needed.

What his research into the human brain will discover, we cannot predict. But it will be something worth talking about and sharing to generations beyond ours.

Before Owen’s arrival, tens of thousands of Western alumni will descend on campus for Homecoming 2010. Homecoming is all about stories and reconnecting with people.

We always like to hear your stories — whether it’s how you’re spending your career or retirement, to what you think of Western’s direction or how you feel about your alumni magazine and the stories we share with you. Write, call, e-mail and keep the story going.

EDITOR’S NOTEBOOK

DAVID SCOTT dscott2@uwo.ca

SPY HOLE USED TO CHECK ON RADIO AUDIENCE

(Re: Best Kept Secret — Spy hole for professors?, Spring ’10)

Evidence of professors spying through the “secret door” of Somerville House’s Great Hall is not available here but it can reveal one use it served during my era as president of the UWO Broadcasting Society, long before Radio Western was a gleam in anyone’s eye. The little ‘cupboard’ contained a microphone linked to a P.A. system that served the Great Hall and the downstairs Somerville House cafeteria, both of which served as places for eating lunch in the primary noon breaks. During part of the 1962 to 1964 period, members of the Broadcasting Society spoke to those lunch audiences with ‘public service’ announcements and a promo for a half-hour program about Western that the Broadcasting Society produced and was broadcast on Sunday nights on CFPL Radio’s 980 AM frequency.

After I was employed full-time by CFPL, a Radio Western concept was developed through overnight musical broadcast CFPL FM, which eventually aided in the funding and licensing of Radio Western. As for the ‘spye hole’, I confess I opened it a few times to see if our captive audience was ready.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Publication is at the discretion of the Editor. Letters may be edited for length, style and clarity. Maximum: 300 words. Opinions published do not necessarily reflect those of the Western Alumni Gazette or The University of Western Ontario.

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I’m not really sure what compelled me to try Hot Yoga a couple of months ago. Curiosity perhaps, paired with some discontent over my exercise regime at the time. If you’ve never heard of Bikram Hot Yoga, please allow me to summarize it for you; it is comprised of a series of 26 yoga postures and two breathing exercises performed over 90 minutes, led by an instructor, in a room heated to tropical levels and humidity to match. In other words, torture in a sauna. My impression was that it was practiced by the young and nubile and I, being neither particularly young nor nubile, approached the whole exercise with both skepticism and trepidation.

As expected, the postures were difficult, painful and nausea-inducing. Extremely nauseating, in point of fact. I realize there is a period of acclimatization involved for this sport, particularly for someone like me who would never even sit still in a sauna for an hour and a half, much less move around in one. In spite of all this, I had a deep feeling (perhaps hypoxia-induced?) that if I could get past the nausea this is tremendously helpful to our immune system due to the stimulation of the thyroid, parathyroid and pituitary glands at the base of our neck. Oh boy. This Bikram fellow must be very good. And I suppose the yoga people think all this just another way for their class to rearrange anatomical structures! The optic nerves to resemble some Gumby-like cartoonish things stretched out like fraying rubber bands with a couple of eyeballs hanging on for dear life at the ends? Do I want my optic nerves to resemble that! The colon massages itself quite nicely from the inside thank you very much – a little trick we were cheerily told we are “massaging the ascending colon.” Oh, really? Not too sure how that would be happening, and even if it is, would that actually be a good thing anyway? I seem to recall that the colon massages itself quite nicely from the inside thank you very much – a little trick we doctor types call peristalsis.

In another posture we are told that the optic nerve is being stretched. Never mind the how, again the question is … to what purpose? Do I want my optic nerves to resemble some Gumby-like cartoonish things stretched out like fraying rubber bands with a couple of eyeballs hanging on for dear life at the ends? I suppose the yoga people think all this anatomical name-dropping lends them credibility. My all-time favourite, though, is that performing the postures is not the most difficult thing about Bikram Hot Yoga. As I have mentioned, there is an instructor who guides each class with a running dialogue which is meant to both tell you what you’re supposed to be doing and also, I believe, to distract you from the messages of pain your body is screaming at your brain. Muddled into the stuff about where your hands, feet and other body parts should be, there are always little pseudo-scientific bits about the benefits of each posture on your anatomy. For example, during one pose where one is doubled over while standing on one leg, we are cheerily told we are “massaging the ascending colon.” Oh, really? Not too sure how that would be happening, and even if it is, would that actually be a good thing anyway? I seem to recall that the colon massages itself quite nicely from the inside thank you very much – a little trick we doctor types call peristalsis.

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NEW PROVOST, VICE-PRESIDENT (ACADEMIC)
‘SEASONED LEADER’

A Canadian expert in sport performance and authority on Ontario graduate programs is the new Provost and Vice-President (Academic) at The University of Western Ontario. Janice Deakin, formerly Associate Vice-Principal (Academic) and Dean of Graduate Studies at Queen’s University, assumed Western’s top academic position for a five-year term beginning August 1.

Western President Amit Chakma describes Deakin as “a high-energy, seasoned, academic leader.”

“Her track record shows her to be a strategic thinker and an extremely capable leader who can build effective teams and networks,” Deakin says Western held a strong draw for her. She was impressed with the commitment to student accomplishment inside and outside the classroom.

“I look forward to a process of listening to and learning about the people, the programs, the opportunities and the challenges that face Western as a community of students, faculty, staff and alumni,” says Deakin.

Deakin holds three undergraduate degrees from Queen’s — education, psychology and physical education. She earned a Master of Science degree at McMaster University and a doctorate in kinesiology at the University of Waterloo.

Deakin will succeed Fred Longstaffe, who has served as Provost and Vice-President (Academic) since 2005.

The Provost portfolio includes academic units, Faculty Relations, the Office of the Registrar, student recruitment, Institutional Planning & Budgeting, the university library system, and Information Technology Services.

As for what lies ahead, Deakin says her first step will be to watch and listen.

“IT WILL IN FACT BE THE PEOPLE OF WESTERN WHO COLLECTIVELY SET THE COURSE FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE FUTURE. I LOOK FORWARD WITH GREAT ENTHUSIASM TO BEING PART OF THE WESTERN COMMUNITY”

PRINCIPAL LUMPKIN TO LEAVE HURON UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Ramona Lumpkin, Principal of Huron University College, will be leaving September 30 to assume the appointment of President and Vice-Chancellor of Mount Saint Vincent University in Halifax.

Since July of 2001, Dr. Lumpkin has served as Principal of Huron, an undergraduate liberal arts institution affiliated with The University of Western Ontario, where she is the first woman leader in the College’s 147-year history.

“The Huron community is profoundly grateful for the strong leadership provided by Dr. Ramona Lumpkin,” said John Leitch. "She has served the College well and with great dedication. I wish her equal success in her new role at Mount Saint Vincent University.”

Huron has benefitted tremendously under Dr. Lumpkin’s vision and excellent stewardship. Since her appointment, student enrolment has increased by 40 per cent and now stands at almost 1,300 students. Unlike other universities, who in recent years have experienced staff layoffs and cutbacks, Huron has been able to maintain its full staff complement and has achieved a balanced budget for the past eight years. In the 2009 February Macleans magazine, Huron placed first in Canada in two categories — supportive campus environment and overall educational experience — well above the North American NSSE benchmark. Huron’s “Touch the Future” Capital Campaign, is on track for completion in 2011, already having raised over $10 million of its $12.5 million goal.

PURPLE BIKES TURN CAMPUS GREEN

Alison Fine wanted to fit the inner tube on her bicycle, but there was one problem. The Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry student couldn’t find the bike co-op office at Western. That’s because there wasn’t one — until now.

Welcome to Purple Bikes, where students, staff, faculty and the greater London community will get access to everything they need to know about cycling, from repairs to temporary use of a bike.

It’s meant to be a grassroots kind of program,” says Fine, co-chair of the Purple Bikes program with student member Diane Burns. “There’s the fun aspect, the health aspect, and it’s a great way for students to connect with the community, go to the parks and head downtown instead of being stuck on campus.”

A former McMaster University student, Fine was all too familiar with the idea of a bicycle program. MACycle operates on a $10,000 annual budget, providing a bicycle support service to students and local Hamilton residents.

Almost half of Canada’s universities have bicycle programs, including the University of British Columbia, University of Ottawa, University of Waterloo and Guelph University. Purple Bikes felt it was time for Western to saddle up.

THE PURPLE BIKES PROGRAM — AN OFFSET OF ENVIRWESTERN — CONSISTS OF TWO COMPONENTS

The ride-share program, which is geared towards students, will offer free rental for 48 hours. The only cost will be a $5 annual membership fee. Depending on the number of bicycles available, students can continue to rent bicycles throughout the year.

The co-op branch of the program will offer low-cost repairs to the campus and London community by providing parts to members at cost and assistance in repairing their bikes. Student volunteers will be trained by mechanics to guide members in repairing their own bikes or can charge ($30 an hour) to make the repair.

“The co-op is open to everyone in the community to encourage people to start taking bikes and stop taking cars,” says Fine. A campus-wide survey of students and staff indicated more than 90 per cent of respondents were interested in beginning to bicycle or currently bicycle and would be supportive of a Purple Bikes program.

The test program started in early May from Elgin Hall. Purple Bikes has 12 bikes in its fleet — painted purple, of course. With the donation/ acquisition of additional bikes the program will expand to Saugus-Maitland, Perth Hall and University Community Centre (UCC) in September.

To assist the Purple Bikes program, contact the group by visiting their office in the UCC, Room 315C, e-mail purplebikes.london@gmail.com or search for ‘purple bikes’ on Facebook.

WORLDWIDE STUDY

Recent findings in the genetic testing of more than 100,000 people have identified the genes that control lipid levels, in particular LDL (bad cholesterol), HDL (good cholesterol) and triglycerides.

It found 95 genes associated with lipid levels, worldwide and led by Sekar Kathiresan of Harvard Medical School is published in the September 2010 issue of Nature Genetics.
RECOGNITION THAT STICKS

DIGITAL BOOKPLATES A FIRST FOR CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

BY DAVID SCOTT

Paper and paste is now ‘old school’ when it comes to giving a gift to Western Libraries. The traditional method of gift recognition was to physically paste a bookplate in the opening page of a designated book, something that was labour-intensive, against the philosophy of not defacing publications and offered no guarantee the donor’s name would stick around the pages forever.

Enter the digital age and the brainchild of Sherry Wells-Foster, Alumni and Development Officer, and Karen Marshall, Assistant University Librarian (Information Resources and Access), resulting from investigation into best practices at American universities like Duke, Harvard and University of Las Vegas. The Digital Bookplate Program is almost one year old now at Western and takes an idea used specifically south of the border for recognition of endowed gifts only — to a pragmatic way to raise funds and recognize donors who give gifts of $150 and more to Western Libraries.

The idea of a digital bookplate program to use as a fundraising tool is a first for Canadian universities, and possibly a first for North America. “We think we’re the pioneers in this type of usage,” says Wells-Foster.

“Another appeal to a digital bookplate as a donation is that it is sustainable. ‘It doesn’t end up in a landfill. It’s a green way to honour someone, foregoing the watches and the clocks. It’s a permanent way to honour someone special in our lives,’ says Wells-Foster. She has been invited to speak this fall on October 7 at the Leaders’ Forum at Western. ‘The organizers thought there was a real link between Western’s leaders and staff honouring each other, paying tribute to each other in a sustainable way through the bookplates.’

Because of outside donors, students can now see clearly that their knowledge base, the catalogue, is isn’t just supported by the university, it’s also supported by alumni, colleagues, by staff, says Marshall.

To view all of our 2011 trips, visit www.alumni.uwo.ca/travel. Contact us to receive a copy of our catalogue or to be added to our mailing list.
W hat makes a story so enduring it’s retold more than 100 years after its main characters have perished? There are not many Canadian tales of mythic qualities that have stood the test of time better than the Black Donnellys of Lucan and Biddulph Township. And there are as many Western connections to the historical tale of murder, mayhem and vengeance as there are versions of the story that culminated on a February night in 1880 at a log cabin near Lucan when an armed group of local vigilantes murdered five members of the Donnelly family and set fire to their home. There are enough dramatic elements in the story for endless seasons of theatre.

Once taboo to speak of the Donnellys, the village of Lucan is now embracing its colourful ancestors with a new Lucan Area Heritage & Donnelly Museum that opened earlier this year, front and centre on Main Street with a vast collection of memorabilia on loan from Hamilton lawyer and author Ray Fazakas - The Donnelly Album (1995) & In Search of the Donnelly (2001).

“Several years ago the annual visitor total was about 1,000 people. And we had over 1,200 people through in May,” says curator Laura Garner. “Local museums are saying ‘oh my gosh, are you kidding?’ Even last year the entire year was about 4,000 people.”

The museum had been operating for a few years in a building on the same block as the new location. Attendance shot up after the Lucan Area Heritage society funded a new museum to house the Fazakas collection that not only highlights the Donnellys but also history of the Biddulph-Lucan area.

Garner went out into the Lucan community and interviewed seniors from each of the long-standing families – with both Donnelly and vigilante ties - and made recordings of the meetings. “That encouraged many of them to donate more items, so we have more of a collection to work with.”

One interview was with an elder member of the Hodgins family, who have always lived on Concession 5, Biddulph Township (Concessions 1 to 5 were Protestant and Concessions 6 to 10 were Catholic. Concession 6 being the Roman Line where the Donnellys lived).

“He talks about how his grandfather was out working the field when Johnny O’Connor (the lone survivor who hid under a bed in the Donnelly log cabin) came running across the day after the massacre and you can see how that would happen. You look out their kitchen window and sure enough you can see the Donnelly homestead and picture Johnny O’Connor tearing across the field saying the Donnellys had been killed. It was a really great, awesome opportunity to get those kind of stories.”

Garner believes the Donnelly story doesn’t only have a place in the past but with new generations. “I think it’s a great story we can teach a lot of the kids about. Because immigration happens all of the time...it’s the same issue Muslims face – the persecution. How does a group of 30 decide to kill an entire family? They can’t all be bad people. You don’t really have the answers because nothing was resolved in court. No one was found guilty, so it keeps getting people interested.”

Somehow this enduring tale has made its way on to some school curriculums. “Some high schools study it – not in Lucan that’s for sure. Some teachers just do it as the Black Donnellys story and read it as a novel. And some do it where they get their students to read Thomas Kelly (The Black Donnellys, 1954 & Vengeance
of the Black Donnellys, 1962) and then read something more factual and compare it – and show how history can be told in different ways. Plus it’s just the right amount of violence that kids like,” says Carner.

Playwright Paul Thompson, BA’63 (Huron), DLitt ’10, found the intrigue he needed in the Donnelly story as a student at Western – enough so to create two plays on the legendary Lucan family. Them Donnellys in 1974 at Theatre Passe Muraille and The Outdoor Donnellys in 2001, 2002 & 2004 at the Blyth Festival. That production involved the entire community – with live horses and toymakers, a blacksmith’s shop and an outdoor stage with nature as the backdrop.

“My first literary connection with Donnellys was out of Alpheidae (Magazine) that James Reaney (English professor, playwright and author) published when I was at Western that did a review of the most recent Orlo Miller book (The Donnellys Must Die, 1962) as I remember it,” says Thompson.

Following the productions of The Farm Show and 1837 by Western in the early 1960s. Keith Turnbull, BA’65, who had co-directed the premiere of Reaney’s The Sun and the Moon for London’s Campus Players in 1965. Turnbull directed experimental works for the Second Stage of the Manitoba Theatre Centre (MTC) from 1968-70, and was Artistic Director (AD) of MPT in 1971-72. In 1973 he was AD of Neptune Theatre’s Second Stage. But according to the Canadian Theatre Encyclopedia his theatre career is most notable for the development of Reaney’s three-part epic docudrama, The Donnellys. His company, inexplicably named NDWT, toured The Donnellys across Canada in 1975. The trilogy was revived at the Banff Centre for the Arts in 1996-97.

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“There was a bit of theatre mafia gang out of Western in the early 1960s. Keith Turnbull, BA’65, Martin Kinch, BA’66, Bill Webster, BA’69 (Huron, co-founder of Soulepper Theatre) and David Fox, BA’63, who went off to teach for theatre what Stompin’ Tom was doing for the music culture. We wrote some original songs for it, had a great singer singing in it. We focused on the fiddle music that drove people crazy,” says Thompson.

After developing his Donnelly plays for many years, Reaney reconnected with Western grad Keith Turnbull, BA’65, who had co-directed the premiere of Reaney’s The Sun and the Moon for London’s Campus Players in 1965. Turnbull directed experimental works for the Second Stage of the Manitoba Theatre Centre (MTC) from 1968-70, and was Artistic Director (AD) of MPT in 1971-72. In 1973 he was AD of Neptune Theatre’s Second Stage. But according to the Canadian Theatre Encyclopedia his theatre career is most notable for the development of Reaney’s three-part epic docudrama, The Donnellys. His company, inexplicably named NDWT, toured The Donnellys across Canada in 1975. The trilogy was revived at the Banff Centre for the Arts in 1996-97.

And do them in.”

about 10 years before I corralled into the Farm Show in 1972,” recalls Thompson. Although they were competitors in a sense at the time with their theatre companies, Thompson was very much interested in Reaney’s play on the Donnellys and went to see all three of his plays.

“Them Donnellys was Handschrift (Part III) – I thought that’s really where they embraced the potential of the violence with the theatricality they were doing with. When they acted out the business of Michael’s death I thought that was really powerful, very menacing.”

While the Thomas books vieded the Donnellys, Thompson felt that Orlo Miller’s book in response kind of ‘angfellged’ them.

“My thought was we were dealing with something more interesting than a less-angelic version... For me, the theory of why Donnellys has remained important is it’s one of the myths, legends, actual historical incidents that remind us that we have an inner violence that was very useful externalized when we were clearing land. But not so useful when we started setting up civilization.”

It’s that sense of the landscape that new immigrants, like the Playwrights, found important. As a physical challenge to overcome and tame, that Thompson revisited the story again with The Outdoor Donnellys in Blyth. “I thought another shot at the ode to the landscape because we’d come up with the idea of the landscape as the way we told the story. The landscape got to play it in a really interesting way. When we did The Outdoor Donnellys the trees looked like they had been silent witnesses to the whole thing. The real horses, carrots, the real fire, just for me allowed us to bring, to use in powerful theatrical ways, the kind of touchesones to life out there.”

From the land, Thompson believes is where the myths of the Donnellys springs and the violence originates.

“The myth has to do with the vulnerability of newcomers in a fairly absent landscape you’d imagine... So there’s kind of natural friction (def): A moment of intense excitement, a shudder... when you talk about the Donnellys.

The Outdoor Donnellys is narrated by the character of William Port. The framework of the narration draws in the audience to offer parallels to modern existence. “One of my favourite parts of Outdoor Donnellys was at the end when the narrator says ‘well, most of the people around here still don’t necessarily take the keys out of the car and lock the back door’. It’s still at the heart of our psyche that even if we do take in the car keys and do lock the door, we’re still pretty vulnerable out there. This way of living is built upon a certain amount of trust and co-operation with neighbours. Because most of the people in that part of the world live in an isolated house where somebody could come in and do them in.”

Port’s actual diary is one of many pieces in The University of Western Ontario Archives. Many of the Donnelly Family Papers are housed at the J.J. Talman Regional Collection including “Post Mortem Reports on the Bodies of James, Julia (Johannah), Thomas, john and Bridget Donnelly, February 5, 1880.”

“The best of the documents in a mile by my opinion is William Port’s diary. When we did the research for Outdoor Donnelly you couldn’t touch that with your hands, breathe the dust off it. And see the parts people had cut out because they wanted to protect their relatives,” says Thompson.

Someone who spent months, maybe years reading through original paperwork on the Lucan legend was the late James Reaney. “I thought the audience we were dealing with would be more interested in a less-angelic version... For me, the theory of why Donnellys has remained important is it’s one of the myths, legends, actual historical incidents that remind us that we have an inner violence that was very useful externalized when we were clearing land. But not so useful when we started setting up civilization.”

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The Outdoor Donnellys is narrated by the character of William Port. The framework of the

© William Donnelly’s witness statement following the massacre. The University of Western Ontario Archives. (Photo by Heather Travis)

The University of Western Ontario Archives. (Photo by Heather Travis)

© Replicas Donnelly family tombstones on display at Lucan Area Heritage & Donnelly Museum built by the CBC props department for a TV documentary. (Photo by David Scott)

© Headline from February 6, 1860 issue of The Weekly Globe & Canada Farmer. The University of Western Ontario Archives. (Photo by David Scott)

© Twitter handle from The Donnelly Documents: An Ontario Vendetta.

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SUMMER 2010 EDITION

Alumni Gazette

Lucan family: Them Donnellys in 1974 at Theatre Passe Muraille

This 1860 log-cabin on the museum property is from the same era as the original Donnelly Homestead and has almost the same floor plan. It was found in Bruce Township, moved to Lucan and refurbished to replicate the Donnelly home. (Photo by David Scott)
The outcome of the massacre was really anti-climactic. No one was found guilty in the ensuing trial held in a London courtroom. That’s where the late Chris Doty, BA’89 (English, Political Science), MA’91 (Journalism), stepped in with a great vision to recapture not only the evidence presented at the time but took his theatrical creation, The Donnelly Trial, a step further by inviting some audience members to be actual jury members, to render a verdict to audiences each night and finally to stage the play in the original courtroom where the vigilantes were tried in 1880. Doty’s Donnelly Trial was reprised by Grant Doty, a Western alumnus on the latest offering from a Western alumnus on some interest in the Donnellys too, because the late Chris Doty, BA’89 (English, Political Science), MA’91 (Journalism), stepped in with a great vision to recapture not only the evidence that happened every October and was created by Chris Doty.

“People can walk through London and there are stories about people who died in these certain ways. You say ‘these things happened in London?’ These are stories that had national significance. Chris brought history to life. Everyone said that: ‘He brought history to life in London,’” says Grant.

The late Chris Doty, BA’89 (English, Drama), BA’93, did his own version of Doty’s Lost Souls Stroll, called the Odd Souls Stroll, at a recent London Fringe Festival. Delving into Doty’s repertoire must have stirred some interest in the Donnellys too, because the latest offering from a Western alumnus on the Lucan legend comes this fall in the form of The Donnelly Massacre by Rip. He’s teamed up with Fanshawe Pioneer Village to create adult-oriented entertainment with “Haunted Village Hayrides” telling the tales of the Donnellys right before Halloween, starting in mid-October. www.fanshawepionneervillage.ca

The Donnelly Massacre happened 130 years ago – will people still be talking about it 200 years after it happened?

“I think it’s kind of cyclical. Every second generation or so has to rediscover these things. I think somebody, sometime, probably from Western, will find that people supposedly have forgotten about it, then dig deeper and all of the sudden it will come out again,” says Thompson.

Until then, maybe we should lock our doors at night...
"We had a great time. We gelled quickly. We knew we had a similar sense of humour, so it was easy to be friends," Blahut recalled. "We also realized we had similar philosophies about theatre. A year later we started talking about building a theatre company together."

The partnership took root, united by their similar approaches yet strengthened by their differences. Quesnelle brings to the table the knowledge of an academic, while Blahut offers her visceral training in movement and dance. "Justin's understanding of text is outstanding," Blahut said. They recognized that London was a tremendous breeding ground for original works, but that small, independent theatres were not producing the classical and contemporary canon, with the exception of Fountainhead and London Community Players.

Inspired by Orffo, they named their company Passionfool, a nod to the way in which the lead character is 'played' by lago. Their goals were to showcase the evolution of Western works, from the Greeks and Shakespeare all the way to contemporary playwrights like Harold Pinter, Tom Stoppard and Michel Tremblay. "We wanted to find a way to make the classics edgy, understandable and relatable," Blahut said. And they have, as evidenced by the successful run earlier this year of Euripides' Medea, which featured Blahut in the title role. Quesnelle directed and designed the show, opting for a theatre-in-the-round configuration that minimized audience numbers yet maximized the intimacy of the space. The result was a unique experience for those 44 people seated each time in the TAP theatre.

"We considered the audience an extension of the Greek chorus. They could look across the space at other audience members. The responses of the audience members were as immediate and evident as those of the actors," Blahut said. Quesnelle, known for his minimalist storytelling style, likes his role to that of a facilitator, who both guides and challenges his actors. His skill as a director, he said, was fostered when he took a fourth-year Creative Writing intensive with Professor Emerita Larry Garber in the Department of English at Western. "Truth be told I'm not much of a writer. But those sessions made me realize how much I enjoy test analysis and mining written works for inner truths. The aspects of directing that I enjoy the most were nurtured in those sessions."

And Medea set out, like most Passionfool productions, to challenge people's perceptions and leave them examining characters in shades of gray. "On the surface, Medea is a child murderer, and it's a horrific idea to entertain, but what happens if we try to give her an honest life as a real human being? What motivations do we discover? These are not always happy places to go to, but the pay-off as artists, and the pay-off for the audience is more than what you would get with the fluff you see in some summer theatres," Blahut said.

Passionfool's most recent award came at this summer's London Fringe Festival, where Quesnelle won Best Solo Performance for his portrayal of 10 characters in Daniel MacIvor's Monster. The acclaimed Canadian playwright does not typically grant rights to amateur companies to perform Monster (a dark comedy about the nature of evil), but he made an exception for Passionfool, after Quesnelle and Blahut argued the merits of their production in a written essay. "Monster is a powerful and provocative piece," Quesnelle said. It's a play that poses more questions than it answers and sticks with you like a scar. And it was by far the most challenging role(s) I've yet to tackle as an actor."

They were already familiar with MacIvor's work, having previously staged Never Swim Alone, a thriller about two men locked in a deadly competition. Like Monster, Blahut directed and Quesnelle starred in the piece. Their production earned a Brickenden Award for Outstanding Production, and won similar kudos at the 2009 London Fringe Festival. That same year, Passionfool became the resident theatre company of The Arts Project, affording them a permanent home complete with office and rehearsal space. It also benefited the local arts organization. "Our focus is gallery, theatre and studios, so having a resident theatre company fits with what we're doing," manager Sandra DeSalvo said. "It's nice piece to the puzzle, and they're serious theatre performers."

The future continues to look bright for Passionfool, with its 14th production underway this fall. The 2011 season is yet to be determined, but as always it will strive for excellence and showcase at least one Canadian playwright.

And Quesnelle is considering a Fringe Festival tour of Monster. He wants to continue pushing himself creatively. "As an actor, I'd love to do Cat on a Hot Tin Roof and Streetcar. As a director, Endgame and The Maids."

Passionfool also offers classes and workshops for aspiring young thespians. The Academy is taught by members of Passionfool's ensemble, as well as guest teachers. The educational experience culminates in a public performance at the end of each 13-week session. www.passionfool.com or www.artproject.ca
‘THAT FEELING YOU HAD’

T

he scene walk up University College Hill on the Saturday of Homecoming last year retraced a path Shane Gonsalves, BSc’05, JD’09, had followed many times as a student. But this time it was different. Umbrella in hand and strolling with girlfriend Vicky Simanovski, BMOS’08, he was just a bit unsettled. Skies were threatening but the “weather angel” had stepped in to slow the rain. Shane dropped down to one knee, stared at Vicky and asked her to marry him. He had been thinking for some time about where to propose. Would it be New York, Toronto? But what was missing with those places was a shared connection. Finally, the UC Hill at Homecoming had seemed just about right.

“I said yes and then I started crying,” says Vicky.

The poignant moment was captured on the face of a woman walking behind the couple. Struck by the unfolding scene, and with tears in her own eyes, she spoke to Shane: “I saw the whole thing … congratulations!”

For more than 60 years Homecoming has been filled with snapshot moments. Countless real-life encounters – from meeting an old roommate carrying her newborn to the 100-year-old grad taking a bow at a reunion dinner – fill the moments to overflowing with funny, touching and bittersweet emotions.

There’s no easy way to describe that Homecoming feeling. But for many graduates an urge happens to you when you age. They are not 68. They are standing there looking at each other and they are not seeing the wrinkles and the different attire and all the different things that happen to you when you age. They are seeing each other as 18-year-olds and it is magical.

TRISTA WALKER
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, ALUMNI PLANNING & EVENTS

University homecomings have been around in North America for 100 years or more. Popular histories point to Harvard-Yale football games dating from the 1870s when alumni watched the old rivals battle on the playing field. Baylor University in Texas has been marking the tradition since 1909 and popularized the parade. The University of Missouri pegs Homecoming to 1911 when an athletic director invited alumni home for the annual game with the University of Kansas. Thousands were drawn to a weekend of speeches, dances, parade, and of course the big game. Whoever was first, it has come. Many U.S. schools had Homecoming in the 1920s. If Homecoming took longer to reach Canada, it wasn’t for want of similar events in local towns and cities. In London, Ont., an active Old Boys Reunion began as early as the 1880s brought home adventurers who had flown the nest. Many churches have a Homecoming tradition centred around a special event such as anniversary Sunday. These days, marketers have seized on the powerful emotions at play. Last year Scotland declared a national Homecoming, the largest collaborative tourism project in the nation’s history, and drew 95,000 more tourists than usual.

At Western the history of Homecoming has yet to be definitively written. The modern era of Homecoming began in the 1950s with the emergence of both the Alumni Association and a university-wide Homecoming. Still, reunions pre-existed Homecoming for many years in faculties such as Medicine.***

This year Western will draw about 15,000 alumni and family members to the city, making it the biggest such event in the country. Beyond the known reunions, untold numbers won’t even get counted. Drawn by the standing invitation, they will rent cottages at Grand Bend or take over a small inn and combine private functions with a drop-in at campus.

Within the local hospitality industry, Homecoming means all hands on deck for people like Vicky Kropp, proprietor of the historic Idylwyld Inn on Grand Avenue with her husband John. According to Vicky reunion groups often rebook for the next reunion five years down the road. Right now, the Idylwyld is fully booked for Homecoming three years into the future – all 23 guest rooms.

Not everyone wants that kind of Homecoming. We’re not sure if Paul Wells gets officially counted. The columnist and self-described joker occupies the back pages of the Alumni Gazette and shreds political idiocy for a living in Maclean’s magazine. He returned for Homecoming in 1996 and in 2006 as part of the student Gazette celebrations. But he steers away from many scheduled events.

“I’ve been back to Western more than a dozen times since I graduated in 1989, but this tends to happen at odd times, not at the regulation mob-mentality Homecoming time. Which is too bad because I love regulation mob-mentality. “I never go to the game. I never did when I was an undergrad and would see no point making up a fake tradition now. I go to Joe Kools and the UCC and The Gazette, which is what I did back then. I talk shop with student journalists and fellow former student journalists. It always feels like coming home. Hey, now I see where they get the name.”

Homecoming is a well-oiled, yearlong planning event.

They are standing there looking at each other and they are not seeing the wrinkles and the different attire and all the different things that happen to you when you age. They are seeing each other as 18-year-olds and it is magical.

Marking the 60th anniversary of their graduation, perhaps 10 men in their 80s and 90s will form up near the Medical Science building. Some may be wearing uniforms issued to them as Canadian servicemen in the Second World War. As with every five-year reunion, these graduates of Meds ’50 will march to the Great Hall for their reunion dinner.

These are the surviving members of the so-called Veterans class, men who entered medicine fresh from service in the Second World War. Medicine Dean G. Edward Hall had made a stunning proposal – only vets could enroll in medicine in September 1945. With an overwhelming response, another intake class was accepted in January 1946. Merged as Meds 50, they became a powerhouse class of influencers at Western and elsewhere, a class unmatched in Western’s history for spirit, generosity and love of alma mater and country.

Howie Cameron, reunion organizer and attendee at every five-year reunion except the very first, grew up in medicine when a medical degree seemed out of reach. But Western and the federal government stepped in to make it possible. “I would never have gone to university without this help. I consider I have some loyalty to Western.”

* * *

For more than 60 years Homecoming has been filled with snapshot moments. Countless real-life encounters – from meeting an old roommate carrying her newborn to the 100-year-old grad taking a bow at a reunion dinner – fill the moments to overflowing with funny, touching and bittersweet emotions.

There’s no easy way to describe that Homecoming feeling. But for many graduates an urge happens to you when you age. They are not 68. They are standing there looking at each other and they are not seeing the wrinkles and the different attire and all the different things that happen to you when you age. They are seeing each other as 18-year-olds and it is magical.
Many class reunion organizers and volunteers start contacting former classmates two or three years in advance. And it takes a small army of alumni volunteers and Western staff to support the university’s most important four-day weekend. The enormity only begins to reveal itself when peeling away the layers of involvement.

Let’s begin with the eight-person volunteer committee of alumni who help to shape the event. And then add the Alumni Relations staff support throughout the year. In Communications, staff help with planning, ads and brochures. As the big weekend approaches, more staff get pulled in to tie up loose ends. Staff help with planning, ads and brochures. As the big weekend approaches, more staff get pulled in to tie up loose ends.

First on the Friday night (‘07) there was the Six Degrees get together with over 100 young alumni. I was surprised to see this many graduates together for an event re-living their past experiences with new acquaintances. It was at this point I understood what the entire Homecoming experience culminates to. The Meds ’50 class has kept in close contact and celebrates regularly at Homecoming thanks to the efforts of alumnus Howie Cameron.

Above left: Shane Gonsalves and Vicky Simanovski stand at UC Hill where Shane proposed to Vicky at Homecoming 2009.

The BioChem ’50 class has kept in close contact and celebrates regularly at Homecoming thanks to the efforts of alumni Howie Cameron.

If John and Judy MacDonald have a word for their Western experience it would be camaraderie, the notion of mutual trust and sociability. This notion of fellowship is central among many older grads. The Sirma couple met at Western. John, known as Mac, got a bachelor in chemistry and physics in 1959 and a PhD in organic chemistry in 1964. Following a post doc at Rice University in Texas he spent 30 years in research for Imperial Oil and Exxon, retiring in 1994. Judy graduated in chemistry in 1961 and later worked in Western’s Collip lab. They learned that’s why I think Homecoming is so successful, because of the traditions we established. This year he’s on a committee working on the 60th, a reunion that will take place this fall. “My God, I can’t believe I am that old.”

The magic (of Homecoming) can only be experienced and it is word-of-mouth that gets new people out every year. The organized (and unorganized) events create the platform for what becomes one of the biggest celebrations in the country every year.

“My most memorable moment is actually comprised of two events, one setting up for the other. First on the Friday night there was the Six Degrees get together with over 100 young alumni. I was surprised to see this many graduates together for an event re-living their past experiences with new acquaintances. It was then on Saturday afternoon, in a packed TD Waterhouse stadium, I witnessed a massive group of Londoners, UWO alumni, and current students create a sea of people united together. It was at this point I understood what the entire Homecoming experience culminates to.”

Deb Cupello has earned a triple – three Western degrees (1998, 1999 and 2006). The teacher at St. Joseph’s Catholic high school in St. Thomas had applied to other universities along the way but she admits they weren’t really in the running. “You know how people say, ‘if I knew then what I know now’. Well, my point is, I knew then (as a student) and it was a really positive experience. So that’s why I wanted to maintain that connection.”

“Western is associated with the concept of tradition and that’s why I think Homecoming is so successful, because of the traditions we established.”

The annual Globe and Mail survey takes the pulse of student satisfaction and Western has been hands-down winner among large universities every year of the survey. The survey’s designers say Western provides the services of a big school while maintaining a decidedly small-school feel. Many alumni say this is where Homecoming really starts. In the relationships forged in student clubs and classes, on residence floors, at parties and in examination rooms. And even at football games. If it doesn’t happen here, there’s little to come home to. In how many places can a young guy feel that connection enough to walk to the top of a hill and then drop to one knee and propose? And the only observer will walk away with tears in her eyes. Unless they feel like family.

Company’s coming. Time to get ready.
Come home with family and friends... it’s time to celebrate!

**Thursday, September 30**

**HOMECOMING KICKOFF & ALUMNI WESTERN AGM**
7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
TD Waterhouse Stadium
Join us as we bestow our 3rd Annual Spirit of Western Award. Appetizers, mingling, entertainment and more! Everyone is invited.

**Friday, October 1**

**36th ANNUAL ALUMNI AWARDS DINNER**
5:30 p.m. Reception
6:30 p.m. Dinner
The Great Hall, Somerville House
Western honours exceptional alumni during a fabulous three-course meal with musical entertainment and greetings from Western President, Amit Chakma.

**2010 Alumni Award of Merit Recipients**
Kelly Meighen, BA’71 - Dr. Ivan Smith Award
Dr. Keith Barron, PhD’97 - Professional Achievement Award
John B. Lee, BA’74, BEd’75, MA’85 - Professional Achievement Award
Wayne Dunn, BEd’80 - Community Service Award
Dr. Lisa M. Given, BA’93, BEd’94, MLIS’96, PhD’01 - Young Alumni Award

**Ellwira Berzins Award Recipients (Women’s Athletic Alumnae)**
Belinda Chou, BA’01, BEd’05
Mary Lou Dresser, BA’59
Tanya Tygesen, BA’90
Bev (Perce) Warner, BA’70

**‘W’ Club Hall of Fame Inductees**
Jeff Arp, BA’81
Jim Parker, BSc’57
Dr. Ron Watson
Guy Zink, BA’74, BEd’75

**Six Degrees Homecoming**
9:00 p.m.
The London Tap House
545.5 Richmond Street
Young alumni from the last decade will kick off the weekend at this popular networking event.

**Saturday, October 2**

**HOMECOMING PARADE**
9:00 a.m.
Along Richmond Street

**HOMECOMING HOSPITALITY**
10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Alumni Hall Lobby
- Information
- Refreshments
- Gifts
- Children’s Activities with Sport Western

**MANULIFE SOUTH END ZONE LUNCH**
11:30 a.m.
TD Waterhouse Stadium
Join us in the best seats in the house. Package includes football ticket, VIP lunch, tented reception, Homecoming gift.

**HOMECOMING FOOTBALL GAME**
1:00 p.m.
Western Mustangs vs. Queen’s Golden Gaels
For tickets, please contact the Mustang Ticket Office at 519.661.4077 or visit: westernmustangtickets.universitytickets.com.

**Golden Anniversary Dinner**
6:00 p.m. Reception
7:00 p.m. Dinner
The Great Hall, Somerville House
Honouring the class of 1960.

**Sunday, October 3**

**HOMECOMING GOLF AT FIREROCK**
9:00 a.m. - Registration begins
11:00 a.m. - Shotgun start
10345 Oxbow Drive, Komoka
Dust off your driver and join us for the 3rd Annual Homecoming Golf Tournament. All skill levels are welcome. Tickets include 18 holes, a GPS golf cart and buffet lunch. Register individually or as a team. Format scramble. Rain or shine.

**President’s Reception**
11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Gibbons Lodge, 1836 Richmond Street
Invited as special guests to a garden reception at the home of Amit & Meena Chakma.

**Russel Braun in Concert**
2:00 p.m. Paul Davenport Theatre (former Talbot Theatre)
Musical concert featuring Canadian Baritone Russell Braun
Price: $35
VIP ticket: $99, with 50% charitable receipt, front row, meet the artist
Winner of two Juno awards, Braun has the acclaim of critics and worldwide audiences alike. Proceeds support the Parsons-Poole Legacy Project in the Don Wright Faculty of Music.

For more information, and a listing of faculty, branch and chapter, and affiliated college events, please visit www.alumni.uwo.ca.

**Homecoming is sponsored by:**

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SUMMER 2010 EDITION
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Western Gains
By Tom Spears

Adrian Owen brings his Cambridge team to Canada

"The idea even 10 years ago that you can take a person who’s vegetative, put them in a brain scanner and make any sort of progress, any impact on that person’s life — it was really pretty inconceivable in this field."

The news has startled Britain. Of consciousness is having a conversation. Astonished world: A man with no outward sign of consciousness is having a conversation. On New Year’s Day (2011), this world-famous scientist starts a new job — at Western. The news has startled Britain.


Th e Robarts Research Institute has brain scanners that stand out on the world stage, says the scientist and the subject to respond to each other without delays, like two people having an ordinary conversation.

At Western, he’ll study people with Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s disease and others — all involve severe loss of brain function.

When you’re stuck inside your head and you cannot even acknowledge to your loved ones that you are there, then being able to communicate in even a rudimentary way is a pretty major step forward.”

He peering inside the mind also tells us about ourselves. “It can answer a lot of questions about ‘What is consciousness?’ That’s stuff philosophers have wrestled with for centuries.

He thinks that leads to foundations for looking for therapies, looking for ways to improve the lives of some of these patients in quite a radical way.”

At Western, he says. "It’s really a no-brainer move. I’ve been very surprised how surprised people are."

Owen, 44, is one of 19 high-powered researchers recruited to Canadian universities in May as Canada Excellence Research Chairs. Each receives $10 million in federal funding over seven years. Owen himself gets a super lab worth far more than the actual research grant.

"Everybody has noticed, all over the world, that Adrian Owen is going to the University of Western Ontario. That’s a statement for the country and a statement for the university."
It’s no surprise when a graduate of the Richard Ivey School of Business becomes a successful entrepreneur. But Kevin O’Leary, who earned his MBA at Western in 1980, has become probably the most visible entrepreneur in the country.

Since last autumn, he has been co-hosting, with business reporter Amanda Lang, The Lang and O’Leary Exchange, a lively weekday program on CBC News Network that debates the state of the markets and the economy. He is also a regular on Dragons’ Den, the CBC-TV show in which aspiring entrepreneurs pitch their ideas to venture capitalists, including O’Leary. And he appears on Shark Tank, the U.S. version of Dragons’ Den airing on ABC-TV.

O’Leary is certainly well qualified to judge a start-up’s potential. He has had four entrepreneurial successes of his own, including, most recently, O’Leary Funds Inc., a mutual funds company he launched as the industry was consolidating.

O’Leary, 56, was born in Mont-Royal, QC, and educated in Cambodia, Cyprus, Tunisia, Ethiopia, France and Switzerland, as his stepfather worked with the International Labour Organization. “What I learned, moving every two years, was that there’s a whole big world out there, and Canada is just a small part of it,” he says. “Very little of my money is in Canada today.”

Following an undergraduate degree in Environmental Studies at the University of Waterloo, O’Leary pursued his MBA at the Ivey School (where he now sits on the Executive Board). “The value of the degree was in the credentials it gave me for raising funds for my business ventures,” he recalls.

O’Leary’s first start-up was in television production. He became a founding partner in Special Event Television, an independent production outfit that produced original sports programming such as “Don Cherry’s Grapevine” and “Bobby Orr and the Hockey Legends.” It was the beginning of an ongoing love affair he has had with television.

Then, in the basement of his small Toronto home, he parlayed $10,000 in seed capital from his mother into Soft Key Software Products, developing software to help students with reading and math. He moved the headquarters to Cambridge, MA and went on an acquisition spree before selling his company in 1999 to Mattel Toy for US$3.7 billion dollars, one of the largest deals to that time in the consumer software industry.

In 2003 O’Leary became co-investor and a director in Storage Now, a leading developer of climate-controlled storage facilities. Through a series of development projects and acquisitions, it became Canada’s third largest owner/operator of storage services.

In early, 2008 he co-founded O’Leary Funds Inc., a mutual fund company focused on global yield investing. He is the company’s chairman and lead investor. The firm has $960 million under management across 11 different publicly-traded funds. O’Leary brought to the fund company a lesson he learned from his mother: “She would never spend the principal, just the interest. Everything I own has to pay a dividend,” he insists. “I looked for money managers who would do the same thing. I just want to set the investment style, not pick the stocks.”

Meanwhile, O’Leary also became a TV presence. He was a frequent co-host on Business News Network (BNN), the cable specialty channel owned by CTglobemedia, and became the entrepreneur/investor co-host for the Discovery Channel’s Discovery Project Earth, a program that explores innovative ways to reverse global warming. But his highest visibility in Canada has come from his roles on Dragons’ Den—where he has appeared in all five seasons—and the Lang/O’Leary sparring matches. He acknowledges that his TV work has helped build his brand, as well as introduced him to investment gurus and market movers.

O’Leary has an office in Toronto and a cottage – shared with his wife and two children -- in the Muskokas. He’s perpetually on the move, though, seeking out new investment opportunities. He’s increasingly in Europe and Asia, and finds the travel “just brutal.” While he says he “has to figure out a way to retire,” he tried that for three years following the sale of his software company and got bored “sitting on every beach known to mankind.” Besides, he still has a to-do list. One goal is to take O’Leary Funds public over the next two to three years; another is to “keep exploring where TV takes me.”
When Stephanie Ciccarelli graduated from Western in 2006 with her Bachelor of Musical Arts, she knew voice would be where she made her living. But Ciccarelli has found success promoting other people’s voices internationally with a company she founded with her husband David in 2003.

Voices.com is an online marketplace that connects business people with voice actors and professional voiceover talents. Initially the main clients were radio and television stations, advertising agencies and other businesses. But the growing need for voice talent for video games, iPhone, audio books, and other technology applications has generated explosive demand. In 2009 Voices.com was named number 20 on Profit Magazine’s Hot 50 list, after experiencing a 534 per cent growth in revenues from 2006 to 2008.

So how did a music major wind up married to an audio recording technologist, and giving birth to both a fast growing business and a fast growing family? The couple met in February 2002, says Ciccarelli. “I was a first-year music student and my mom knew one of my goals was to record a demo. David had a recording studio, the Flying Disk, and he was featured in the London Free Press. Mom clipped the story and left it in my room. I liked the story, and he was pretty handsome, so I set up an appointment to meet him and have a tour of the studio.” She decided his was the recording studio she wanted to use, and as they worked together to make the demo, she says, “It turned romantic.”

A whirlwind few years followed – they married in 2003, launched Voices.com and started their family (the couple now has three children, ages six, five and two)…all while Ciccarelli was still a full-time student at Western. Not that being busy was a new thing. Growing up, Ciccarelli studied both music and acting. She was a member of London’s Original Kid Theatre Company and performed with the music programs at St. Mary’s Choir School and Catholic Central High School and with the Amabile Youth Singers. In her spare time she taught voice and sang for weddings, funerals and other occasions.

Through those experiences, Ciccarelli says, “I was used to being my own boss,” so the start-up of Voices.com seemed like a natural entrepreneurial transition. The Ciccarellis jumped into the marketplace in the early days, when the internet was starting to gain popularity as a tool to find voice talent. The company’s client roster includes dozens of recognizable names including NBC, ESPN, PBS, The History Channel, The Discovery Channel, Sony Picture, Microsoft, Cisco Systems, ING, Western Union, American Airlines, Ford, GM, Toyota, and the US Army. Voices.com has an online inventory of more than 107,000 voices in dozens of languages and a range of ages and capabilities. Businesses looking for talent can browse the sound bites to find that perfect voice for their project. Some people specialize in specific sound effects. One woman can sound like a baby at various stages, from newborn up. Another has perfected the sound of a barking dog. There is a puppeteer who worked with Jim Henson of Muppets fame. Others can replicate celebrity voices, which comes in handy if a soundtrack needs slight editing and the original actor is unavailable.

Ciccarelli’s voice is not part of the voices.com repertoire. Instead she uses her voice in different ways these days, writing blogs, coaching voice actors, and authoring e-books related to voice acting, from Script (a collection of royalty-free voice-over scripts that can be used when recording their demos) to The Internet Marketing Plan for Voice Actors. It may not exactly be what Ciccarelli envisioned when she enrolled in the Don Wright Faculty of Music at Western. But it sure has been an interesting journey.

...The growing need for voice talent for video games, iPhone, audio books, and other technology applications has generated explosive demand.
Do you ever get the feeling you’re being watched? Take a stroll around the Physics & Astronomy Building and that feeling may well seem a reality.

And no, it’s not the hard-working faculty and students peering down from their windows, but rather a collection of odd and unique figures attached to the building itself – faces such as a Yorkshire farmer, Tecumseh and ‘Ole Bill’ (based on the First World War British Tommy created by cartoonist Bruce Bairnsfather).

In charge of the Natural Science building, completed in 1924, was builder John Putherbough, who was in a friendly competition with the builder of University College.

“That’s what makes them so special, there were no moulds whatsoever.”

ALAN NOON

“There was a friendly competition as to who could do the best job,” says Alan Noon, freelance researcher with the Department of Communications and Public Affairs. “John hired stone mason Dan Cree of Hamilton, Ont., who asked John if he could make some interesting designs on the building to give it some colour and movement.”

From that enthusiasm came more than 30 one-of-a-kind sculptures, which Cree carved on the spot.

“That’s what makes them so special, there were no moulds whatsoever,” adds Noon.

“The best time of year to catch a glimpse of these matchless mugs, such as ‘Boy with Toothache’ (modeled after a magazine advertisement for toothpaste) is after the green ivy dies back in the fall and winter. For a detailed look at the famous facade faces, check out a website of former Physics professor Don Moorcroft at www.physics.uwo.ca/~drm/history/sculpture.html
to cultivate your personal taste. Becoming a member of your local public or university art gallery will alert you to invisible events such as exhibition openings and artists’ talks, which will hone your skills and level of appreciation. It is often the case that new collectors will start acquiring one type of art that they are comfortable with and then move on to more challenging stuff. When you are ready to purchase a work of art it is critical to go through a reputable dealer. London, Ontario is fortunate to have three well-established commercial galleries: Strand Fine Art; Michael Gibson Gallery, and, the oldest, Thielsen Galleries. They can provide you with information on the artists they represent and assist with the selection of individual works. If you see something you like, it is always a good idea to ask where the artist has exhibited and if they are included in any major publications and public art collections. While there are many excellent emerging artists out there who may not have an extensive track record, it is best to start collecting artists with established professional careers. And if you want a second opinion before making the plunge, it never hurts to do a little more web-based research on the artist or simply call a curator or other experienced individual to find out more.

If you are still wary of making the big commitment, art rental services at your local public gallery can offer a no risk solution. Renting a work of art for a few months will allow you to determine if it is something you want to own. Like any worthy activity the more you put into it the more you will accomplish. There is good original art available for all budgets and tastes.

James Patten is director/curator of the McIntosh Gallery at The University of Western Ontario.
NEW RELEASES

FIVE SECONDS AT A TIME
Five Seconds at a Time - How Leaders Can Make The Impossible Possible by Ivey Professor Denis Shackle & Tara Bradacs, HBA’05. When a tragic mountain-climbing accident left business professor Denis Shackle stranded on Mount Ruapehu in New Zealand, he turned to the leadership principles that he had been teaching for years to survive the longest night of his life. Alone, with temperatures plunging to -30 degrees Celsius and dressed only in a T-shirt and shorts, Shackle first broke the night into five thousand five-second intervals. He decided to deal with only one interval at a time – a strategy based on his knowledge that effective leaders break big challenges into smaller, more manageable ones. Then, stepping back to see the bigger picture, he relied on vision, intuition, and faith to keep him alive. Shackle emerged from this harrowing experience having cemented his belief that the principles fundamental to leadership are also key to tackling any leaders are feeling overwhelmed. Five Seconds at a Time provides effective tools and strategies to excel. With its compelling mix of survival, leadership principles and real-life stories, it will inspire readers to achieve the seemingly impossible. Available through amazon.ca

FIFTY & FABULOUS
Before writing Fifty & Fabulous: The Best Years of a Woman’s Life, Jaki Scarcello, BA’74 (Sociology), spent 30 years listening to and supporting individuals and organizations as a leadership consultant, facilitator and coach working with Fortune 500 companies in Canada and the United States. In a world where thirty-year-olds line up for Botox shots, a woman of a certain age may start to suspect that her best days are behind her. But Scarcello proves otherwise with a fresh and spirited take on the years after fifty – and shows that this time of a woman’s life holds new opportunities at every stage, right up to the surprising lightness of very old age. Written with honesty and humor, touching on topics from sex and self-image to the milestone of menopause to changing roles and relationships, Fifty & Fabulous appeals to wide audiences; it is a useful resource not only for those who are in the workforce, but also for students and homemakers; rather than just pointing out what one can tackle, Fifty & Fabulous shares real women’s inspiring stories about their struggles and successes. Jaki Scarcello is a sought after motivational speaker and her how-to book The Red Flag Rulebook serves as the ultimate guide for women looking to weed out those not-so-worthy men. Available through www.amazon.com

CHOOSING WORK-LIFE BALANCE
Walter Chan, PhD’74, spent most of his career with the Ontario government where he was a former director. Last year, he took early retirement to write a book on a subject very dear to his heart. Choosing Work-Life Balance: The Keys to Achieving What Many Think is Unattainable addresses the issue of work-life balance by developing the Umbrella Model and insights for living joyfully through midlife and beyond. Following Marcel Duchamp’s death in 1968, the Philadelphia Museum of Art stunned the art world by unveiling a project on which he had been working secretly for 20 years. Étant donnés (known in English as Given, or, literally, “being given”) consists of a small room with a locked wooden door; through a peephole one can be seen a landscape of trees, with a naked female figure at the front, her arm outstretched, holding a lamp. In this illustrated study, Julian Haladyn, BFA’02, argues that Duchamp’s intention in this final piece was to open his artwork to endless interpretation and reinterpretation. Available through www.amazon.com

THE RED FLAG RULEBOOK
In the refreshing new release from Burman Books The Red Flag Rulebook by best selling authors Cheryl Anne Meyer and Tara Landon, BA’07 (Sociology) clearly lists and explains through humor and brutal honesty all of the “red flags” that women should look out for when choosing a companion. The book empowers women to reject men that have too many red flags and it encourages them to put the ball back in their own courts. Unlike other dating how-to books, The Red Flag Rulebook serves as the ultimate guide for women looking to weed out those not-so-worthy men. Burmanbooks.com, Amazon.com

THE PIT CREW CHALLENGE
Bob Parker, BA’90 (Philosophy), is President of Robert A. Parker & Associates Inc., an International Training Consulting company located in London, Ontario that specializes in providing unconventional training for innovative companies. As a motivational speaker and trainer for over 20 years, Bob speaks to diverse groups of people each year on helping them improve their organizations and personal lives. His newly released book, The Pit Crew Challenge: Winning Customers Through Teaming, outlines some of the key learnings from over 10,000 Pit Crew Challenge participants on the principles of teaming and organizational effectiveness. Available through www.amazon.com

CREATIVE ARTS IN INTERDISCIPLINARY PRACTICE
This contemporary research text edited by Cheryl McLean, BAT’77 (MA’03, Concordia, Creative Art Therapies) and published by International Journal of The Creative Arts in Interdisciplinary Practice, www.ijcaip.com, introduces an emerging and rapidly growing field. At a time when collaboration is more evident than ever, this text offers articles about the creative arts in research, action and interdisciplinary practice. Firsthand topical accounts are featured from leading academics, health researchers, nurse educators, physicians, educators, environmentalists, artists and others who actively use the creative arts in interdisciplinary practice in cutting-edge research and in methodologies for health, hope and change. Available through www.creativartspractice.blogspot.com

COLERAINE
Coleraine – A Time Remembered by William B. Connor, BA’64 (History) is set in Northern Ireland in the late sixties and early seventies, and recalls a chapter in Ireland’s troubled past. In the aftermath of a bombing in the quiet town of Ballycastle, Willie Thompson’s family struggles to make sense out of what has happened, unaware that this tragic event foreshadows something even more terrible. It is a story of ordinary people who courageously confront their own fears and human frailties and in the end find a measure of faith and renewal. A native of Ireland, William Connor was born and educated in Coleraine. At the age of 17 he left Ireland to seek a new life in Canada. Contact: CherylMcLean@ijcaip.com
VOICE OF ALUMNI
WITH CAROL-LYNN CHAMBERS, BSC’82, MPA’D1, PRESIDENT, ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

LEADERSHIP
As I started to write this column, I was inspired by watching a Western alumnus teaching his young son how to fish, while visiting my hometown of Sarnia recently. The father was proudly wearing his purple Western Football t-shirt. I thought to myself, hopefully someday his son will also have the chance to be a Western graduate. The scene, set against the backdrop of beautiful Sarnia Bay at sunset, turned my thoughts to leadership - and in particular, how we inspire, guide, challenge, and support the next generation of leaders. As you know, international leadership is a key theme in Western President Amit Chakma’s aspirations for the university. Leadership at Western comes in many forms - from fostering knowledge exchange, stimulating research into emerging technologies and markets, finding new solutions to new problems - to building a worldwide community of innovative, enterprising, intellectual, humanitarian, and philanthropic individuals that proudly wear the Western colours.

The Alumni Association is a reflection of this community - our dedicated volunteers from all walks of life who contribute their time and talents to furthering Western’s worldwide profile and significance. We also bring a unique perspective, having had the “best student experience,” we now enjoy the enviable position of a more objective and broad-based view of the university, coloured by our life experiences since graduation.

As my term as your President comes to a close at Homecoming this fall, it is rewarding to look back and reflect on the many leaders that have helped to continually shape our Alumni Association, and the contributions that our Association has made to the Western community. It is also with much collective pride that we can reflect on our many accomplishments against our current Strategic Plan - “Factoring the Future - Engaging Alumni.” Some examples include the continued success of our alumni programs, the growing engagement of alumni in those programs, record uptake on affinity partner services, and our ongoing contributions to the dialogue and directions regarding University governance and campus life. And much more.

But our work is never finished. We continue to rely on the dedication, creativity, and passion of alumni to step forward and help to spurt the many initiatives offered by the Alumni Association and to further our impact in the broader Western community. We are fortunate to have leadership from the youngest to the most senior alumni in our volunteer ranks at Alumni Western and it is this cross-pollination of ideas and our professional staff partners who make it happen that makes our organization so successful. It is such an exciting time to be involved with Western - consider joining us.

Check out www.alumni.uwo.ca to see how you can get involved.

ELGIN ALUMNI BRANCH SUMMER PICNIC TURNS 70
Is it the location? The record of great weather? Or maybe the people? Whatever the reason, the Elgin Alumni Branch summer picnic - at 70 years old and running - is Western’s longest active alumni event that seems to attract more and more each year. Charlie and Laurie Nagge of Port Stanley hosted the 2010 picnic, at the Ontario Legislature’s Speaker of the House – and a full contingent of volunteers, Alumni Relations staff, and President Amit Chakma kept the event at full steam like a Pt. Stanley locomotive. Read the complete story, with photos, online at www.alumnigazette.ca.
Dr. Ivan Smith Award
The Dr. Ivan Smith Award is Alumni Western’s highest tribute. It is awarded annually to an outstanding individual in recognition of their sustained and significant contributions to the Alumni Association, The University of Western Ontario and society.

Kelly Meighen, BA’71
Kelly Meighen says she is sure she was the last student Western let in through the gates in 1968. “I was struggling through high school and getting into Western was really big for me,” says Kelly, who attended Huron University College. “I completed my degree in Psychology, and I learned who I was as an independent individual. But I still didn’t have a robust view of what I could accomplish – and here we are today– something right must of happened along the way.”

Kelly grew up in London, Ontario and after attaining her degree from Western, went on to work for the Ontario Government, General Foods Inc. where she ultimately worked as Director of University Relations, Beedie, Shepell & Associates, and finally in 1994 she took on the role of President at the T.R. Meighen Family Foundation. Since 1977, Kelly has been very involved in volunteering in her community. Today she lives in Toronto and is a member of Western’s Board of Governors, T.R. Meighen Family Foundation, Stratford Shakespeare Festival, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, Evergreen at the Bridgwater, and Upper Canada College. Additionally, she is a past member of the board with Sancta Maria House, Allen School, The Wellesley Hospital, Mount Allison University and Writer’s Development Trust of Canada.

Through her involvement with the Board of Governors, Kelly was involved in the deliberations for hiring Western’s new President, Amit Chakma.

“Being a part of the process to find Western’s new leader was such a privilege,” notes Kelly. “I feel I have had a hand in shaping the future of this university.”

Kelly says it is a luxury to be able to devote her time to volunteer commitments and organizations she is passionate about. Additionally, she says she is thrilled with what the T.R. Meighen Foundation has been able to accomplish in supporting organizations throughout Ontario (including Western), Quebec and in New Brunswick.

For a complete list of award winners and photos, including athletics awards, please visit www.alumnigazette.ca

Alumni Events

Branches: Canada

Calgary, AB
Volunteering at Calgary Inter-Rail Food Bank September 24, 2010
Cheer on Western vs. Queen’s Football October 2, 2010

Durham Region, ON
Rick McGee Night September 25, 2010

Guelph, ON
The Ethics of Ingenuity November 2010

Halifax, NS
Eve with the Lieutenant Governor at Government House October 21, 2010

London, ON
Senior Alumni Program Lecture Series September 14-December 7, 2010
Alumni Association AGM September 30, 2010
Homecoming 2010 September 30-October 3, 2010
Six Degrees Homecoming: Classes from the Decade
Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat at the Grand Theatre November 27, 2010
Wine tasting event and cooking workshop at Avonora Date TBD
London Knights Hockey at the JLC December 3, 2010
London Knights Hockey at the JLC January 7, 2011
London Knights Hockey at the JLC January 28, 2011
London Westods g the JLC March 7, 2011
Tim Hortons Brier SilverSkate Alumni Hockey Tournament March 8, 2011

Long Point, ON
Six Degrees Long Point: Eco Adventure October 21, 2010
Montreal, QC
Montreal President’s Reception October 31, 2010

Niagara Region, ON
Wine Tasting Reception October 10, 2010
Cooking Seminar at Niagara College November 2010
Toronto Maple Leafs @ Buffalo Sabres February 5, 2011

Ottawa, ON
Western Football @ Ottawa (pregame at The Barley Mow) September 6, 2010

Peterborough, ON
Alumni Reception October 7, 2010

Sarnia, ON
Innovations in Food and Wine September 14, 2010

Hockey Night in Sarnia January 7, 2011

Toronto, ON
Personal Branding Career Networking Receptions November 10, 2010
HRS Pre-season Hockey Ottawa Senators @ Toronto Maple Leafs September 22, 2010
Toronto Lecture Series September 22, 2010
Toronto Lecture Series October 3, 2010
Toronto Lecture Series November 30, 2010
“Casino of the Arts” at MolsonCo October 29, 2010
Toronto Lecture Series December 2, 2010
Toronto Lecture Series December 9, 2010
Toronto Lecture Series February 16, 2011
Toronto Lecture Series Founder’s Day March 7, 2011

Vancouver, BC
Vancouver President’s Reception September 30, 2010

Victoria, BC
Wine Tasting at the Union Club November 5, 2010

Waterloo, ON
Oktoberfest at Concordia Club Six Degrees Watercolor: Your Digital Tattoo November 9, 2010

Windsor, ON
Rick McGee Night September 17, 2010

Winnipeg, MB
Manito Moose Games October 28, 2010

Branches: International

Dubai, UAE
Canadian Thanksgiving in the United Arab Emirates October 6, 2010

Hong Kong
Mission Hills Golf Outing September 4, 2010
Halloween Happy Hour October 29, 2010

London, UK
Founder’s Day Event March 7, 2011

Palo Alto, CA
Alumni Reception September 30, 2010

Nassau, BS
The Bahamas, The International Community and Western September 30, 2010

New York, NY
CAGY - All Canadian Alumni Event September 23, 2010

Global (online)
Six Degrees Global Financial Boot Camp Winter 2010-11

Awards of Merit Winner in Hong Kong
Professor Yue-man Yeung is Emeritus Professor of Geography of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. He is currently a research consultant of Central Policy Unit of HKSAR, a consultant of Shenzhen Social Science Academy and also guest, Honorary or Advisory Professor of several prominent Mainland China universities.

Prof. Yeung is formerly the director of Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, the head of Shaw College, and university registrar of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. He worked almost a decade for Canada’s International Research Centre (IDRC) based in Singapore and Ottawa. His wide-ranging research interests have recently focused on the development of China’s coastal cities, China’s reform, globalization and Asian cities. He is a prolific writer who has to his credit a total of 44 books and numerous articles in international refereed journals and book chapters.
Advancement Services, 519-661-4176 or 1-800-420-7519 Fax 519-661-4182 email advser@uwo.ca.

Cathryn Green McNamee, BA’63

Cathryn McNamee.com

Dr. Jonathan Burrow, BS’71, (Mathematics), has been elected to the Australian Academy of Science in recognition of his research, which has significantly advanced the world’s understanding of nanotechnology.

Dr. Arthur Lam, MD’74, joined Swedish Medical Center in Seattle as medical director and Portfolio Manager of First Republic Bank in Los Angeles.

Dr. Steven Norman Liss, BSc’80, (Mathematics), has been appointed to the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada’s (NSERC) 2019 Governor General’s Commendation in recognition of his service as a member of the Board of Directors of NSERC.

Dr. Amy Helen Lim, BA’87, (English), has recently been appointed Executive Vice-President of Fanshawe College in London, Ontario.

Dr. Bill McEwan, MD’83, was appointed President and CEO of MDA, a public company that designs, manufactures and operates space systems for the commercial, defence and government markets.

Dr. Melanie M. Richardson, BSc’84, (Biology), was appointed VP, Research & Innovation at the University of Newfoundland and Labrador in St. John’s, Newfoundland.

Dr. Mike Paré, MD’76, (Surgery), has been appointed to the board of directors of Amgen Canada, a biotechnology company that researches and develops medicines to treat cancer, cardiovascular disease, inflammation and other serious medical conditions.

Dr. Andrew C. McKechnie, BSc’78, (Agriculture), has been appointed as President and CEO of John Deere Canada, a leading manufacturer of agricultural and construction equipment.

Dr. Joanne McMillan, BA’73, (Geography), has been appointed as Senior Vice-President and Chief Financial Officer of the University of Guelph.

Dr. Matthew P. Margetts, BSc’78, (Chemistry), has been appointed as President and CEO of the University of Alberta.

Dr. Neil J. McWilliam, BSc’77, (Chemistry), has been appointed as President and CEO of the University of Waterloo.

Dr. J. Egbert McEachern, BA’83, (Economics), has been appointed as President of the University of Western Ontario.

Dr. Joanne McLeod, PhD’83, (Biology), has been appointed as President and CEO of the University of Guelph.

Dr. Karin C. Mehlmann, BSc’80, (Biology), has been appointed as President and CEO of the University of Waterloo.

Dr. John K. Mehaffey, BSc’85, (Environmental Science), has been appointed as President and CEO of the University of Guelph.

Dr. Jane M. McFeeters, BA’87, (Psychology), has been appointed as President and CEO of the University of Guelph.

Dr. William E. McFarlane, BSc’85, (Chemistry), has been appointed as President and CEO of the University of Guelph.

Dr. Mark W. McDonald, BSc’87, (Computer Science), has been appointed as President and CEO of the University of Guelph.

Dr. Mandy S. Mechelle, BA’86, (Economics), has been appointed as President and CEO of the University of Guelph.

Dr. Robert J. McFarlane, BSc’87, (Chemistry), has been appointed as President and CEO of the University of Guelph.

Dr. Robert J. Mccarthy, BSc’87, (Chemistry), has been appointed as President and CEO of the University of Guelph.

Dr. Robert J. Mcnab, BSc’87, (Chemistry), has been appointed as President and CEO of the University of Guelph.

Dr. Robert J. Mehta, BSc’87, (Chemistry), has been appointed as President and CEO of the University of Guelph.

Dr. Robert J. Middlekauff, BSc’87, (Chemistry), has been appointed as President and CEO of the University of Guelph.

Dr. Robert J. Miller, BSc’87, (Chemistry), has been appointed as President and CEO of the University of Guelph.

Dr. Robert J. Mitchell, BSc’87, (Chemistry), has been appointed as President and CEO of the University of Guelph.

Dr. Robert J. Moore, BSc’87, (Chemistry), has been appointed as President and CEO of the University of Guelph.

Dr. Robert J. Morris, BSc’87, (Chemistry), has been appointed as President and CEO of the University of Guelph.

Dr. Robert J. Morrison, BSc’87, (Chemistry), has been appointed as President and CEO of the University of Guelph.

Dr. Robert J. Morton, BSc’87, (Chemistry), has been appointed as President and CEO of the University of Guelph.

Dr. Robert J. Owen, BSc’87, (Chemistry), has been appointed as President and CEO of the University of Guelph.
Alumni Gazette

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Gazetteer

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Jordon R. Banks, BA’90 (Political Sc.), was appointed as Managing Director of Facebook Canada, based in Toronto, Ontario.

Peter R. Sikura, HBA’90, was appointed VP, Strategic Solutions Group of Pitney Bowes Canada & Latin America. Pitney Bowes provides software, hardware and services that integrate physical and digital communication channels.

Crocketta (Chris) Grappone, LLB’90, was recently named a 2010 Law League of the Law Society of Upper Canada Annual Awards Ceremony. Grappone was called to the Bar of Ontario in 1992. Highly respected by Crowns, defence counsel and judges alike, Chris Grappone is renowned for her exceptional leadership and mentorship abilities. As a team leader with the Public Prosecution Service of Canada, she consistently provides a positive learning experience for numerous junior counsel, helping to build a solid foundation for their legal careers.

Tony Basari, HBA’91, has been appointed the President and CEO of Fhit, a sports and identity-management company. He is a principal of Growth Equity Partners, a full service business advisory firm.

Edward Jaszenos, BA’91 (Admin/Com Fin/Econ), was appointed to the position of CFO with Interment Media Inc., a new media company that is focused on the Venture exchange.

Kathryn Lynn Denton, PhD’92 (Physiology), was appointed the new VP of Education, Douglas College, British Columbia.

Fashion and social shopping platform Polyvore Inc. has named Sukhinder Singh Cassidy, HBA’92, its new Chief Executive Officer. Singh Cassidy was formerly the CEO-in-residence at Accel Partners.

Peter Wilson Tagliamonte, MBA’93, has been appointed a Director of Verena Minerals Corporation, a metals exploration company.

Michael E. Drolet, BA’74 (English), was appointed a Director of Global National in Toronto.

Robert S. Butchey, BSc’95, was appointed the new VP of Education, Douglas College, its new Chief Operating Officer.

Edward Jonasson, BA’91 (Psychology), was appointed the new VP of Education, Douglas College, its new Chief Operating Officer.

Michael J. Baldinelli, MESc’97 (Mechanical Eng), was appointed CFO of DocuSign, Inc. – in the electronic signature market.

Jeff Powell, MA’00 (Geography), is one of four Canadian university athletes nominated for the Canadian Interuniversity Sport (CIS) Male Athlete of the Year.

IN MEMORIAM


Bruce Shiga, BEd’68 (Althouse), on April 7, 2010 while vacationing in Cozumel, Mexico.

Robin Hollis Roberts, BA’75 (Political Science), on April 22, 2010 in Toronto.

Western Alumni and Royal Canadian Regiment Colonel Geoff Parker, BSc’90, on May 10, 2010 in Afghanistan.

Facility & Staff

Professor & Law librarian Margaret Annula Banks, on Thursday, April 29, 2010 in London, Ontario.

Professor Emeritus (Sociology) John Howard Kunkel, on April 22, 2010 in Los Angeles, California.

Former Family Medicine faculty member, Dr. John Orchard, MD’78, on April 2, 2010 in London, Ontario.

Full obituaries of the listings above can be found online at: www.alumniuwo.ca

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THE FINAL SAY
WITH PAUL WELLS, BA’89

TIME TO PUSH THE WESTERN VEHICLE

This spring I was invited to lunch in Ottawa with Amit Chakma, Western’s new president. On his side of the table were several other members of the university’s administration. On mine were alumni who’ve made a career in journalism. The happiest surprise was seeing Clark Davey, who graduated in 1948 and went on to report for, edit and manage most of the country’s important newspapers.

The topic of lunch wasn’t journalism, really. I suppose we were invited so Dr. Chakma could take a break from the VIP rounds in the capital, and because as political reporters and UWO alumni we might be expected to know both the university and its measurable achievement. He didn’t blink. He conceded part, but not all, of my point. He stated the reality that broader perspectives encourage higher ambition. You can’t coast when you’re somewhere strange. You can’t assume the way they did things back home is the only way. And you start to realize you’re able to think and act beyond the horizons you used to take for granted.

At lunch we all had a good debate about how perceptions of Western can be brought into line with its lately improved reality so the university’s progress can continue and accelerate. What’s already obvious is that, in encouraging Western students to notice the world and in seeking to draw the world’s attention to Western, Chakma is attempting to kick Western out of its regional base and into the international arena.

That won’t be easy. I think my alma mater is ready. So I dusted off my credit card and, for the first time in too long, made a donation. I learned that Western’s Make a Difference campaign is a little more than one-third of the way to its $500,000,000 goal for 2014. That’s ambitious, but our alma mater is becoming a place where ambition is expected.

If anyone reads my column here regularly, they’ll know I never use it as part of a fundraising drive. My lunch with Dr. Chakma led me to make an exception this time. Many of us have watched from a distance as Western transformed itself from a wonderful place for collecting undergraduate memories, into a contender. Now’s a good time to stop watching and help push.

Chakma wants to triple the representation of international students in Western’s undergraduate population.

One thing I learned at lunch is that Western’s student recruitment has an odd middle-distance quality to it. We do quite well at attracting students from Toronto. We don’t do as well at persuading students from the London area to stay home for university. And we aren’t really even on the map for international students. Barely four per cent of current students are international students. The latter two phenomena don’t seem to have much in common, but to me they’re linked. University is an adventure for young adults. You’re not likely to stay home unless you realize home can be an adventure. And if you’re traveling halfway around the world, you will select your targets based on their reputation and the noise they’re making.

Chakma has set about making noise. He published an article in the UK’s Times Higher Education Supplement this summer touting Canadian’s attempts to lure top talent to Canadian campuses. Thanks to some recent good news in high-stakes recruiting, he was able to begin his article about a national trend with good news in high-stakes recruiting, he was able to begin his article about a national trend with
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