

Do you remember Cafeteria B?

Arts honours its alumni, faculty, staff and students

BY DALE BARBOUR
The Bulletin

The Faculty of Arts honoured the best and brightest of its students, staff faculty and alumni at its annual Arts Celebrating Arts event on Sept. 14 in University College.

"This is always a fun event for us," dean Richard Sigurdson said. "Today is all about celebrating the outstanding achievements of the Faculty of Arts. We do a lot of tremendous things in this faculty and we're not afraid to tell people how good we are."

"We have so many students who have gone on to do wonderful, exciting things that we thought it would be inspirational to have some of these people come back to the campus," Sigurdson said.

One glance at the list of people being recognized was a compelling argument for talents and skills speaking for themselves.

The celebrated alumni for 2007 included; Elaine Ali, the senior vice-president for the CTV Stations group and an advocate for women; John Courtney, professor emeritus, political studies, University of Saskatchewan; and Muriel Smith, a Manitoba politician, educator, and human rights advocate.

The three have been honoured for their efforts in their chosen fields and in the community.

But recognition from their alma mater was more than a pat on the back, it was a chance to reflect on their own memories of university life.

Ali said she entered the university from a sheltered community in southern Manitoba and immediately dove into psychology, sociology and religion classes. As critical was what went on outside the classroom.

"We had such great discussions. It opened my mind and heart to new ideas and it introduced me to my husband 37 years ago," Ali said. Their study corner of choice was a little area underneath the



Photo by Bob Talbot

From left, Arts alumni Elaine Ali, Muriel Smith and John Courtney brought some of their fondest memories of university life to the Arts Celebrating Arts event on Sept. 14.

Elizabeth Dafoe Library. Ali said when their son transferred to the University of Manitoba and Faculty of Arts this year they returned to look for their old haunt. It wasn't there anymore, but Ali says new spots have sprung up to take its place.

"We're truly hoping our son will find his little corner to study and meet people and his Arts degree will lead him to exciting opportunities," Ali said.

Courtney, whose work on Canadian Politics has been foundational to the field, says when he first hopped on a train for the University of Manitoba, his goal was to study architecture. But he

reconsidered his options and landed in the Faculty of Arts – a position secured by the political science professors he met at the university. And like Ali, Courtney found romance at the university.

"I met my wife Helen at the university. We met at Cafeteria A and Cafeteria B, which sounds so unromantic now," Courtney said with a laugh.

Muriel Smith

Smith, whose resume includes being a Manitoba MLA from 1981 to 1988, had the distinction of graduating in the year of the 1950 flood.

"I can recall living in Tache Hall – back when it was divided nearly down the middle with men on one side and

women on the other – and seeing the water coming up to the edge of the building."

Smith said she grew up in a mining town with no access to a library but plenty of opportunity to form strong opinions. University cemented her view that there are no final answers in life and, like Ali, she found the best arguments took place outside the classroom.

"Our ideas became meaningful to me through the late night discussions we held where I could test my ideas with friends and opponents."

Smith graduated at a time when there were only a handful of female students in Arts and the push was to recover from the war and recover a sense of domesticity. Like a lot of people at the time, she married young. But she also got involved with a women's study group and kept debating with her colleagues – training that would introduce her to social justice issues and eventually to politics.

"It took life experience to shift me from being an observer to an activist," Smith said. "If you can be infected with life long learning, I think you'll find there's no stopping when you finish one career – or don't get elected again. There are always new avenues opening."

Students who have made the dean's honour roll were recognized at the Arts Celebrating Arts event, as were support staff and faculty who have met with success during the year. The Award in Internationalization for 2006-2007 went to Lea Stirling, associate professor, classics, Canada Research Chair in Roman Archaeology and international authority in Roman North Africa, Roman ceramic production, and cemetery archaeology.

The Professor of the Year Award for 2007 went to Murray Singer, psychology, a recognized international authority on human cognition, especially language processes.

Isbister Building gets \$575,000 upgrade

The Faculty of Arts has been celebrating in more ways than one this month. Along with recognizing the success of its people with Arts Celebrating Arts the faculty also had the chance to showcase some of its best new facilities.

In all, more than \$575,000 has been spent over the last two years converting space at the first and second floor of the Isbister Building into laboratory and office space for the Faculty of Arts.

The laundry list of projects includes a new department office and faculty offices for Native studies; a new suite of offices for labour studies, including a student resources centre; a new sociology/social science interactive computer lab; offices and laboratory space for the Centre for Globalization and Cultural Studies and the completion of the linguistics lab. Women's studies and the department of French, Spanish and Italian are also seeing new office space in the Isbister Building.

Arts dean Richard Sigurdson said the sweeping changes through the Isbister Building give the departments better space and better visibility.

"The department of Native studies new storefront operation is much more welcoming for students and the new linguistics lab comes with a silent chamber," Sigurdson said.

Rob Hagiwara and Terry Janzen are the principle current occupants of the new Linguistics Lab and the new sound-proof room will enable research into such areas as sign language and dialect studies.

The new offices represent an opportunity to centralize departments and programs for the first time.



Photo by Dale Barbour

Native Studies head Wanda Wuttunee was happy to see renovations in the Isbister Building wrap-up – her department now has a more student-friendly place to call home.

Native studies, women's and gender studies, and labour studies will be able to create spaces for teaching and research faculty as well as for students to mingle that did not exist in the past.

The new Social Science Computer Laboratory allows the sociology to offer new and innovative

teaching in social science methods and practices. The new lab on the second floor of the Isbister Building features 47 Interactive computers networked with the instructor's monitor. There is technical capacity to expand a number of the workstations to create a number of call assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) sites for survey research.

The French, Spanish & Italian teaching and graduate assistants' space is adjacent to the expanded Language Laboratory on the first floor which opened in 2001. The Italian Centre will provide a focus for the Italian studies programme within the department of French, Spanish and Italian.

Diana Brydon, Canada Research Chair in Globalization and Cultural Studies, has developed a newly-created Research Centre and Laboratory in Globalization. The facilities will support a wide range of research in the areas of globalization. The laboratory features not only a sit-down seminar room but an interactive conference board for live audio/visual conferencing, and research stations for graduate students and visiting faculty.

The Centre for Globalization and Cultural Studies is being established to provide a venue and an organizational structure for pulling together disciplinary and interdisciplinary research in the fields of globalization and cultural studies, specifically to advance research on globalization and culture within a Canadian-based international dialogue that involves collaborative, interdisciplinary investigation drawing on the strengths of humanities and social science perspectives and methodologies.