# R Onews

**Presidential** 

**News** 

and Views

## Queen's Spirit

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LL THE FOOFARAW about Homecoming and Aberdeen Street raises the question why Queen's persists in perpetuating this irritant. I am not

privy to the reasoning but assume that it is partly because folk celebrations are very hard to stop by administrative edict and also because some believe they foster the once-famous Queen's spirit. The latter is important to fund-raising – a concern understandably never far from the University's mind.

Institutional loyalty is declining, an impression strengthened by a recent personal experience: Arts/PHE'56 this year invited their surviving profs to a celebratory Homecoming dinner. We greybeards and greylocks noted the extraordinary cohesiveness of this group compared to bonds among more recent graduating classes. The consensus was that few of the recent crop of Queen's grads fashioned so strong an *esprit de corps*.

Why should this be? Several causes leap to the mind: **Fa**is one. About 3,000 students graced the campus when I arrived in 1949. Look at the place now! Greater numbers foster anonymity and inhibit intimacy. They also engender **a**a

Whereas earlier students dealt with only a few university-wide persons (the registrar, padre, dean, professor – all of whom had their home phone numbers listed in the campus phone book), they now confront an army of agencies and officials charged with catering to minute academic, health, social and personal concerns. Most of these are service- rather than university-centred.

Student **a** . Our constituency was ethnically, religiously, and geographically much less diversified. It was consequently easier to identify with everyone else and to create a sense of family.

V - . Hardly any students left the campus except during holidays or long week-ends. In my first few years I had Saturday 8 am classes that were well attended. (OK, reasonably well attended Such shortfall as there was, was related more to the hour than to the day.) Nowadays the campus begins to empty on Thursday evening and does not recover until about

Tuesday. An enormous proportion of people flee to Toronto and other centres, loyal to their own sub-communities.

In the 21st century, virtually every student must work at one or more. a -

, further watering down their "Queen's experience." This was anything but a universal pattern in the old days.

Furthermore, it was formerly easier to find pupon graduation. Today, a more problematic future often deflects undergraduates' attention from campus concerns. A related phenomenon – the growing practice of undertaking graduate studies – also undermines the centrality of Queen's. Loyalty to one's first college becomes diluted by attachment to other schools.

These are only some of the causes for the attrition or diminution of a healthy and binding attachment to, and identification with, Queen's. If school spirit – becoming a well integrated member of the university community – is deemed to be a useful byproduct of student life (I consider it invaluable), then one ought to seek redress.

The number and complexity of the causes for the decline in Queen's spirit preclude any simple or single solution. Does it make sense for RAQ, many of whose professorial, administrative and other members have a warm attachment to Queen's, to study this problem and seek solutions? It would, in fact, make a fine area for exploration by the Student/Retiree Committee we are developing with the Rector and the AMS.

JOHN MEISEL, Past-President

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Mark your calendar!

R Q , a a Monday, April 30, 2007 University Club

Bar 11:30 Lunch 12:30 Meeting 2:00

IN RECENT newsletters, we have reported on the Queen's Medical Plan, with particular reference to the 20% not covered when traveling outside the country. We have also told you that Trent Insurance, who previously provided such insurance at a 20% premium, no longer makes this available. Neither Queen's administration nor RAQ has been able to find any other Canadian insurance com-

pany willing to offer such a plan.

Recently, representatives of the Kingston Financial Centre kindly offered to look into this problem on our behalf. Their initial findings were provided at the information session for retirees held at the Donald Gordon Centre on Friday, November 10. They were assisted by Mr. Robin Ingle of Toronto, whose firm has provided travel and emergency medical insurance for many, many years.

These are some highlights of this presentation:

First, when traveling, you should have at hand your "GLOBAL MEDICAL ASSISTANCE" blue card issued by Great-West Life/MEDEX. In the event of a medical event requiring treatment that occurs outside Canada, you must call MEDEX within 48 hours. Your card shows your own ID number, the Queen's policy number (139046) and the various worldwide telephone numbers (in Canada and the U.S. it is 1-800-527-0218). Be prepared to use it in the province of Quebec.

The recently distributed Queen's "Group Insurance Plans" booklet has a refined definition of what constitutes a medical "emergency" occurring outside the country – see pages 14-16. If you want to be covered for a previously identified medical condition, it must be **a a** 

a a a a If you have questions about your specific eligibility, call Great West Life at 1-800-957-9777. One of the experts' main messages is to

be certain about your existing medical condition and your eligibility for a potential claim reimbursement *before departure.* To be denied by Great West Life, after incurring huge medical costs, could have catastrophic consequences.

All the outside experts were clear in their praise of retirees' coverage under the Queen's Medical Plan. First of all, we have medical insurance, which is not necessarily the norm, and the plan itself is seen as very good, with excellent provisions

If you are leaving Canada and wish to be covered for the 20% not available under the Queen's plan, you will NOT be able to purchase 20% coverage at 20% of the full premium. However, if you wish to protect this uninsured portion, there are plans available. Depending on your needs, age, health condition, willingness to accept a higher deductible, etc., you may be surprised at the relatively low cost and increased flexibility available with one of these individually owned plans.

\* Please understand that RAQ is not endorsing Kingston Financial Centre or Robert Ingle. We are simply making you aware that their services are available.

Also realize that We are are plans aQ



On September 22, a beautiful fall day, 16 RAQ classical music lovers and friends met for dinner at the Lake of the Mountain Inn before proceeding to the evening concert in Picton's beautiful Church of St. Mary Magdalene.

## 2007

#### Monthly Lunches:

Attendance continues Winter to be high at these informal meetings for lunch at various restaurants, usually on

the last Monday of each month. Everyone is welcome. E-mail Jessica Roddy, jroddy@kingston.net or phone 613-353-6959 to be notified of the lunch locations and/or to reserve your place.

#### Tour of 'new' Gordon Hall a, Ja ₄a

The Registrar's Office will welcome RAQeteers to this newly refurbished building, with its exterior restored to the original design.

Completed in 1911 and named after Principal D.M. Gordon, Gordon Hall was built with a gift from the Ontario Government and provided a home for the Department of Chemistry for some 90 years until Chemistry moved to Chernoff Hall.

The building was added onto several times. In 1964, an extra floor was added. The Gordon Annex was constructed 1947-1949. The Frost Wing, added in 1961 and named in honour of Grenville Barker Frost. was torn down in 2003. Gordon Hall has been completely redone since then, including removal of the anomalous extra floor. It now houses the Office of the University

Registrar, Career Services, the Dean of Student Affairs, and the School of Graduate Studies and Research.

The building faces Union Street opposite the Phys Ed Centre, between Nichol Hall and the Douglas Library. We will meet in the front lobby. If you plan to come, please e-mail morgana@post.queensu.ca or call Alison Morgan 613-544-9854

#### Queen's Theatre Matinee: Meet the Director of **Faustus**

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The Drama Department presents The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus by Christopher Marlowe (Elizabethan). Briefly stated, the main character "seeks the ultimate wisdom and with it the ultimate power, but becomes obsessed with power to the neglect of his spirit." Professor Jillian Kelly will be the guest director.

Price for seniors is \$8.00.

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"The Viennese Waltz"a talk by John Burge, Director, Queen's School of Music

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Join us for another music talk in the Graham George Seminar Room in

the W.D. Jordan Special Collections and Music Library, in the Douglas Library.

Professor Burge's presentation, which will include musical excerpts, will provide a glimpse into the flurry of activity that led to the waltz craze in Vienna and will trace the influence of the waltz on composers over the last 200 years. Even today, Vienna is called "The Waltz Capital of the World," and the works of the great waltz composers such as Johann Strauss Sr. and Jr. continue to be very popular and frequently performed.

To give us an idea of numbers, please contact Juliet Milsome either by phone 613-544-9893 or e-mail milsomej@post.queensu.ca if you plan to come..

As a prelude to this talk, you might consider attending "A Night in Vienna," the School of Music's gala fundraiser on February 9 and 10 in Grant Hall.

This event will feature Austrian music, song and dance, performed by the Queen's Symphony Orchestra, vocal students, alumni, faculty members and professional ballroom dancers. A dance floor will allow guests to dance to the music of Strauss and other Viennese

Specialty Austrian treats will be offered, plus a cash bar with Austrian beer and wine. For tickets for this event, contact the Performing Arts Office.

### Also, watch for details of upcoming "Monday Morning Forums"

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