FIRST CLASS

From lawyer Clayton Ruby to science student Janaki Vallipuram, five decades of excellence and transformation.

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We have an expanded audience for this issue of YorkU. Our York 50th anniversary special is circulating with The Globe and Mail throughout Ontario, so I’d like to welcome these readers to the celebration. As you might expect, we’re offering plenty of history, some current research and a look to the future. Above all, we feature many of the fascinating people involved with York, from leading lawyer Clayton Ruby on our cover to acclaimed author Nino Ricci writing on our back page, with the space scientists who led the Mars weather mission in between.

One of my favourite projects for this issue was reworking a famous picture at York, showing founding president & vice-chancellor Murray Ross at his desk in an open field. The field was due to become York’s new campus in the then Toronto suburb of North York. You will see the results of our photographic effort in the opening pages of the Universe section, overseen by art director James Nixon with the original desk generously supplied by longtime York official Sylvia Zangrone, who still uses it. But for background, I also needed to look up the original context for the picture. This was not hard to do, because the photo was published in the old Toronto Telegram, which closed in 1971. York’s Clara Thomas Archives & Special Collections now holds the full collection of 1.3 million Tely pictures, and York University Libraries has the back issues of the newspaper on microfilm.

The Ross picture appeared on the second-section front page on Saturday, Dec. 29, 1962, under the headline, “Toronto: Continent’s No. 2 Cultural Capital – Dr. Murray Ross Foresees Surging Renaissance.” The accompanying full-page interview illustrates why the founding president’s shadow still hangs long at York. Along with prasing fast-growing and “culturally advanced” Toronto, he also talked about “the tremendous demand for part-time educational programs. In the future, far more people will attend evening colleges than day colleges.” In fact, York’s Atkinson College, specializing in adult and part-time education, had just opened that year and for a while in the 1960s actually outstripped the rest of the University in enrolments. Ross’s vision still resonates in this issue, we also introduce the new Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies, opening in July, which recognizes that today’s students seek the widest range of choice possible in their education, including when they pursue it.

Back in 1962, the far-sighted Ross thought Ontario’s Grade 13 should be abolished, predicted that China was then the nation to watch and defended the concept of research libraries. “Ross was often controversial, not least to his peers, but he certainly knew how to start a university.”
说道像一件奇怪的事情，我们庆祝约克的50周年，但50年是大学生命的非凡短时期。我在这里指的是哈佛大学的373年，牛津的800多年，以及意大利的大学之母——博洛尼亚大学，即将迈进千禧年。

50年是一个重要的里程碑，理所应当庆祝。约克50周年是庆祝我们没有在多久的时间里就走多远，而不是庆祝我们存在了多久。更重要的是，它关乎我们未来50年将要一起达成什么。

数月来，人们一直在翻阅档案照片，看电影和旧课程日历，试着思考如何最好地展示约克令人着迷的历史。你可以在约克50周年网站yorku50.ca上看到这些图片和视频——包括蜂窝发型和山羊胡。

我们很幸运，有很多帮助塑造约克的人仍然与大学有关——前校长伊恩·麦克唐纳、哈利·阿尔瑟斯（Harry Arthurs）、伦诺·马森德（Lorna R. Marden），例如。我有幸与前校长伊恩·麦克唐纳交谈，他告诉我一个有趣的故事：1974年，当成为校长时，约克只有14年历史，而且有11个系（除了Health）。我们已经成立，包括环境研究学院和艺术学院。

约克是一个一直都知道它想要去的地方，并且我相信这是一条很长的路来解释约克在50周年会是一个什么样的大学。人们可以追踪他们青年时代的雄心与抱负到他们在这里所终结的路径。这是一座以清晰的愿景为创立的大学。

约克的第一任校长兼副校长Murray Ross在1960年说：“没有一个有理智的人会反对高度专门化。但只要完全有专门化，而没有其他东西，就拥有不完全的教育。我们试图打破专门化的壁垒，给约克大学的学生一个知识的整体感。”

我相信，今天的这些话比Murray Ross所说的更真实。在这短短几行里，是我们学科整合、我们对学术自由的承诺和我们与知识界分享我们知识的决心的种子。

约克50周年是一个很好的地方——老到有足够的知识，而且年轻到有去争取它，而且我非常自豪能在这个约克时刻领导约克。

所以，我们既要庆祝过去，也要制定计划，提出问题，与社区互动，为未来的发展做好准备。我们需要努力找到新的、更好的方式来创建和推广知识，以更好地服务我们的社区，本地的和全球的。这将是约克50周年最棒的生日礼物。”

Mamdouh Shoukri是约克的校长兼副校长。
Where’s My University?

So said the tongue-in-cheek caption on this picture, famous at York, when it was first published in the Toronto Telegram on Dec. 29, 1962. It shows founding president & vice-chancellor Murray Ross sitting at his own desk on the site at Keele Street and Steeles Avenue slated for the fledgling University’s new campus, which would open in 1965. York’s campus at Glendon had just 571 students in 1962.

S
o says Mamdouh Shoukri, York’s seventh president & vice-chancellor, in the summer of 2008 as he sits at the same desk Murray Ross used in 1962. The desk is one of the few unaltered elements at a University that has undergone stunning expansion, physically and intellectually, in the 50 years since it was established on March 26, 1959. Today York has 52,000 students.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY COREY MIHAILILUK
The University decided to start immediately on construction of a central library in 1968, including a general library area with space for 250,000 volumes and a research library with space for over a million volumes. Over the course of the summer, York University Libraries purchased the book stocks of two bookstores; the Ernest Starr second-hand bookstore in Boston and the Ducharme bookstore in Montreal.

In 1969, the Green Bush Inn, the first student-run pub on campus, began. The temporary location is in the Central Plaza next to the Toronto Dominion Bank. The York Student Federation has a committee of students who want to preserve the original 139-year-old Green Bush Inn building from demolition and transfer it from its location on St. George Street, west of Yonge Street, to the Keele campus. It never happens and the original inn is torn down.

Since 2004, Timothy’s Coffees of the World Inc. has been selling a special brew from York at more than 100 locations across the country – Las Nubes coffee, certified fair trade. This unusual marketing partnership was the brainwave of environmental studies Professor Howard Daugherty. In 1998, Daugherty’s friend Dr. Woody Fisher donated the Las Nubes Rainforest in Costa Rica to York. As director of York’s Fisher Fund for Neotropical Conservation, which funds biodiversity research at Las Nubes, Daugherty was looking for a way to give nearby coffee growers an incentive to increase sustainable production, and to raise money for research. The coffee growers began implementing environmentally friendly agricultural methods, benefiting greatly from research conducted by York students and the Tropical Science Center of Costa Rica. Timothy’s agreed to get involved, and a portion of each cup and bag sold now goes to York.

In 1963, the York choir recorded its first album, From Bach to Rock, with Capital Records. The choir was under the direction of William McCauley, who was the longtime house music director for the O’Keefe Centre for the Performing Arts in Toronto (now the Sony Centre). He served concurrently as York’s music director from 1961 to 1969.

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$500
Tuition fee for York’s inaugural 1960-1961 academic year

5

Over 80%
Grade average for more than half of York’s incoming high-school class each year

218
Hectares of land on York campuses

19
Hectares which are woodlots

1970
Year in which the annual Red & Blue Bowl football game began (York’s then-Yeomen vs. U of T Varsity Blues)

1979
Year in which York’s rowing team began and ended

176
Countries York students come from

I n 1974, scrip, often known to York students as “funny money” or “Monopoly money”, was introduced for residence students to pay for food. Rezzies were required to buy a certain amount of the paper, which could only be spent at York’s cafeterias and food-outlets. It was touted as a way for students to avoid carrying large amounts of cash on their persons. But a discount black market soon developed, becoming a place of exchange between scrip-rich students who ate hardly anything (often dancers, it seemed) and others (like phys-ed majors) who didn’t have enough to make it through the year. The black market scrip was sold at up to 50 per cent discounts by students desperate to recoup some of their investment. Today, students pay with smart YU-cards.

And while the appetite imbalances remain, rezzies no longer have to find ways to unload unused credit on their annual meal plans: above a certain level, they can carry it forward.

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Rampant Destruction

In 1991, Vari Hall, the new entrance to the University combining lecture halls, classrooms and office space, was built. It replaced the Ross Building’s notorious front ramp, which York’s president of the time, legal scholar Harry Arthurs, was delighted to destroy. “It just symbolized everything that was functionally wrong with the Keele campus,” Arthurs told YorkU in 2005. “First of all, it was built on an inhuman, unesthetic scale. It had no connection to the way people actually moved around the campus. It was virtually unusable in cold weather. All in all it was a bad idea.”

Newton’s Own

Three centuries on, a direct descendant of Sir Isaac Newton’s original apple tree was planted at York in 1999.

Famous Canadian artists Jack Bush and Harold Town were each commissioned to design college banners at York – for Vanier and Founders colleges respectively. Montreal artist Guido Molinari was another well-known figure who contributed a banner design – for Atkinson – as York’s nine colleges became established in the 1960s and ’70s. The idea was that all the banners would hang in each college’s dining hall, and so they did for a time. The banners were also hung at one point under the arch at the head of the Ross Building’s old entrance ramp, just east of the Scott Religious Centre. While they made a brief debut, they were subsequently taken down because their “snapping” in the wind created too much noise.

Newton’s Own

Years

York’s sculpture collection boasts works by some of the world’s major artists, one being Alexander Calder. In 1967 the International Nickel Company of Canada gave York the Calder maquette for the work “Man,” commissioned for Montreal’s Expo ’67. The sculpture can be found tucked away on the back patio entrance of the Joan & Martin Goldfarb Centre for Fine Arts. It is a one-sixth scale model for the larger work.

Positives and Negatives

A Tear After York Opened: the York Senate adopted a motion prohibiting students from belonging to a social fraternity or sorority. The Board of Governors and other authorities all concurred with the prohibition, and it lasted until 1989. York continues to deny such groups any recognition or official status on campus.

In 2008, York became the first postsecondary institution in Canada to sanction graduate thesis work in Aboriginal languages – and in any language other than English or French.

Between 1990 and 2000, York increased the amount of organic material diverted from landfill, and composted, by a factor of 42.

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Scottish artist Vincent Caffrey was commissioned to design an oil painting that would take pride of place on the wall of York’s Board of Governors meeting room. The painting, “Scottish Army Banner,” was completed in 1993.
A look at York’s five decades through five fascinating people, from leading lawyer Clayton Ruby to the class of 2009’s Janaki Vallipuram.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF KIRK

FirstClass

HEY ARE SEPARATED, in their time at York, by nearly 50 years. Clayton Ruby (BA ’63), one of Canada’s leading defence lawyers, was part of the very first York class that entered the University of Toronto’s Falconer Hall in 1960 and moved to the Glendon campus the following year. Janaki Vallipuram, a top-ranked biochemistry student, expects to graduate in this 50th anniversary year and pursue a career in medical research. Each says something about the way York University has evolved. Ruby was a classic “redline the possible” kind of student – he arrived thinking about poetry and sociology, and left heading for law. Vallipuram, a child of immigrants like so many at York today, is very focused on her goals – and thriving as York continues to broaden its opportunities for scientists.

In the pages that follow, we profile one York-educated person from each of the University’s five decades, from Ruby to Vallipuram. Although not necessarily York’s best-known grad – see page 36 for a reminder about them – these five fascinating people embody York’s continuing commitment to excellence and their own determination to succeed.
If you knew anything about Clayton Ruby and his high-profile human rights, Aboriginal and criminal cases – or his championing of social justice issues in the courts – you’d be justified in concluding he intended to pursue a career in law, loved all things legal, and aced high school and university. You’d be wrong.

Ruby (BA ’63) says a career in law was the “last thing” on his mind while he was an undergrad in York’s starting class, which early on moved to the new Glendon campus. “I didn’t want to be a lawyer particularly,” he says. “But I wasn’t interested in the other professions.” High marks “I was an indifferent student both in high school and at York. But I was always interested in ideas. I loved ideas.” At Glendon, Ruby devoted most of his time to the dream of becoming a poet. “I spent three years trying to be Dylan Thomas. Then I gave up. It was probably for the best – for me and poetry.”

Ruby’s journey to York was curiously roundabout. A high school teacher had recognized his desperation for ideas and put him onto several books. Ruby was enthralled by one in particular – The Lonely Crowd by Harvard sociologist David Riesman – and wrote to the author. Riesman replied that if he liked his book he should look up a friend in Toronto, one of the great sociologists, who was about to join York. That was Professor John Seeley, who became, says Ruby, “my mentor at Glendon. He opened up for me a world of ideas I hadn’t known existed. People like Seeley and Riesman weren’t to be categorized as ‘sociologists’ really. They were bigger than that. They combined philosophy, psychiatry, sociology – all sorts of elements. And the best thing about York was that you were assigned a tutor, and Jack Seeley was my tutor. Each week we talked about all sorts of issues – books, ideas, injustices, things you were reading. It was wonderful. He taught me how to think.”

Because his marks were mostly unremarkable, says Ruby, he couldn’t get into the University of Toronto’s law school on that basis. However, Dean George Tatham at Glendon persuaded the U of T law dean to accept Ruby. Even then, he left after first year. “That was unheard of. No one quit law school. I took a year off to work in the civil rights movement and spent some time with the Indian and Métis people in Saskatchewan. But I came back at the end of that year to finish my law degree.”

Ruby would later go on to get his master of laws from the University of California, Berkeley (1973) and write several legal textbooks en route to becoming one of Canada’s top defence lawyers. “I tried to fight the good fight on behalf of those who often can’t. It’s led to taking on some high-profile clients, such as the surviving members of the Dionne quintuplets, the Church of Scientology, Guy Paul Morin and former MP Svend Robinson.

Ruby, whose life revolves around two graduates of York’s Osgoode Hall Law School – live-in partner Harriet Sachs and law partner Marlys Edwardh (both LLB ’74) – says he discovered there were things you could do with law that would make the world a better place. Law was also a way to channel the part of him that was an angry young man. “I was an angry kid growing up, and an angry kid at Glendon – and York was a great place for an angry kid who wanted to do things differently! And I think I’m still an angry kid,” says Ruby with a laugh. “But I like to think that now that anger gets used for social purposes.”
Move over Oprah Winfrey. Here comes Rose Reisman. Maybe you’ve heard of her – the cook-book author whose 1993 bestseller Rose Reisman Brings Home Light Cooking launched her as Canada’s “healthy-eating evangelist” and an unstoppable entrepreneur. This York graduate with multiple degrees has hosted TV cooking shows, run a cooking school and still dishes out advice about everything from weight loss to fitness on TV and radio, in newspaper columns and as a public speaker. Through the sale of her 17 books, she has raised $1 million for the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation and recently branched into corporate catering and home-delivered gourmet meals. Last fall, she launched RoseReisman.com, a Web site she hopes Canadians will turn to for expert advice, recipes and inspiration. It’s her latest attempt to save us all from death by fat.

Obesity killed her father and her aunt in their 50s, and Reisman, now 55, worries she inherited the fat gene. But she lost her grubbba tuchus (Yiddish for “big butt”) long ago, and after a brush with dangerously high cholesterol as a young mother of four, she’s figured out what it takes to be healthy. “I want people to feel as good as I do,” says the woman who leaps out of bed every morning at 5am, works out in her personal gym and walks the dogs before meeting clients and visiting her 10,000 square-foot industrial kitchen in East York. With child obesity, diabetes, heart attacks and stroke on the rise, her crusade has never been more compelling.

Reisman (no relation to bookseller Heather) never planned such a career. But, at 13, she showed she had what it takes. The daughter of poor Polish immigrants lied about her age to earn spending money capping bottles of Brut on Fabergé’s assembly line. And she shone in the high school drama club. “I loved it. I was good at it.” She dreamed of a life on stage – until she auditioned and failed to get into York’s acting program.

So, she would teach. To put herself through university in the ’70s, Reisman lived at home and served drinks at the swank airport Hilton. She “dressed up” to go to York in miniskirt and go-go boots. Her social life centred on Central Square at York, where she would meet friends and her future husband, Sam Reisman (BA ’74, MBA ’77), for coffee. “York was like a large camp. You knew everybody.”

Reisman earned a BA in sociology in 1975, a BEd from the University of Toronto the next year. While she taught junior high school, she added two more York degrees (BA ’77 in fine arts, MFA ’82) before quitting to produce dinner theatre, then start a family. Ever restless, the young mother and investment banker’s wife enrolled in York’s business school. “I wanted to understand my husband’s world.” For someone so arts oriented, getting her 1985 MBA was “extremely stressful” and Reisman discovered that cooking relaxed her. Soon she had the bright idea to write a cookbook. The rest is history.

Like the child actor she once was, Reisman still loves the recognition that comes with achievement. “I used to sit on a plane hoping the person next to me would ask me about my work so I could tell them all about it. Now I don’t have to.” In 2007, she won the Schulich School of Business Alumni Recognition Award for Outstanding Public Contribution, which came as a shock. “I just didn’t think I deserved it. I was an average business student. But the nice thing was I realized you didn’t have to be a business genius to make a difference. Passion matters more.”
YorkU
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COVER
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"Saturday Night Live" comedian Tina Fey’s Sarah Palin on the Internet than on TV. That is “a defining pop culture moment,” Kaan Yigit told a reporter during the US election. The Toronto-based media consultant is often quoted in the business press – from CNN to The Wall Street Journal – because he’s made it his business to spot trends in how we watch TV, listen to radio and communicate with each other in this increasingly digital, wireless universe. Yigit (BA Hons. ’87, MBA ’96) recently coined the phrase “disconnect anxiety” to describe how stranded and helpless we feel when parted from our BlackBerries and cell-phones. When he found out movie downloaders thought stealing from rich studios was OK, he dubbed it the “Robin Hood effect.” The president of Solutions Research Group likes to stay ahead of the curve and is so good at it that entertainment gants like Disney, Time Warner and ABC are turning to him for a glimpse of what the future holds. “My passion is the intersection of media, technology, communications and culture,” he says.

Those interests coalesced at York in the ‘80s. Yigit was 17 when he and his mother waved goodbye to Istanbul, Turkey, to join his brother in Toronto. He’d been educated in English but had trouble finding his social compass in this new country – until he heard that Radio York was looking for volunteers. Soon he was host of a jazz show and part of an eclectic, creative bunch of people. “Radio York gave me a sense of belonging and purpose. It gave me community. It gave me a voice. I wanted to do the same for others.” And he did, in a big way. He and Mel Broitman spearheaded Radio York’s application that transformed the closed-circuit campus station into CHRY 105.5 FM, giving voice to North York’s diverse community. “It’s one of my great moments of pride,” says Yigit.

His project complete, this ideas man went on to do policy research for the provincial government, then joined Decima Research. While he learned to conduct audience surveys, he studied for an MBA at York’s Schulich School of Business. One day he went in to talk about the exciting new Internet with boss Allan Gregg and his partner Jake Gold, and they contracted him to create a Web site for The Tragically Hip, the band they managed. It took him a year. Tasting independence, he began doing research for the new specialty TV channels starting up and before long had a small staff and office. Then he took a risk and launched his first subscriber-based study, “In the Name of Cool”, providing major record companies with reports on popular music trends among youth. “Cool” morphed into “Fast Forward”, which plotted entertainment consumption trends among all age groups.

But Yigit’s most ambitious project to date is his “Diversity in Canada” study. Based on 3,000 interviews conducted in nine languages, it revealed the buying and media habits of this country’s growing and diverse immigrant population – long overlooked by traditional market studies. It was groundbreaking and became the basis for a 2006 Toronto Star series on the new Canada. “The diversity I encountered at York was both challenging and enriching,” says Yigit. “Twenty-five years later it informs how I do business, what I do and how I look at the world. For every idea, I know there are multiple viewpoints.”

The working titles of his current research projects – “Prime Time is Anytime” and “Go With the Flow” – capture the blending of life and work and the openness with which we share our lives in this borderless age of social networking. Yigit is watching it all unfold. “I think of the work I do as looking through an evolutionary lens.”

Kaan Yigit is a top trendspotter for the digital age. BY MARTHA TANCOCK

At the Centre of Now

BY MARTHA TANCOCK

M
YorkU February 2009

EDITTIME READING FOR KAREN MURRAY (BEd ’98) may be poems by Maya Angelou but is just as likely to be children’s books like Winston of Churchill: One Bear’s Battle Against Global Warming. As a student achievement officer with the Ontario Ministry of Education, the award-winning primary-school teacher devours all the latest kid-lit. “If I recommend a book, I’ve read it.” She recommends a lot. For the past two years, as she has worked with teams of teachers from across Toronto on strategies to improve children’s reading, writing and math skills, she takes the time to suggest books children from diverse cultural backgrounds can relate to. As she learned in York’s pioneering Urban Diversity Program in the 1990s, “every kid comes with their own backpack of knowledge and we have to dig into that backpack to engage them emotionally.” Through books, teachers can talk about “big ideas”, like friendship, fairness, perseverance, bravery, overcoming adversity and injustice, protecting the environment. Such stories help children understand themselves and the world. “It’s amazing what conversations I’ve had with kids after reading these books,” Murray says. “These books lead to kids asking, ‘How can I be engaged?’ That’s where we want kids to go – to be good global citizens.” The books can also be empowering. “For the kids I work with, learning about somebody who’s made a difference gives you a road map, gives you courage.”

It did for her. This daughter of Guyanese immigrants remembers how, when she was in Grade 5, her teacher gave her a copy of Alex Haley’s Roots: The Saga of an American Family and introduced her to other books written by African-Americans. “We had this wonderful dialogue,” she says of a relationship that still endures. “Mr. England did plant the seed; that’s how important teachers are.”

After Murray earned a BA in cognitive psychology from McMaster University, she found a job integrating visually impaired children into schools. You missed your calling, her colleagues told her, and she enrolled in York’s Faculty of Education, keen to take the Urban Diversity Program and learn effective ways to teach children from different cultures. “That was the most transforming time for me,” says Murray. Program founder Patrick Solomon, who died this fall, “injected me with a love of equity, a love of diversity, a love of learning and the whole idea of being a change agent and making sure there is equity of outcome for all kids.” Now Murray’s back doing a master’s thesis on education and equity.

From the day she started teaching, this change agent has remained involved in Toronto’s Jane-Finch neighbourhood, where she grew up. Every Saturday morning for 10 years, she’s been training adult volunteers to help children read at Ossendale Community Centre – and has won awards from Toronto and York for her efforts. “You hear about violence and crime but there are so many other wonderful and positive things that happen there.” Who could have guessed, for instance, that more high school students than adults are running up to volunteer these days? Coming to complete 40 hours of community service required to earn their diploma, these reluctant teenagers swagger in like gangsta rappers – then melt under the spell of “an itty bitty child” leaning into them, sounding out words. “It’s amazing,” Murray says. “In the end, they don’t think it is not cool anymore. They make the best reading buddies.”
Many people would say they got goosebumps when they first attended a science class, but it happened to top biochemistry student Janaki Vallipuram. Someone whose outside interests include the violin and Indian classical dance is no stranger to elation, but as she settled into her seat at the start of term, Vallipuram admits she was just as excited about Charles Darwin and evolution. For her, it’s all a part of the challenge of lateral thinking and sorting out life’s big picture as she works toward graduation in York’s 50th anniversary year and a career in medical research. “Everything ties in, in its own weird way,” she says. “I like finding common threads and solving problems.”

Her drive to discover new things – and maintain an A+ average – has served Vallipuram well during her four years in York’s Faculty of Science & Engineering. It landed her a place in the research lab of neuroscientist Dwota Crawford of York’s School of Kinesiology & Health Science in the Faculty of Health. There Vallipuram is using state-of-the-art equipment to investigate a protein linked to a genetic defect that causes autism. It’s all thanks to York’s emphasis on exposing more undergraduates to fundamental research. “I’m lucky that I have that opportunity to really participate in the research and not just do the busy work,” she says.

More than anything, Vallipuram credits her parents with nurturing her penchant for hard work. Sri Lankan immigrants who came to Canada before she was born, her mother and father focused on the effort she and her brother put into their school work instead of on high marks. “They praised the hard work as opposed to results and, because of that, I put my whole effort into what I do,” she explains. It has paid off. After winning a Governor General’s Academic Medal in her graduating year of high school, Vallipuram came to York with several scholarships and proceeded to thrive on an interdisciplinary mix of courses in biology, chemistry, math and physics as well as computer science, kinesiology, philosophy and Canadian literature. She has also received two science awards and a continuing scholarship.

Vallipuram’s compassion led her to look at a career in medicine. During a trip to India to visit family, she was struck by the difference between the picture of the country presented in Bollywood movies and the reality. “It was a lot more underdeveloped than I thought it would be and that was one of the things that got me thinking about health especially,” says the member of the Doctors Without Borders Club at York. “That really etched in me the importance of good health care and got me interested in this whole field.”

As much as Vallipuram is a member of the millennial generation – she became a teenager in 2000 – she says she rarely uses Facebook or even e-mail (it takes her a day or two to reply). “I prefer to meet my friends in person,” she says. When she graduates, she plans to take her first summer off in years while she considers the offers she is sure to receive to do graduate work at York or attend medical school. With her taste for discovery, it’s a sure bet Vallipuram will be getting many more goosebumps.
HISTORY

In excerpts from his new book, a veteran York historian chronicles the early days.

BY MICHAEL HORN

In York University: The Way Must Be Tried, an authorized history just published as part of York’s 50th birthday celebrations, York Professor Emeritus Michiel Horn tells the story of the University’s early years in engaging detail. Given complete independence and unfettered access to York records, the veteran historian interviewed more than 250 people to record the saga of an institution first blessed as a north Toronto adult education centre in 1955 and approved as a university by the Ontario legislature four years later. He chronicles the struggles of founding president Murray Ross, a former University of Toronto vice-president and social work professor, as the new institution took shape, first at the University of Toronto’s Falconer Hall, then at the Glendon and Keele campuses, and follows the University’s evolution in detail – amid both triumphs and considerable dissension – through 1985. A final chapter brings the story up to the present. In the excerpts that follow, Horn describes York today, marks some key moments in its early development and samples student life in the 1960s, some of it intoxicating.

A couple of processions were odd, but oddly engaging, a curious blend of medieval and modern, of tradition and expectation. One such event took place on the Keele campus of York University on Wednesday, Oct. 17, 2007. Dressed in gowns and hoods of many colours, wearing mortarboards and floppy berets on their heads, a parade of women and men filed into the Tribute Communities Recital Hall of the recently completed Accolade East Building. They had come to attend the installation of York University’s seventh president & vice-chancellor, Mamdouh Shoukri.

The mood was very much upbeat. The new president, who had left a vice-president’s position at McMaster University to assume the new challenge, came highly recommended. He was clearly affable and mixed easily with the guests, who seemed more than ready to share his hopes and dreams for York. The position he was assuming was anything but a sinecure. In 2006-2007 York enrolled almost 52,000 students in eleven faculties on two campuses, making it the third largest university in Canada. More than 3,100 full- and part-time faculty and professional librarians, some 2,300 teaching and research assistants, and roughly 3,540 full-time and casual non-academic staff were on the University payroll. The total budget was well over $600 million.
York had become a multiversity, no doubt about that. Yet, if a single term were to be used to describe the York ethos, it was one that linked the institution’s present to its past: interdisciplinarity. If a single term were to be used to describe the York ethos, it was one that linked the institution’s present to its past: interdisciplinarity.

What a difference half a century can make! As he arranged his move from the University of Toronto’s Simcoe Hall to Falconer Hall in early 1960, Murray Ross faced several daunting tasks. One was assembling a faculty and staff for York. Scarcely less urgent was finding students willing to take a chance on the new institution. Next in line was preparing the Glendon estate for the move that would take place by the fall of 1961. The new University also had to develop its own curriculum, to plan for the opening of its faculty of part-time studies, and to secure land that would serve York as a campus on which it could eventually expand. According to the affiliation agreement with the University of Toronto, formally signed on June 30, 1960, the affiliation would last for at least four and up to eight years. During that time, York courses would be essentially the same as those offered by the older university, and York graduates would receive University of Toronto degrees. York employees and students had access to the University of Toronto’s library, laboratory and athletic facilities. The arrangement gave the fledgling University a stature it would otherwise have lacked, making it easier to attract both faculty members and students.

What brought the first students to York? Douglas Rutherford, one of eight University of Toronto Schools (UTS) graduates to register, said that York seemed just a little different, and that attracted him. More to the point, however: “You were on the U of T campus and would get a U of T degree, and you would also have small classes. There really was no downside.” Clayton (Clay) Ruby came for a different reason. While still in Grade 13 he had got to know John Seeley and, impressed with the sociologist’s insights, decided to register at the University where he was going to be teaching. Seeley became a lifelong friend.

Rick Salutin, who also became a friend of Seeley’s, had actually registered in University College. He recalled that he “began the year at U of T in Honours English but switched to York, just up the street in Falconer Hall, when some English professor told me to buzz off; he had no time to look at something I’d written.” Dale Taylor, a UTS graduate, had planned to go to Trinity College but was intrigued by York’s ads and went to talk with Ross, who lived a few blocks away. “He sold me on York University.” Ross convinced him that, rather than be a nobody at Trinity in his freshman year, he could make a mark at York from the outset.

Looking back on the early days of York, George Rost-D’Eyl, who registered in 1961, wrote: “Many of the members of the academic community, both in the first year at Falconer Hall and then at Glendon, were there out of a feeling of reaction to what was perceived as the assembly-line anonymity created by the larger established universities.” The opportunity to help create something new and important was exciting. “Aside from the traditions and practices common to all universities, there was no established way of doing things. There were no long-established faculty or student organizations or practices. But there was tremendous potential for the establishment and development of a unique intellectual environment.”

Soon after York University opened its doors, Ross had made an official announcement that, in the long run, the institution would consist of a liberal arts college, a large multi-faculty university and an evening division. Before the spring of 1962, however, neither Ross nor anyone else anticipated that York’s growth would be particularly rapid. Ross’s book The New University (1961), a collection of speeches that...
was in large part a blueprint for York, stressed the benefits of teaching and learning in the intimate setting provided by a liberal arts college. Ross also expressed reservations about the university’s size and its potential to dilute the quality of education. He feared that the university would become too large and too distant from the heart of the city, in the same way that the University of Toronto had become.

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In 1965, Ross announced his retirement, effective June 30, 1970. He was succeeded by John De Jongh, vice-president (academic) of Queen’s University, the committee warned the presidents that enrolment would grow more rapidly than they had thought or were ready for. Not only would the baby boomers begin to show up in 1964, with their number growing rapidly after that – this was known, of course – but the participation rate, the proportion of university-age young people entering the institutions, was already increasing at a greater pace than the universities had been anticipating, especially because young women were registering in unprecedented numbers, and would continue to increase.

During 1965 and 1966, York’s focus shifted from its first to its second campus. The move to the new location on Keele Street, south of Steeles Avenue, began in August 1965. But planning for the move had begun three years earlier, when the University acquired the land it wanted for expansion in the long run, expansion that was hastened by the appearance of the 1962 Deutsch Report.

The acreage that York obtained in North York had been farmed from the early decades of the 19th century into the middle of the 20th. Four of the five settlers on the land that is now the Keele campus were of Pennsylvania Dutch origin, Mennonites attracted by the promise of free land in Upper Canada. The Fisher, Stong, Kaiser and Hoover families settled on several lots between what are now Steeles and Finch avenues. The English-born John Boynton settled south of them. The still-extant Stong House on Steeles, built by Jacob Stong on land bought from his father, Daniel, dates from 1859-1860. The farm stayed in the hands of the Stong family until 1952, when a speculator bought the land and then sold it to the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation. It turned in turn the property available to York, along with land once owned by two branches of the Kaiser family.

In the fall of 1962, with the campus now in York’s possession, the board asked University Planners, Architects and Consulting Engineers (UPACE), a joint venture by three Toronto firms, Goeden S. Adamson and Associates, John B. Parkin Associates, and Shore and Möllgard and Partners, to develop a master plan and design the first four buildings. Thomas Havrath, the architect-planner of the Glendon campus, continued to serve as architectural consultant and adviser to the board, and Hideo Sasaki, head of the Department of Landscape Architecture at Harvard University, became a special consultant to UPACE. (This should put to rest the persistent myth, which I started hearing soon after I came to York in 1968, that the campus was designed by California-based planners ignorant of the Ontario climate.)

Among the early arrivals were members of the Psychology Department. Kurt Danziger, who joined the department in 1965, came directly from South Africa. Acclimated to Cape Town’s mild climate, he found the Keele campus, especially in mid-winter, a severe shock to the system: “It was Siberia!” Neil Agnew, who left a clinical-research position in Saskatoon to become a professor of psychology and take charge of Psychological (today Counselling) Services on the Keele campus, was understandably less shocked. The psychologist Sandra Pyke, who arrived from Saskatoon in 1967, said: “When we moved to York, we were told it was in large part a blueprint for York, stressed the benefits of teaching and learning in the intimate setting provided by a liberal arts college. Ross also expressed reservations about the university’s size and its potential to dilute the quality of education. He feared that the university would become too large and too distant from the heart of the city, in the same way that the University of Toronto had become.

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down here I thought we had moved to the banana belt.”

The early students often saw themselves as pioneers, not only because the campus was brand new, but also because they were the first in their families to attend university. In that category were Jackie Robinson and Sandra Noble Goss, graduates of Downsview High School who later called themselves “suburban Toronto working-class kids” and said that they knew of no classmates whose parents had gone to university. (This pattern has continued, especially at the Keele campus, as Esther Greenberg, a member of the Psychology Department since 1968, noted.) What struck Robinson and Goss about the campus was “the vastness of it, and the cold in the winter.” There was construction everywhere. “I constantly had muddy shoes,” Robinson recalled. It was easy for them to take the Keele bus north, but, because it did not enter the campus, they faced a long walk along St. Lawrence (now York) Boulevard to the few buildings that had opened. Well into the 1970s the Toronto Transit Commission resisted pressure to increase the frequency of service and reroute the Keele bus through the campus, so that hitchhikers standing along St. Lawrence Boulevard remained a feature of life at York for years.

Wendy Mitchinson, who came to York because its first-year general education program gave her time to make up her mind what to study and because York gave her a bigger sense of independence, said that she married finearts student Rex Lingwood, who actually “liked that York was a construction site.” “There was a real energy there as a result,” Mitchinson added. A key event in student social life took place when the 1969 session began. On Sept. 11, the Green Bush Inn, the first student-run pub on campus, served its first drink. Students flocked through the campus, so that hitchhikers standing along St. Lawrence Boulevard remained a feature of life at York for years.

Lots of students drank on campus before the fall of 1969, of course, but the practice was largely confined to residence rooms. So was another indulgence, the smoking of marijuana. How widespread it was is impossible to ascertain, but the scent of burning marijuana was a regular feature of residence life. Not everyone recognized it. “I was so innocent,” Mitchinson remembered, “that I thought the pot I smelled in McLaughlin Residence was incense.” From my own experience as a don in Wood Residence in the late 1960s and early 1970s, I would say that marijuana use was fairly common but not a significant problem. Heavy drinking and “dropping acid”, the use of LSD, were. Several times I was pressed into service in the middle of the night to drive a student experiencing a “bad trip” to the emergency department of Sunnybrook Hospital.

Early in 1969, Equivalare, the Keele campus student newspaper, argued in an editorial for the legalization of marijuana, on the grounds that it was hypocritical not to do so since it was no more dangerous than alcohol, tobacco or sex. Although the drug was illegal, there was no clear-cut policy on its use at York, so that academic administrators dealt with cases on an ad hoc basis. This led to inconsistencies and did nothing to improve the attitude of students towards “the administration”, in any case too easily seen as slightly malevolent. Finally, it must be noted that, when the federal government appointed a Commission of Inquiry into the Non-Medical Use of Drugs in 1969, Gerald LeDain, dean of York’s Osgoode Hall Law School, became its chairman.© 2009. Excerpted with the permission of York University and McGillQueen’s University Press.

Copies of York University: The Way Must Be Tried may be purchased in person and online from the York University Bookstore, bookstore.yorku.ca; from York’s 50th anniversary site, york50.ca; and from major bookstores.
A selection of York faculty and grads who’ve become household names.

BY BETH ZABLOSKI

IRVING ARELLA
York history professor since 1968
Co-authored None Is Too Many: Canada and the Jews of Europe, 1933-1948, a searing account of Canada’s exclusionary immigration policy

LOUISE AROUR
Professor at York’s Osgoode Hall Law School, 1974-1997
Served on the Supreme Court of Canada, then as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2004-2008

MARGARET ATWOOD
York English professor, 1971-1972
Renowned author of more than 35 books

ISABEL BASSETT
MA ‘73, English
Broadcast journalist and former chair & CEO of TVOntario

ED BROADBENT
York political science professor, 1965-1968
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1969 co-founder of the Waffle, a leftist faction that tried to take control of the NDP

IRVING LAYTON
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Poet who published more than 40 volumes before he died in 2006

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NPD leader and MPP for Vaughan

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The masters of York’s nine colleges present an evening lecture series highlighting the diverse research conducted by York faculty. Dates, topics and lecturers:

Jan. 20: Impressionism and Society
History and humanities Prof. Emeritus Arthur Haberman

Feb. 24: The War on Terror in the First Century
Classical studies Senior Scholar Paul Swarney

March 11: Dealing with Dualism: Language, Culture & Identity in Canada
Glendon Principal Kenneth McRoberts

April 2: Monumental Passions and Modernism
Canada Research Chair in Performance & Culture Christopher Innes

May 6: Perspectives on Sustainability and the Future of Humankind
Environmental studies Prof. Emeritus David Bell

Sept. 17: Making Human Resources Management Work for You
Human resources management Prof. Monica Belcourt

Sept. 24: Physical Activity: Its Role in Diabetes Prevention and Treatment
Kinesiology & health science Prof. Michael Riddell

Oct. 19: How the Internet is Changing Canada
Communications & culture Prof. Emeritus Fred Fletcher

Nov. 5: Autonomous Robots in the 21st Century
Computer science & engineering Prof. Michael Jenkin

From lectures and symposia to performances and exhibits, a series of events will help York celebrate its 50th anniversary. They will reach a crescendo around York’s March 26 birthday, including a major symposium featuring globally known thinkers and a black-tie gala concert, and will continue throughout 2009. Below are some of the highlights of events open to the public. To see a full listing, including final information on times and locations, visit York’s 50th anniversary Web site, yorku50.ca.
nationally renowned scholar currently holding a Visiting Chair in Women's Studies at Rutgers University, on “Happiness, Race and Empire”. A reception will follow.

50 YEARS IN THE FACULTY OF ARTS: A RETROSPECTIVE
MARCH 23 TO 27
To celebrate 50 years of Faculty of Arts excellence prior to the launch of the new Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies on July 1, there will be a visual timeline and gallery showcasing the Faculty’s history. Submissions of photos, videos and memorabilia are welcome – see arts.yorku.ca.

50+50 SYMPOSIUM: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY DISCUSSION ABOUT PRETTY MUCH EVERYTHING
MARCH 27 TO 28
What have we learned in the last 50 years and how will it help us in the next 50? This is the question that will shape 50+50, the centrepiece of York’s 50th anniversary celebration. To answer it, the University has invited some of the world’s most distinguished thinkers and achievers to a public symposium in the Price Family Cinema in the Accolade East Building. Each speaker will be hosted – and probed – by a senior York scholar. Each will take questions from the audience and will engage in a roundtable with other speakers. Speakers include:

NICHOLAS NEGROPONTI, architect and computer scientist, on leave as director of the MIT Media Lab to promote One Laptop per Child, the global initiative he co-founded.

EDWARD O. WILSON, Harvard University biologist and Pulitzer Prize-winning author, hailed as “the new Darwin” by writer Tom Wolfe and as one of America’s 25 Most Influential People by Time magazine.

MARGARET ATWOOD, world-renowned author and Massey lecturer, whose books include The Handmaid’s Tale, The Blind Assassin and Payback: Debt and the Shadow Side of Wealth.

ROSALE ABELLA, justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, human rights law expert and sole commissioner of the 1984 Royal Commission on Equality in Employment. LLOYD AXWORTHY, president of the University of Winnipeg, former foreign affairs minister and a key architect of the global treaty banning landmines. SHEILA WATT CLOUTIER, citizen advocate on Arctic climate change and international Inuit leader. ARJUN APPADURAI, Bombay-born socio-cultural anthropologist, senior adviser for global initiatives at The New School in New York City and originator of the term “global cultural flows.”

YORK IN CONCERT – BLACK-TIE GALA
MARCH 28
York University’s 50th anniversary will be celebrated in grand style with a black-tie Gala Concert in the Tribute Communities Recital Hall in the Accolade East Building. Hosted by a series of prominent alumni emcees, performances will include the jazz stylings of well-known vocalist MATT DUSK (BFA Spec. Hons. ’02), an opera aria by VARIOUS COMPANIES (BFA Spec. Hons. ’08) and a humorous ballet by choreographer SUSAN CASIN (BFA Spec. Hons. ’78, MA ’07). A special COMPLAINTS CHORUS (choral work is being created by lyricist Bruce Harrott (BA ’74) and composer Glenn Morley (BA ’75), chronicling the myriad of complaints York has accumulated over the past 50 years. The event script is being developed by television writer Shelley Scarrow Hurst (BFA ’94). All participants, both on stage and backstage, will be York alumni or current students, with the exception of gala producer Phillip Silver, former dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts.

YORK’S COMMUNITY FESTIVAL
MAY 8
York will welcome its neighbours and alumni to the Keele and Glendon campuses to enjoy a variety of family-oriented, hands-on activities and attractions, including a Science Rendezvous, poetry walks, exhibits, performances, concerts and fireworks.

CANADA AND THE WORLD: ASIAN IMAGININGS
MAY 13 TO JUNE 12
This exhibition explores transformation in connections to “mother country”, to rapidly changing Asian societies and to Canadian life and society, through the work of contemporary Asian-Canadian artists working in various media, including painting, installation and photo- and time-based media.

KENAIDAN - YORK UNIVERSITY CHAIR’S CUP GOLF TOURNAMENT
MAY 27
Held at the Copper Creek Golf Club in Kleinburg, Ont., this first-class tournament raises funds annually for graduate student scholarships at York. Since its inception, tournament proceeds, matched 2 for 1 by Ontario government grants, have totalled $3 million and benefited over 200 students.

CELEBRATING HAYDN: CONCERTS
AUG. 4 & 7
Evening concerts connected with a four-day conference on Haydn will feature the PERDERREK STRING QUARTET, based at Wilfred Laurier University, and renowned pianist MALCOLM BILSON of Cornell University.

ART GALLERY MEETS THE SCIENCE FAIR: AMBIVALENT OBJECTS AT THE INTERSECTION OF ART AND SCIENCE
OCT. 5 TO 6
An exhibit of collaborations by students from the arts and sciences, these “ambivalent objects” will be displayed within a space that blurs the boundary of an art gallery and a science fair.

TIME WARP JAZZ ORCHESTRA
OCT. 7
A special evening concert combining the noted York jazz ensemble Time Warp with a number of other well-known artists. The concert will be recorded for potential release on York’s record label.

WOMEN’S STUDIES LECTURE: LIVING LE DEUXIÈME SEXE – EXPERIENCES IN TRANSLATION
OCT. 20
A new English translation of Simone de Beauvoir’s The Second Sex will be published in November 2009, 60 years after the path-breaking feminist book first appeared. At the invitation of York’s School of Women’s Studies, the Paris-based translators, Sheila Malowany-Chevallier and Constance Borde, will speak about Simone de Beauvoir, their work and the history of the project.

CONTESTING URBAN GROWTH IN THE GREATER GOLDEN HORSESHOE
OCT. 23
This symposium will bring together York scholars and stakeholders in diverse sectors engaged in regional growth debates and policy-making in southern Ontario’s Golden Horseshoe.

OCT. 23 TO 25
The environment is a topic that covers a diverse array of crucial mothering issues, from maternal health to environmental education. The three-day conference will involve some 250 international scholars, students, activists, environmental professionals, educators, artists and mothers.

BODYWORKS SYMPOSIUM: INTERSECTIONS IN SPORT, ART AND CULTURE
NOV. 5 TO 6
The Bodyworks Symposium will actively create new alliances between professionals in sports and the arts, research groups, policy-makers and the general public.

York University wishes to thank the following companies for their sponsorship of York’s 50th anniversary activities.

Presenting Sponsor:

Bank of Montreal

Enbridge

Cineplex Entertainment

Media Sponsor:

CTVglobemedia

York University
Design-oriented, environmentally friendly and affordable – with a fine shot of whimsy. Those were the creative goals for a broad collection of signature products York is offering to commemorate its 50th anniversary.

There are, for instance, pieces that replicate vintage photographs housed in York’s Clara Thomas Archives & Special Collections, including key chains, magnets and jewellery produced by Toronto-based RJH, a selection of 100 per cent recycled Ecopoy journals from Mirage Paper Co., and notecards made from recycled paper that feature black-and-white images from York’s early days and colour photos of campus life today.

The collection also offers exclusive U50 branded products, including classic items such as clocks, travel mugs and vacuum flasks in glossy red and sleek stainless steel. Check out the transparent red ballpoint pen made from biodegradable corn plastic, the stainless steel travel mug featuring a built-in, reusable plunger filter, and the streamlined, red stainless-steel water bottle, all featuring the U50 anniversary logo.

There are also soft and stylish bamboo-fibre and organic cotton T-shirts from Toronto’s Me To We Style, a social enterprise committed to providing ethically manufactured, quality clothing. York has partnered with Lailey Vineyard Wines, a family-run vineyard and winery in Ontario’s Niagara Region, to offer two U50 VQA wines – a 2006 Cabernet Merlot and a 2007 Chardonnay. So drink up: $3.69 from each bottle purchased via retail sale will go to the York to the Power of 50 campaign to benefit York students.

And throughout March, Timothy’s Coffees of the World will offer York’s Las Nubes sustainable coffee as the coffee of the month at 105 locations across Canada. As it has since 2004, Timothy’s will donate a portion of sales to York’s Fisher Fund for Neotropical Conservation, supporting research and conservation activities in the region of southern Costa Rica where York’s Las Nubes Rainforest reserve is located.

U50 products are available through the U50 Web site, yorku50.ca, and from the York University Bookstores, on the Keele and Glendon campuses or bookstore.yorku.ca.
The Snows of Mars

York science team made headlines around the planet this past September with a simple weather report. The bulletin, delivered by Professor Jim Whiteway of York’s Department of Earth & Space Science & Engineering, was short, to the point and historic – it snows on Mars. “Nothing like this view has ever been seen,” Whiteway said at a NASA briefing as he described an image captured by a York-designed instrument on the Phoenix Mars Lander. But his use of that one wintry word quickly caught the attention of the world’s media. “I didn’t think to call it snow,” says Whiteway, a professor in York’s Faculty of Science & Engineering, recalling how he was convinced by NASA staff to forgo his usual term “precipitation”.

The announcement was momentous for scientific reasons but also for York’s long-established space program, a leader in Canada. The instrument, known as a lidar (laser radar) and developed by Professor Emeritus Allan Carswell, allowed the York team to “see” the streaks of white stuff falling from clouds about three to five kilometres above Mars’ polar region. It was an event 48 years in the making for the team, which also included Professor Peter Taylor, late Professor Diane Michelan- geli and York research associates and graduate students, as well as personnel from the Canadian Space Agency, Natural Resources Canada, MDA Corp., Optech Inc., Dalhousie University and the University of Alberta.

The story actually began in 1968, when Carswell, an expert on lasers at Montreal’s RCA Victor Research Laboratory, accepted an invitation to join York’s science faculty from Professor Ralph Nichols, distinguished research scientist and founder of the University’s Earth & Space Science Program. By 1974, Carswell’s research led him to set up a technology spinoff company, Optech Inc., which is now a world leader in

York’s decades of involvement in space pay off with a groundbreaking mission to the red planet.

BY DAVID FULLER
RESEARCH

applications of lidar technology. Among the students Carswell introduced to his techniques was Whiteway, who came back to York after six years in Wales to expand his work on Earth-based lidar systems into models that could fly in space.

When he arrived at Toronto’s Pearson International Airport in 2003, Whiteway picked up a newspaper from the seat of his taxi and read about York’s successful bid for a role in the Phoenix project. Within days he was immersed in an undertaking that would dominate his life for five years and lead to the launch of Phoenix on Aug. 4, 2007. Tragically, it was just a few weeks after the launch that his colleague Michelangelo, an expert in atmospheric computer modelling and the original team leader, died of cancer after having worked on many of the essential parameters for the mission. Taylor, meanwhile, was a former researcher at Environment Canada whose experience studying winds in the Arctic and other exotic locations made him a natural choice for the project. “I never thought I’d be doing weather on Mars,” he says.

After hurtling through space for 10 months and making a tense seven-minute descent, Phoenix landed on Mars’ arctic plain on May 25, 2008, ready to start a three-month study of the planet’s winds, dust and surface conditions. “The most interesting meteorology happened in the last 30 to 40 days,” he says. During this time, the team started seeing more dust devils as the winds and cloud cover increased and temperatures began to plummet to as low as -95 C. Meanwhile, the University of Arizona team working Phoenix’s digging claw and soil analyzers were able to confirm that Mars’ polar surface consisted of water ice and not frozen carbon dioxide.

On Nov. 2, when Phoenix’s solar-powered batteries failed and it stopped communicating with two satellites orbiting high above the planet, its performance had surpassed expectations. The scientists had confirmed that, even if it’s a frozen sheet the size of the Mediterranean and covered in dust, there is water on Mars and some of it falls from the sky. “That, to me, is profound,” says Whiteway. “It’s not that long ago that with Mars the question was ‘what happened to the water?’ We know now.”

With the mission officially concluded – although some optimists hold out a faint hope that Phoenix, like its namesake, will rise again at the end of the year-long Martian winter – the York crew, along with teams from the US, the UK, Denmark and Switzerland, began analyzing the data for journal articles and a series of conferences in 2009. But, some may ask, was discovering snow and ice on a distant planet worth the trouble and expense? “I’m biased,” says Whiteway, “but when you’re going somewhere and you find something that changes the conception of the evolution of that planet and our solar system, I think that’s money well spent.”

York University celebrates 50 years of research excellence

York continues to seek innovative solutions to scientific and societal challenges. Our researchers are finding water on Mars and creating programs to stop children’s bullying. They’re developing models to predict the spread of infectious diseases, decoding the brain’s mysteries, and discovering treatments to prevent strokes, heart disease, and autism.

Here’s to 50 more years of knowledge that makes a difference.

To learn more about York’s innovative approach to research, visit www.research.yorku.ca
any grads and students won’t have noticed yet, but big changes are afoot at York – the biggest, in fact, in its history. Come July, the Faculty of Arts, part of the University since its inception, and the Atkinson Faculty of Liberal & Professional Studies, with roots in part-time education going back to 1962, will be no more. In their place, the new Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies (LAK/PS) will be launched on July 1, 2009, culminating an evolutionary process that has occupied a legion of faculty and staff for the past two years. LAK/PS, comprising about half the University, will help make York more flexible, more interdisciplinary and more reflective of today’s lifestyles. But the question on most people’s minds probably is, “What does this mean for me?”

The answer is both “everything” and “nothing.” The new Faculty, encompassing the humanities, social sciences and related professional studies, was approved in 2007 in recognition of a need for more clarity – many subjects were taught in both Faculties – a desire to bring everyone together, and the opportunity to make more courses available at more times. For Arts and Atkinson grads, the school they knew is evolving into a new, even more interdisciplinary entity, but not at the expense of tradition. For professors, there will be easier opportunities for research collaboration across disciplines – and the chance to work with all of one’s colleagues in the same Faculty. And for students, the new Faculty will cater to 21st-century lifestyles by offering more choices at times that make sense to them, in programs that are among the best in Canada.

For example, in a popular subject like English, previously offered in both Arts and Atkinson, there will now be one program with a wider range of courses and one set of requirements, eliminating a long-standing source of confusion. In the 1970s, when York introduced innovations that gave rise to parallel programs for full-time day students and part-time night students, the duplication made sense. But times have changed and the success of the Atkinson model of flexible study programs for working people will now be adopted by all York Faculties to accommodate a new generation of students who, for instance, might work nights and study part time in the day, during fall, winter and summer.

“If you take a look at what happens now,” says Vice-President Academic & Provost Sheila Embleton, whose office has guided the transition, “you have all different combinations of part-time, full-time, direct entry and mature students, and they change as they go through their programs. They don’t want to have to keep flipping from Faculty to Faculty as their situation changes.” The LAK/PS transition will also allow York to harmonize its undergraduate and graduate curricula and course requirements, making transfers and applications to graduate school smoother for both students and their teachers.

This change is the largest in a series of restructuring efforts on the Keele campus that has seen many former Arts and Atkinson programs, such as math and psychology, consolidated elsewhere. Math courses are now all grouped in the Faculty of Science & Engineering and psychology is a significant component of the Faculty of Health, which was established in 2006. “We’ve been doing lots of these realignments, putting like with like,” says Embleton. Students already in a given Arts or Atkinson program will have the option of completing it (by 2016) or transferring to the newer version, says Ross Rudolph, senior adviser to Embleton and a professor of political science in the Faculty of Arts. Those who switch, particularly part-time students from Atkinson, says Rudolph, will find a rich range of course offerings available year-round.

For grads wondering how the change will affect their degree, the answer is it won’t, but that’s only part of the story. A BA from Arts or Atkinson will still read the same and no changes are contemplated. What will change, says James Allan, York’s director, alumni, is the range of alumni programs – and networking – available to grads who are part of the new LAK/PS community. “We’re not talking about changing history,” says Allan. “They are still our grads, and they are still Arts grads and Atkinson grads.” But alumni activities organized by LAK/PS will bring together both groups, creating more opportunities to connect. At the same time, the Alumni Office is happy to help grads form chapters relating to, say, a specific Arts or Atkinson program or unit, to maintain the camaraderie that a particular group shared.

Furthing tradition, the Atkinson name and ethos have been retained in the Atkinson Centre for Mature & Part-time Students (ACMAPS), a pan-University centre launched in 2007 with a mandate to raise awareness of the issues that affect mature and part-time students. In cooperation with all Faculties and the Office of the Vice-President Academic & Provost, ACMAPS will work to ensure that all students can access the best programs and courses that York offers.

At root, York is bolstering a strength it has always had, staying one step ahead of its institutional peers. “The idea of a university that only teaches Monday to Friday; 9 to 5; September to May, is dead,” observes Allan. Long live the University that’s always there.
York to the Power of 50, York’s 50th anniversary fundraising campaign, has reached $170 million toward its $200 million goal. Our supporters are making an exponential difference by giving to enhance York's unique brand of learning and discovery. Here are just a few examples of how donors are helping.

**EMPOWER 50**

**Chairs and Professorships**

The Jean Augustine Chair in the Faculty of Education will study issues affecting schooling in urban environments to improve teaching methods and student outcomes. Fundraising continues from supporters across the country.

**CREATE 50**

**Infrastructure**

The successful $10 million fundraising campaign for The Accolade Project helped create studio and performance space, enhanced programming and other benefits for York’s Faculty of Fine Arts.

**INNOVATE 50**

**Pioneering Programs and Research**

The Sherman Health Science Research Centre is being made possible by a $5 million gift from Honey and Barry Sherman. The centre will boost York’s leading research into areas such as how the brain functions and the effects of osteoarthritis on knee and hip joints.

**TRANSFORM 50**

**Student Awards and Scholarships**

The Lillian Wright Maternal-Child Health Scholars Program supports undergraduate and graduate students in the critical field of maternal-infant health and early child development. The program was made possible by a $2 million gift from the Lillian and Don Wright Foundation.

You can make an exponential difference, too, by making a donation to York University during our 50th anniversary year and the York to the Power of 50 fundraising campaign.

Give today: 416-650-8210
contact@yorkfoundation.yorku.ca or visit yorku.ca/foundation
Olympian sprinter Molly Killingbeck (BA ‘86) likes to say: “I didn’t discover running, running discovered me.” As a shy 13-year-old immigrant from Jamaica, she played sports to make friends. Not until she saw high school track competitions qualify for the Commonwealth Games did she say to herself: “If they can do it, so can I.” Within a year, she’d made the national track team, swapped American scholarships to enrol at York and train at Toronto’s new Track & Field Centre. Over the next six years, the part-time sociology student peaked as a world-class sprinter and won her greatest glory — Olympic silver in the women’s 4x400-metre relay at the 1984 Los Angeles Games. It was the first Olympic medal won by a York student.

Four years later at Seoul, Killingbeck dropped the baton — and ruined her Canadian team’s shot at Olympic gold. “It was disastrous,” remembers the mother of sons Quinn, 30, and Zane, 29. “I would have given anything to run a stake of uphill in the 400 metres, or even to be on the team.”

It was disheartening. “I was particularly hurt as a sprinter, and there was a lot of pressure on me,” she says. “I know I could have run in the 200 metres.”

She switched to coaching, turned Windsor and York varsity runners into champs — and primed Canada’s men’s 4x100-metre relay team for their gold at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. Now, after detouring into sports administration and raising son Quinn, the 50-year-old elite athlete is vying to return trackside to coach the national team’s sprinters and hurdlers — her sights fixed again on the world’s top prizes. “If you drop the baton, pick it up and keep going,” she tells her proteges. “Nothing is impossible.”

Jeremy Greenberg
Booster extraordinaire

First Spirit

Jeremy Greenberg
is a spiritual man. Maybe not in the religious sense, but certainly when it comes to his alma mater. As a student, Greenberg (BA ’03) was instrumental in founding York is U — now the official student alumni program of York University. Originally an all-student effort, York is U is a diverse, non-political organization providing campus-wide events and programs designed to instill spirit, pride and a lifelong connection to York among students. It has received international recognition for its work and grown to become the largest student organization at York.

Greenberg, who has a degree in political science, has been affiliated with York in one way or another since 1998 (until recently, he served as coordinator of student leadership programs). During his student life he held four positions at the student newspaper Excalibur, including editor-in-chief. His decade at York, he says, was “some of the best times of my life. I have a lot of wonderful memories.”

An outgoing, often passionate advocate for his projects, Greenberg says it was his desire to serve others that motivated him at York. “I wanted to make a meaningful contribution toward improving our community. That’s what got me started. The thrill of helping others and making a positive impact got me hooked.”

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MIKE FORD

Molly Killingbeck
Coach, Olympic sprinter

First Medallist

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KC ARMSTRONG

YORK PEOPLE
Many Ways to Give

Three exemplary donors use a variety of avenues to support York

York alumni find many ways to give back to their alma mater. Here are three inspiring examples:

Ken Skolnik (BA ’70) characterizes his monthly giving to York as “simply returning the favour”. Skolnik was an amateur student of 27 when he began his BA in English and history. “One of the proudest moments of my life was when I received my letter from York saying that I had passed the entrance exams. I still remember the way the paper felt. I must have levitated.”

York was a very young university, and Skolnik recalls a palpable excitement on campus. “You knew you were on the ground floor of something wonderful.” He remembers engaging classrooms where ideas were challenged and professors debated.

Skolnik, a retired school teacher, recently increased his monthly donation to the York University Foundation from $10 to $20 a month and challenges others to start a habit of giving. “I really recommend monthly giving to everyone. I think it’s a great way to look at giving and to start to give. It’s a very good way to try to do your bit.”

Since becoming York’s first women’s studies graduate, Rev. Louise Mahood (BA Hons. ’84) has established the Louise H. Mahood Bursary Fund within the School of Women’s Studies. Mahood has also generously volunteered her time, working on the fundraising committee for the School of Women’s Studies. “The school is vitally important for its surges high-calibre academic research, as well as providing endless epiphanies for women studying women.”

Brad Meslin (BA ’80), managing director of CSP Associates Inc., an American private equity investment and advisory group, credits his political science degree with putting him on the path to career success. “York was one of those fork-in-the-road moments. Different paths presented themselves beginning at York and took me to where I am today.”

Recently, Meslin established the Meslin Scholarships in Global Political Studies at York University. “I really value the world view and perspective a Canadian university can provide to students,” he says. In establishing the scholarships, Meslin took advantage of one of several matching programs that multiply the impact of a donor’s original gift.

For more information on ways to give, please contact the York University Foundation at 416-650-8210 or visit yorku.ca/foundation.

CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Latest data on York to the Power of 50, York University’s 50th anniversary fundraising campaign:

Target: $200 million
Current level: Over $170 million
Time since launch: 27 months
Priorities for support: Pioneering research and programs, student awards and scholarships, Chairs and professorships, infrastructure.

Photography by Sophie Khachthouk

LEGACY: Mahood

Many Ways to Give

Three exemplary donors use a variety of avenues to support York
There was a common theme flowing through the 2008 Bryden Alumni Awards dinner, one of the most elegant events of the University year. It was how four different individuals found their voice during their time at York. The four were honoured on Nov. 13 for their leadership and accomplishments during a gala ceremony at the Design Exchange in downtown Toronto.

Presented by the Alumni Office and the York University Alumni Association, the evening opened with a screening of the animated short film _I Met The Walrus_, by York grad Jerry Levitan (BA '76, LLB '79). The film, based on a 1969 audio recording of an interview Levitan did with Beatle John Lennon, was nominated for a 2008 Academy Award (see _YorkU_, Summer 2008).

CBC broadcaster Jian Ghomeshi (BA '95) took to the podium in his role as the evening’s host. Musing about his memories as a political science Hons. ’72, PhD ’80), Wendy Craig (MA ’89, PhD ’93) and Frank Cianciulli (BA ’97), the 2008 Bryden Alumni Award recipients.

The Outstanding Contribution Award went to Hatanaka, group head of wealth management at TD Bank Financial Group, for his dedication to the advancement of the University in his role with the York University Foundation Board of Directors. He introduced Bill Hatanaka (BA Hons. ’77), Paul Axelrod (BA Hons. ’72, PhD ’80), Wendy Craig (MA ’89, PhD ’93) and Frank Cianciulli (BA ’97), the 2008 Bryden Alumni Award recipients.

"York gave me the courage to follow what I believed in and what I enjoyed," said Hatanaka. He also spoke appreciatively of being able to pursue a career as a professional athlete while at the same time pursuing his passion for economics.

The Local Hero Award went to Axelrod, whose history at York stretches back 40 years and has seen him take on a multitude of roles at the University, from undergraduate student leader to professor to dean of the Faculty of Education.

Axelrod summed up his experience at York: “Y is for youthfulness. The University has retained an aura of youthfulness through a continuing..."
process of reinvention. O is for openness – the University’s commitment to accessibility,” he said. “R is for risk – every one of my activities at York involved risk and all were rewarding. K is for knowledge. – I came to York because I was interested in ideas and the pursuit of knowledge. I ended up being privileged enough to make that my career.”

A psychologist and researcher, Craig received the Redefine the Possible Award for her renowned expertise on bullying and her work in determining cyber-bullying as a growing problem for today’s youth.

Craig spoke about the influence of her mentors, York Professors Doug McCann and Debra Pepler, and their role in helping her find her voice as an academic. “As a professor and researcher, I often reflect on how my professors at York recognized in me the scholar that I could be,” said Craig. Now a Queen’s University professor, she co-founded with Pepler a national organization that coordinates researchers at more than 21 universities and provides expertise on bullying to organizations across Canada. She also works with the World Health Organization on bullying issues.

The youngest of the group, Cianciulli, 35, received the One-to-Watch Award for his professional and community accomplishments. Since graduating, Cianciulli has founded or co-founded numerous companies, including two conference providers, a staffing company and a voice over Internet (VoIP) organization. Cianciulli’s entrepreneurial activities earned him the Ernst & Young Emerging Entrepreneur of the Year Award in 2006 and a place on Canada’s 2007 Top 40 Under 40 list.

Cianciulli paid tribute to his parents’ influence on his life and his choice to study at York. “They offered me a car,” he joked, “so I came to York and it was at York that I found my voice.” He now gives back by serving on the Faculty of Arts Dean’s Advisory Board.

The evening wrapped with a closing speech by York President & Vice-Chancellor Mamdouh Shoukri, who congratulated the recipients and thanked the event’s supporters, including lead sponsor Manulife Financial, reception sponsor MBNA and video sponsor Wellington West.

For more information about each award recipient, including video profiles, visit yorku.ca/brydenawards.
For many people, a university is a family tradition. As York celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2009, there are more and more alumni who are planning to send their children – or grandchildren – to university. And so the Alumni Office has teamed up with the Office of Admissions Recruitment to offer front-of-the-line access to communications, events and benefits to York applicants who come from alumni families.

Launching in January 2009, the Alumni Families program is a new initiative designed to make sure that alumni can help their family members get the most out of applying to York. “We know that choosing a university is a major decision for any family,” says James Allan, director, alumni. “And alumni already get great perks from the University, on everything from theatre tickets to insurance and car rentals, so we thought our grads should get the best that York has to offer when it comes to admissions information and benefits.”

One of the most significant elements of the program is a scholarship specifically for the children, grandchildren or siblings of York graduates. Valued at $6,000 per year and renewable for up to four years, the Harry W. Arthurs Entrance Scholarship is awarded to prospective students from alumni families who demonstrate scholarly excellence and a strong record of participation and leadership in extracurricular student life.

But the program is about more than special scholarships. It’s about making sure that families have the best information to make smart decisions. “Alumni have their own experiences of York – the professors they remember, the classes they took,” says Barbara Brown, senior director, admissions, communications & client services. “But as York is constantly growing and changing, we want to make sure that our applicants have the most up-to-date information about our world-class University. With the Alumni Families program, prospective students get the best of both worlds – the deeply personal family perspectives and front-of-the-line access to the latest developments.”

While the Alumni Families program is new, Allan acknowledges that there are already many alumni families at York. “I’ve met all sorts of students and grads whose parents are also York grads. So the tradition’s already well underway. We just want to give it a boost by providing our alumni and their families with these extra perks. Given how much our grads give back to the University already, it’s the least we can do.”

For more information on the Alumni Families program, visit yorku.ca/alumnifamilies.
I have to revise my famous York story about W.O. Mitchell. **By Nino Ricci**

**Lies & Misdemeanours**

There is a story I often tell about being thrown out of a creative writing class in my first year at York by none other than W.O. Mitchell. I was 18 years old and fresh off the farm and there was a great deal I didn’t know — who W.O. Mitchell was, for instance — but one thing I did know was that I wanted to be a writer. Mitchell, the author of *Who Has Seen the Wind*, had a technique he called Mitchell’s Messy Method. For an hour or two every day we were supposed to write whatever came into our heads, with the idea of doing a sort of free associative end run around our internal editors and so getting to the stuff that really mattered. In three weeks I managed to amass some 70 pages of Mitchellian mess, though a mere matter of hours after I’d handed them in I had a message from Mitchell’s secretary saying Mitchell urgently needed to meet with me.

My thoughts, as a young man’s thoughts will, ran in many directions. In Mitchell’s office I sat too terrified to speak while Mitchell hemmed and hawed and thumbed grimly through my submission. “There’s nothing there. It’s just run-on. You can stay in my class if you want, but I’ll probably fail you.” I dropped his course the next day, and switched into Psych 101. 

If I had stopped writing then, I would probably have buried this incident away and never mentioned it, except maybe in therapy. But I didn’t stop, and since publishing my first novel I’ve told this story any number of times, usually in a forgiving tone intended to imply that my revenge has been complete.

Now, however, I must make the admission that the story is a lie. Not that things didn’t happen more or less as I recount them. The story is a lie, rather, because it suggests that it was somehow sheer pigheaded resolve that got me through. We all like stories of this sort, about people overcoming great odds to win the race or get the girl or save humankind, they feed the belief that by simple force of will we can conquer every obstacle to reach our dreams. But liking these stories doesn’t necessarily make them true.

I have a different story about York which I was reminded of recently when I received an e-mail from another of my first-year professors, Sally Zerker, commending me on my new novel. The novel has a Darwinian theme, the seed of which was planted back in Zerker’s classroom, where I was first introduced to *On the Origin of Species*.

I should mention that I was an emotional basket case in first year, for reasons that had only marginally to do with W.O. Mitchell’s attempts to squash my life’s hopes, and that as a result my studies were a struggle, kept afloat mainly by the drug-fuelled all-nighters I periodically managed to rouse myself for. At the end of the year, however, I went to collect my final paper from Professor Zerker and she unaccountably called me into her office. “What are your plans?” she said. “What are you hoping to make of yourself?” She was taking me so seriously I thought she had mistaken me for someone else.

“I dunno.” I didn’t dare mention my writing. “I was thinking of travelling.”

“Well, fine, I suppose, just don’t fritter your life away. You have something special. Don’t waste it.”

I could have wept. This is the story I probably should have been telling all these years rather than my W.O. Mitchell one. There were several professors at York who were as seminal for me in their way, as almost literally life-saving, as Sally Zerker was — my humanities professor Elaine Newton was one — but also a long string of teachers going down through all my oddball high school English instructors right back to my Grade 1 teacher, Mrs. Collins, who kept me in during noon hour one day to read her *Green Eggs and Ham* while she ate her lunch. If not for this little army of formative influences to put against W.O. Mitchell, I would surely not have fared so well in the aftermath of him.

Maybe Mitchell was exactly what I needed at the time. In seeming to close a door, he showed me the windows. The crowning irony is that the final laugh is his, really, since a great deal of what I know about writing I learned in those few weeks that I lasted in his class.

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Nino Ricci (BA Spec. Hons. ’81) recently won his second Governor General’s Literary Award for Fiction for *The Origin of Species*. 

3 BACK TALK