

Clayton H. Riddell

Faculty of Environment, Earth, and Resources

ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

Spring 2011

The Dean's Message

Dr. Norman Halden

On May 17, 2010, Dr. Søren Rysgaard was introduced as the University of Manitoba Canada Excellence Research Chair (CERC) in Arctic Geomicrobiology and Climate Change. In addition to the new chair, the University of Manitoba will invest in three new tenure track faculty positions, post-doctoral and research associate positions, graduate students, and support staff.

as "a great Canadian whose tireless efforts have and continue to benefit the North and its residents." To build the new floor Clayton H. Riddell has provided a generous donation of \$2.5 million.

Overall the CERC investment will be leveraged with an additional investment from the University of Manitoba and its partners. The total investment of \$35 million will transform the University of Manitoba's sea ice research group into the world's most comprehensive and innovative climate change institution.

The latest addition to the laser arsenal in the Department of Geological Sciences is the femtosecond laser producing laser pulse widths of ~ 40 femtosecond. This laser produces non-thermal ablation which radically reduces fractionation errors. In addition, from a practical perspective, this enables very fine-scale analyses of the distribution of volatile trace elements such as selenium and mercury, which are notoriously difficult to analyze. We hope to apply the technique shortly to the analysis of minerals in ice, which will be a true test of its non-thermal attributes.

Pictured from left, Dr. David Barnard, Clayton H. Riddell, Dr. Digvir Jayas, Vic Toews, Nellie Cournoyea, Dr. David Barber (Associate Dean (Research), Riddell Faculty), Dr. Søren Rysgaard, and Dr. Norman Halden (Dean, Riddell Faculty).

A fifth storey will be added to the Wallace Building to accommodate specialized laboratories, classrooms, and other facilities. The floor will be named the Nellie Cournoyea Arctic Research Facility, for Nellie Cournoyea, an Officer of the Order of Canada and the first female leader of a Canadian territory. At the CERC funding announcement, Clayton H. Riddell described Cournoyea

ONE planet
MANY perspectives



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Geological Sciences Centenary

The Department of Geological Sciences has celebrated its centenary with a number of events. Around 120 alumni, guests, staff, and students attended the evening events of the Centenary weekend, August 27-29, 2010. The weekend included a lively evening “*beer and bull*” reunion at University Centre, and a more formal celebration in the Ed Leith Cretaceous Menagerie in the Wallace Building. **Dr. Ian Ferguson** (Department Head) acted as emcee for the evening and a number of faculty offered congratulations, summarized centenary events and projects, and recounted the colourful history of the Department. The Department wishes to acknowledge the generous support from alumni, friends, industry, and associations for our centenary projects, the History Wall and the Mosaic Map of Manitoba Geology. The History Wall was unveiled on August 28, and the design and building of the Mosaic Map of Manitoba Geology is underway with completion anticipated in 2011. A small but enthusiastic group visited the Department’s Star Lake Field Station (northwestern Ontario) on Sunday, concluding with a traditional group photo on the deck of the student bunkhouse. (Pictured Right)



Pictured Below: The History Wall is officially opened. From left: Mercedes Rich (undergraduate student), Jeff Young (Instructor, alumnus), Brenda Miller (Department History Committee Chair and staff member), Bill Brisbin (Emeritus Professor and member, Department History Committee), David Richardson (alumnus, class of '46)



Awards & Distinctions

2010 Convocation

Each year the University of Manitoba and the Riddell Faculty recognize student excellence through medals. The following students received such recognition over the past year:

Gold Medal:

Matthew Veenman (B.A. Geography (Advanced))

Program Medals:

Honours Program - **Jill Erin Maxwell** (B. Env. Sc.)

Major or Advanced Program - **Gladys Elaine Salter** (B. Env. Sc. (Major))

3 Year General program - **Kathleen Moore** (B.A. Geography)

Governor General’s Silver Medal

Alison Murata, (pictured right with Dr. Norman Halden (Dean, Riddell Faculty)) graduating with a Bachelor of Environmental Science (Honours Co-op) Degree, was awarded the Governor General’s Silver Medal on October 21, 2010 at the 43rd Fall Convocation.

The Governor General’s Silver Academic Medal is awarded annually on behalf of and in the name of the Governor General of Canada to the University of Manitoba graduate with the highest academic standing in a baccalaureate program, and is one of the most prestigious awards an undergraduate degree student in a Canadian post-secondary institution can receive.



Riddell Teaching Awards

Award of Excellence for Undergraduate Teaching - **William Norton**

Thesis Prize

Matt Demski (B. Sc. G. Sc. (Honours))

Initiative Prize

Jill Bueddefeld (B.A. Geography (Honours))

Entrance Scholarships

Six Riddell Faculty undergraduate entrance scholarships were awarded in 2010. The recipients were:

Nicole Caithness
Chelsea Miles

Shelby Perrault
Stephen Busilla

Holly Beddome
Paul Fafard

Eleven Riddell Faculty graduate entrance scholarships were awarded in 2010. The recipients were:

Supria Ahmed
Karley Campbell
Matt Demski

Michael Hurley
Colton Inkster
Alexander Komarov

Jeffrey Read
Dean Rennie
Ryan Sharpe

Olivia Sylvester
Heidi Walker

Cheeyahwaysaag: Forests Returning to the Way Things Were.

The boreal forests of Canada are an ecological system where periodic catastrophic disturbances such as forest fires, spruce budworm, and beaver activity play important roles in shaping northern ecosystems. Together these disturbances facilitate nutrient cycling, initiate ecological succession, and help to shape the composition and structure of ecological communities. Increasingly, activities such as industrial logging are influencing landscapes, ecological processes, and human communities. **Andrew Miller** (Ph.D. in Natural Resources and Environmental Management) has undertaken research, supported by the **Aboriginal Issues Press Scholarship**, to examine the traditional ecological knowledge of Anishinaabe elders of Pikangikum First Nation, northwestern Ontario concerning the social and ecological impacts of forest disturbances in their community.

Andrew asked the elders to share their understandings of the impacts of forest fire and forestry operations they observed. They noted that areas burned by forest fires quickly become highly productive, especially in plants favoured by moose and snowshoe hare, but that clearcut areas tend to be ploughed and scarred and are therefore unproductive for years following timber harvests. Moose are favoured species for northern hunters and contribute to the household larder while hare, although at the bottom of the food chain, support not only people but are important fur-bearers. Elders also felt that the timber harvested lands are disrespected by the rough treatment of modern forestry practices that produce homogeneous plantations of pine. Wildlife find it inaccessible and snowshoe wearing hunters and trappers feel uncomfortable in an area where someone has destroyed natural forest and replaced it with a forest in their own image.

Pictured below: An area of forest recovers three years after a burn.



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