

THE SENIOR COLLEGE MESSENGER

Issue 11: September, 2022

This is an organ for members of Senior College to submit short articles that share news, opinions, reactions to the program and anything that they feel will be of general interest. Its regular appearance will allow for an exchange of opinion of topics of interest to the members. In particular, it would be interesting to record reactions to the talks, collquium topics and books discussed.

Please submit contributions to the editor, Ed Barbeau at barbeau@math.utoronto.ca

SENIOR COLLEGE RESEARCH GRANTS

On August 15 and again on August 29, a notice was sent out to member of Senior College about the availability of small research grants for such expenses as as travel costs, hiring of a research assistance, posting results on a website and reproduction of materials. The total amount available is \$5000. The following article indicates the sort of project that can be funded.

Applications must be submitted by September 30. For further information, contact Daphne Maurer at mcmaster@maurer.ca.

OLD PICTURES AND MODERN DENTISTRY

A recipient of two separate Senior College grants is Professor David J. Kenny, of the Faculty of Dentistry for two quite different projects. In his field, he co-authored the book *Transforming dentistry: the rise and near demise of dentistry at Western University* with Shelley McKellar, a professor of history at Western University. Published by the U. of T. Press earlier this year, this volume is “a spirited and gritty story of grand visions, strong personalities and contentious leadership” over the half century 1965-2015. U. of T. Press has generously offered a 25% discount until the end of 2022 to those using the code **Schulich25**.

However, following a different muse, he has through the Photographical Historical Society of Canada published the book *Thomas W. Bradt, amateur photographer: glass plate images 1904-1910*. This is freely available online at the Society’s website <http://phsc.ca>. Click on *PRESS*; the book is listed third. It is well worth a visit. Bradt was from Springfield, ON in Elgin County near Aylmer; he took many local pictures of White’s Dam, farm and town life, industry rail and boat transportation. The book concludes with pictures of the town of Aylmer in Elgin County. Some of us may remember Aylmer’s Evaporated Milk, a local industry bought up very early on by Carnation.

EXPERIENCES OF A PHYSICIST-CUM-ENGINEER

Michael Piggott

*This posthumous essay was written on January 18, 2021, and was originally destined for the *Bulletin*. However, as that magazine never appeared, we present it here. Professor Piggott has a remarkable range of interests and talents hinted at in this essay and expanded at the website individual.utoronto.ca/michael_piggott*

I came from England to Canada to work for Chalk River Nuclear Laboratories in 1964. I had a BSc in physics and a PhD in Applied Physical Chemistry and nine years of industrial experience. My work at Chalk River involved silica fibre reinforced aluminum. So when I joined the Faculty of Engineering as part of the Centre for Study of Materials, I expected to be employed in the Metallurgy Department. Instead, I found myself working in Chemical Engineering – a fortunate thing for me.

As a physicist, my department chairman thought me suitable for teaching first year computer programming. Those were the early days of computers and I had no experience thereof. So I found experts in other departments. That was one of the many good things of this University – they found time to bring me up to speed. (Later, I was able to broaden my knowledge through professors in departments ranging from Music and Near Eastern Studies, through Chemistry, Physics & Engineering to Linguistics.

In those days U of T was a very relaxed place. You could ask your department chair's permission to teach any new graduate course you cared to. And as long as it fitted in with the departmental aims and was suitable for academe, it was approved. So I found myself teaching three undergraduate and three graduate courses, as well as to embark on my own research.

The research started with questions that I felt needed answering from my previous experiences. That mostly concerned fibre reinforced metals. But I soon worked out that reinforced metals were a dead end – they were too expensive to make and too full of internal stresses. Thus I switched to more practical reinforced polymers. So I discovered another reason that I was fortunate to be in Chemical Engineering. In addition to learning about computers early in the game, I found myself in a department with professors who knew about plastics – so I benefitted from their knowledge as well. Thus my career took off and I found myself a mover and shaker in the new subject of fibre composites.

After writing my first book, *Load bearing fibre composites*, I discovered that some previous researchers had rushed into print too soon to be thorough enough, so their work appeared to be flawed. Therefore I set myself (or rather my talented graduate students) to re-examining the topics in question. Sure enough, these researchers proved to be mistaken – so I wrote a second edition to correct the first. Now fibre reinforced materials have become ubiquitous, and research and development is mostly devoted to developing new uses for them,

My love of experimental science is still alive. I was permitted to keep my office in the Wallberg Building until I reached 80, and my last five refereed papers were published when I was 81. Now 90, I'm afraid I'm too out of date to write anything useful on my erstwhile specialty. But as a compulsive writer, I still write letters and articles to newspapers and magazines.

IN MEMORIAM

John Campbell Cairns (April 27, 1924 - July 28, 2022)
Professor of French History

Donald John Forgie (1927 - May 21, 2021)
Faculty of Library and Information Science

Charles "Bud" Godfrey (September 24, 1917 - July 24, 2022)
Professor of Rehabilitative Medicine; UHN

Margaret Anne Millar (December 10, 1944 - August 25, 2022)
Associate Dean, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

Michael Piggott (1930 - July 5, 2021)
Professor of Chemistry

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

Events marked with **F** are for fellows and external fellows. Registration a few days ahead is necessary for each event. This can be done in response to a weekly email from Senior College to its members that describes the events or by going on line at www.seniorcollege.utoronto.ca.

A CELEBRATION OF THE FIRST DECADE OF SENIOR COLLEGE

On **Saturday, October 1** between 5:30 pm and 9:30 pm, there will be a celebration of the first ten years of Senior College at the Faculty Club. Come and join in!

Talks: Wednesdays, 10 am

Talks will take place at the Faculty Club **and** on Zoom.

September 7: Lucan Ahmad Way, *Russia's invasion of Ukraine: causes and consequences*

September 14: Marla Sokolowski, *Epigenetics, genetics and behaviour*

September 21: Andrea Charise, *Arts, wellness, and crafting: intergenerational communities*

September 28: Chandrakant Shah, *Settlers' role in reconciliation with indigenous people*

October 5: Ronald F. Williamson, *New understandings of Great Lakes indigenous history and archaeology*

October 12: Ron Saporta, *Tackling climate change and carbon emissions at U of T (St. George)*

October 19: Arthur Ripstein, *Law and the morality of war*

October 26: Lorraine Weinrib, *The Charter at 40*

November 2: Ian Williams (poet, novelist), *Disappointment*

November 9: Peter Victor, *Herman Daly's Full World Economics*

November 16: Charlie Maurer, *Illusion, reality, canvas and camera*

November 23: Charlie Kiel, *How do films work?*

November 30: Ramin Jahanbegloo, *Gandhi, our contemporary*

Colloquia: Thursdays, 2-4 pm (F)

The Colloquium will meet in person at the Senior College Centre at 256 McCaul Street after an optional lunch at Valens Restaurant, 19 Baldwin Street. Participation is limited to 15.

September 15: Why are people so angry? (Chair: Mary Finlay)

October 20: Should we censor hate speech and if so, where should we draw the line? (Chair: Phil Sullivan)

November 17: Is democracy the best for governance? If so, how can we strengthen its positive features and minimize its weaknesses? (Chair: Peter Russell)

December 8: How can we better protect our environment? (Chair: Guiliana Katz and John Yeomans)

Book Club: Monday: 2-4 pm (F)

September 12: Dorothy Sayers, *Gaudy night* (Leader: Germaine Warkentin)

October 3: Tom Wolfe, *From Bauhaus to our house* (Leader: Lisa Steele)

November 7: Suzanne Simard, *Finding the mother tree: discovering the wisdom of the forest* (Leader: Daphne Maurer)

December 5: Yasha Mounk, *The great experiment: why diverse democracies fall apart and how they can endure* (Leader: Max Nemni)