Lessons from the Land

Connecting the dots between Memorial’s Department of Folklore and a growing food security movement demonstrates the value of getting back to our roots

A CHAT WITH MEMORIAL’S PRESIDENT
Q&A with Dr. Gary Kachanoski

2011—A SPACE ODYSSEY
A trip to the moon makes a stop in Labrador
Memorial University is havin’ a time. On August 8–12, 2012, we invite you to catch up with old friends and colleagues, attend class reunions, take educational tours of Newfoundland hosted by our faculty and professional guides, and enjoy plenty of exciting activities for the whole family. Whether you live here or abroad, Memorial welcomes you back with open arms.

Name: Gary Smart  
Graduating Class: 1985, B.Eng  
Favourite Song: Party All The Time - Eddie Murphy  
Fondest Memory of Memorial: Playin’ D&D in the tunnels with the boys. Gnarley.

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If you’ve ever tried to plant a garden in Newfoundland and Labrador, you know why it’s called the Rock. Shallow, stony and acidic, is one description of the soil conditions in this province. We dig in only to be pushed back.

Yet, we’ve persevered.

This edition of Luminus concentrates on the land, and in so doing, explores the relationship between our province and its university. The choice to dig in is evident in the incredible work being done at Memorial and by our alumni.

Research at Memorial is taking us to the moon by way of a 38 million year old meteorite impact site in Labrador, and our botanical garden is protecting endangered native plants. A career in adventure tourism has allowed Memorial alumna Sue Rendell to open the eyes of the world to this province, and our own Dr. David Quinton treats us to a special last word — an alumnus uniquely qualified to reflect on our connection to the land.

And while the vegetable gardens and flowers lie waiting for spring, we know they will return. Our confidence is based on the knowledge that we will continue to help them along. The Rock is a designation of place, but I believe it has always been better used to describe the people, our Memorial family among them, who have called it home.

DR. PENNY BLACKWOOD
DIRECTOR, ALUMNI AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT
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Memorial's Grenfell Campus will be busy over the next few months recruiting students for its first graduate program.

Memorial’s Senate has approved the master of arts in environmental policy program, the first master’s program in environmental policy in Canada. The program will give Grenfell a strategic recruitment and research advantage, and will also support student recruitment and retention by building on Grenfell’s strengths as a centre for environmental research and education in Atlantic Canada.

In addition, the program will attract a pool of graduate research assistants for faculty research projects, much needed support for Grenfell faculty members as they continue to develop their research agendas. The program addresses the need for increased capacity in environmental policy at the provincial, regional and national levels, and it will provide experiential learning opportunities for students through an internship component.

“There is a strong demand for the program, a point repeatedly stressed in consultations conducted across the province and country with representatives from governments and the non-governmental community,” said Dr. Mario Levesque, member of the Environmental Policy Institute (EPI) and one of the developers of the program. “There was specific support for a graduate internship as part of the program. Several government officials indicated that they would be willing to take on one or more interns to conduct research within their departments.”

Grenfell’s EPI is dedicated to researching critical environmental policy issues within the province of Newfoundland and Labrador with a focus on forestry, climate change, energy and related resource issues. This mandate includes analyzing current environmental policies, exploring innovative solutions, conducting and co-ordinating research, disseminating research results to both academic and general public audiences and contributing to provincial capacity in environmental policy research and analysis.

One of the EPI’s key objectives has been the development of the master’s program in environmental policy.

This program builds on the core strengths of the Grenfell Campus in environmental research and education including environmental policy, environmental studies, environmental science and sustainable resource management. The focus of the program is to bring the natural and social sciences together with considerations of environmental policy in order to inform decision-making. Students will take a set of core courses concentrating on policy processes and applied environmental problem-solving. A wide range of electives that address various environmental issues in sectors such as forestry, water and energy resources will also be offered.

Included in the program is a 12-week environmental policy internship with a relevant government office, non-governmental organization (NGO), community group or business. Students interested in forestry issues may intern with various government agencies, environmental NGOs, resource-based industries and businesses or any number of other organizations that have or wish to develop connections with Grenfell and the EPI. For students, the objective is connecting practical experience with classroom theory, and developing a better understanding of how one informs the other. In addition, that learning is accompanied by an opportunity to make a real contribution to progress on any number of environmental issues.

Since its announcement in April, 2011, the program has received significant attention and will have its first full class of students in fall 2012. More information about the program can be found at www.swgc.mun.ca/maep/Pages/default.aspx or by contacting Dr. Mario Levesque at mlevesque@grenfell.mun.ca.
For three months every summer, Dr. Barry Gaulton, BA’93, MA’97, PhD’07 gets to live every aspiring archaeologist’s dream — working on an active dig, in a beautiful location by the sea.

And as a result of a SSHRC standard research grant, he hopes to be able to shed more light on the shifting social and economic climate at Ferryland that began to occur in 1638. That’s when London-based merchant Sir David Kirke appropriated Sir George Calvert’s colony of Avalon, originally established in 1621.

“Kirke had new ideas on how to promote settlement and how to make money,” said Dr. Gaulton. “He was a merchant who purchased wine and was involved in the fishery. He taxed local residents, and ultimately made an enormous amount of money.”

Calvert, on the other hand, as one-time secretary of state for King James I, saw the colony of Avalon as a way of promoting England’s interests overseas and as a place of religious tolerance. However, he only managed to stick out one Newfoundland winter before returning to England.

The $109,000 grant will go towards additional excavations at Ferryland that Dr. Gaulton hopes can be carried out between 2011 and 2013. Archaeologists will focus on two different areas, both of which were initially occupied by the Calverts and later utilized and/or modified during the Kirke period. Determining why certain structures were modified through excavation and analysis will help Dr. Gaulton and his team unravel the operations of the two very different proprietors and their implications for other colonial residents.

Preliminary excavations inside one of the structures suggest Kirke was manufacturing his own lead tokens — a crude form of currency that turns out to be the oldest coinage minted in English colonial America.

“What we’re looking for is architectural evidence for changes in the former domestic and/or communal functions of the earlier Calvert era buildings to one that operated within the confines of the Kirke’s business practices. The artifacts should also mirror these changes and demonstrate differences in their form, function and quantity between the Calvert and Kirke occupations,” said Dr. Gaulton.

Dr. Gaulton acknowledges the strong partnership between the archaeologists and the Colony of Avalon Foundation that exists to preserve the site and develop tourism.

“It’s such a great example of a partnership between the community and the university—and we celebrated the 20th year of the dig in 2011,” he noted.
INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

AND WHY ROOT CELLARS REALLY DO ROCK
Our cultural heritage defines us. A living archive, it exists as a record of our past and present. Although artifacts and heritage buildings, the physical markers of our history, can often be restored, the knowledge, ideas and customs of our ancestors – the cultural intangibles – prove harder to conserve. The Department of Folklore at Memorial University has taken steps to ensure these critical aspects of our history and identity are preserved. A burgeoning green movement also demonstrates that the intangibles can teach us about the future.

Connecting the dots starts at Memorial with Dr. Gerry Pocius, MA’73. Ten years ago, Dr. Pocius represented the Department of Canadian Heritage in the drafting of a UNESCO policy on Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH). While the initiative eventually fell off the radar of the federal government, Dr. Pocius and Memorial’s Department of Folklore worked to establish this province as a leader in the field. Steady growth and provincial government support have resulted in an ICH advisory committee and a strategic plan that focuses on documentation, training and celebration. That plan was kick started in 2008 with the appointment of Dale Jarvis, MA’01 as the province’s first Intangible Cultural Heritage Development Officer.

Since then, a number of initiatives have brought attention to the preservation and celebration of what many refer to as our living heritage, the traditions and customs that are expressed in family events, community gatherings, language, local knowledge, song, food, beliefs and other cultural practices. For the past three years the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador has supported a folklife festival with a goal to celebrate these otherwise unspoken traditions. In 2011, the Seeds to Supper festival celebrated agricultural traditions past and present with a number of events and workshops. With a mandate to support a research project related to the festival theme, the decision was made to concentrate on the agricultural practices and traditions related to root cellars.

Crystal Braye, a graduate student in the Department of Folklore at Memorial, led the project on behalf of the province’s ICH office and in partnership with the Agricultural History Society of Newfoundland and Labrador. She and her colleague Julie Pomeroy, BA’10 did extensive research, interviewing people across the province about their experience with agricultural practices and traditions related to root cellars. The research continues to be a work in progress, but a detailed survey of the cellars, including architectural inventories and photographs, as well as audio files of the interviews, can be found at Memorial’s digital archive.

Crystal explained the rationale behind the root cellar project and why the work is of particular importance, both to the ICH initiative and in a broader sense.

“Root cellars are a great focus, even though they are physical, tangible things – it’s really about getting at all the stuff surrounding them, like farming traditions, gardening and of course the methods of constructing the cellars and understanding their use for food storage and preservation,” she said. “The fishery is such a focus of our heritage that no one really talks about the agricultural practices and traditions in this province. But they are so important and critical, not just to our history, but where we’re going and what we should be focused on. So the root cellars really gave us a tangible starting point from which to collect all that information.”

The value of cultural preservation in this case is compounded by the practical realities of the work. While issues surrounding health, energy costs, food safety and accessibility and rising food prices present themselves in the media, looking to our agricultural traditions may provide real solutions. The Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador (FSN) is leading the way. Since 1998, this membership-based, non-profit organization has been actively promoting community-based solutions to ensure access to healthy food. Root Cellars Rock is a recent FSN initiative and Sarah Ferber is the project co-ordinator for the program. She talked about the connection between root cellars and the food security movement.

“For us, the root cellar is a relevant symbol of Newfoundland and Labrador’s unique agricultural heritage and current potential. This province has many strong food traditions and a great deal of existing capacity, as illustrated by our long-time practice of keeping root cellars,” she said. “One project we’re involved in right now is developing a kit of eight workshops for community groups across Newfoundland and Labrador. They include hands on information to support building food skills and self-sufficiency. Things like container gardening, composting, seed saving, edible wild plants, preparing local vegetables, culinary herbs, safe canning and pickling – and of course root cellars and cold storage. Each of the workshops incorporates parts of our food heritage as a starting point for learning new skills.”

By David Pemey

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Crystal Brayreiterates that connection between present and past as something she took from her experience doing research around the province.

"In terms of our work, I’m hopeful about this project. There’s so much value in preserving this knowledge from the perspective of identity and our cultural heritage, but the fact that it leads to a discussion about current issues adds to the importance," she said. “It’s definitely part of a green movement. We’ve adopted so many modern technologies that are wonderful but they don’t have to be at the expense of some of the old ways. It’s interesting. It seems that to really make progress, we need to take a step back.”

For more information, visit www.mun.ca/ich/ collections.mun.ca/doodledaddle.blogspot.com/ www.rootcellarsrock.ca www.foodsecuritynews.com
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The climate change discussion, once focused on mitigation, is now raising the issue of adaptation. To inform that dialogue, scientists are attempting to understand how the global ecosystem might respond to a changing climate. Canada’s boreal forest is a critical piece of the puzzle.
Over 1000 km wide, the Canadian boreal forest exists as a massive tract, one that spans a distance reaching from Newfoundland and Labrador all the way to the far northern Yukon. It is described as the lifeblood for economies, the heartbeat of Aboriginal peoples and the lungs of the Earth; and from all these perspectives, the realities of climate change threaten its viability. Dr. Sue Ziegler’s work in the boreal forest of Newfoundland and Labrador is analyzing how a changing climate will affect the forest itself, and seeks insight into the greater implications of an altered ecosystem.

An associate professor in the Department of Earth Sciences at Memorial University and the current Canada Research Chair in Environmental Science, Dr. Ziegler’s research has a variety of applications. One aspect of her work looks at how specific features of the boreal ecosystem are affected by a change in temperature. By comparing zones of varying temperatures across the province’s boreal forest, her goal is to help forecast the future effects of climate change.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Boreal Ecosystem Latitudinal Transect (NL-BELT), part of the Canadian Forest Service’s National Network of Latitudinal Transects, was established a little over two years ago as a group of four study sites in western Newfoundland and southern Labrador. All are located within major river hydrologic regions and are situated along a vertical line running north to south. The most northerly site is in the region of the Eagle River near Cartwright, followed by Salmon River near Main Brook, Humber River and then the Grand Codroy as the most southerly location.

The NL-BELT links forest ecosystems that are similar in as many ways as possible in terms of species, age of trees, soil types, and slope aspect. The locations differ significantly in latitude and therefore climate, which is demonstrated by a range of more than 5 degrees [Celsius] in mean annual temperature among the research sites. Information about temperature, moisture and other weather related data is continuously monitored and compared across the BELT by Dr. Ziegler and her colleagues. Conditions in the warmer southern sites provide indicators that will help predict how climate change will affect those areas located further north.

“We’re hoping to discover indicators relevant to climate variation by looking across the transect for differences,” said Dr. Ziegler. “It’s risky because it’s big in scale, but we’re constraining it by combining what we do across the transect with experimentation in the lab.” By combining the two, she hopes to identify chemical indicators based on the lab work that can be used to make predictions, and then see if those hypotheses are confirmed in the field and over time.

Within this province, Dr. Ziegler is partnered with the Centre for Forestry Science and Innovation (CFSI) within the Department of Natural Resources and the Canadian Forest Service (CFS), to set up infrastructure at each location as well as coordinate with community groups and individuals who can help maintain the sites and collect samples. Dr. Ziegler and her group, including Memorial PhD candidate Jennifer Bonnell, M.Sc.’02, research assistant Jamie Warren and post-doctoral researcher Jérôme Laganière, are directly collaborating with researchers from the CFS Atlantic Forestry Centre in Corner Brook, CFSI, University of Kansas, and the University of South Carolina. These partnerships and collaborations are driving this recently funded, large scale Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) project.
But the scope of this project doesn’t end with these partnerships. Summer students, full-time employees, volunteers, and partners in the provincial Forestry Service at offices situated in NL-BELT communities are involved as well. Trained to assist in data collection and sampling, these individuals will also advise on any changes that may occur in the study areas, monitoring data loggers and other equipment that have been permanently established on the sites.

“The participation of people from the surrounding communities is very important. People living in the area can be aware of what we are doing and can participate as stewards of that area,” explained Dr. Ziegler. “There’s a real ownership to their involvement and they are extremely helpful in providing these services. We can’t be there all the time, and they have important insight gained from living in these regions.”

As part of her comparative analysis of data from across the NL-BELT, Dr. Ziegler is looking at the enormous reservoirs of carbon stored in boreal forest soils. Given that the four study sites are all located within major river hydrologic regions, another goal of the project is to improve our understanding of what happens to soil carbon in boreal forest ecosystems by linking the aquatic and terrestrial systems.

“Boreal reservoirs of carbon stored in peat and forest soils are enormous,” explains Dr. Ziegler. “When this organic carbon is converted to CO₂ by microbes in the soil and is released into the atmosphere, it ultimately plays a role in climate change. A potential for positive feedback exists where the CO₂ is released into the atmosphere and this greenhouse gas causes warming, which in turn causes microbes to convert more of the stored carbon to CO₂. So the real question here is whether there is evidence for such positive feedback and how it may or may not persist with climate warming”.

To answer these questions, Dr. Ziegler must determine what regulates the formation of carbon in the forest soils, and how it responds to climate warming. When those carbon reservoirs are extrapolated on a global scale, it becomes clear that these questions are very important to those studying and modelling climate change.

“One of the challenges we have in understanding this process lies in the fact that we can’t just go out and measure soil carbon and say it’s this amount now, and 10 years later re-measure and find out if it has been reduced”, she said. “The problem is that we are attempting to quantify a small change in a huge and varied expansive pool or reservoir, but given the large size of this pool, such a small change is very important but elusive.”

To address that challenge, Dr. Ziegler is taking samples from the aquatic systems draining from the land. Due to the homogeneous nature of the dissolved material in water, testing aquatic systems for the relevant chemical indicators is likely far more effective than punching out and testing samples of soil across the landscape. The latter approach typically yields many variable results even within a small area of the forest.

This work is ongoing, and Dr. Ziegler continues to actively address questions about how to identify reliable indicators of carbon formation and release in forest soils.

“One of the very long-term goals of this work is to discover what regulates the chemical composition of organic matter in streams,” she said. “Does the chemical information carried by water from soil upstream also carry signatures of environmental change that has occurred in the landscape? If we can reliably predict changes in soil through key chemical signatures, developing relationships between soil within the catchment areas with those in the associated streams will be the next key step. By developing such relationships, we may be able to monitor those very important yet elusive changes in the landscape relevant to climate and other aspects of environmental change.”

A weather station is used to collect data at the Salmon River region. In addition to these weather stations, temperature and moisture above and below ground are continuously monitored within the forest sites themselves to capture site-specific data required for all studies at these areas.
GETTING THE LAY OF THE LAND

An interview with Memorial’s President and Vice-Chancellor
Dr. Gary Kachanoski

Dr. Gary Kachanoski has seen more of Newfoundland and Labrador in 16 months than most people see in a lifetime. An accomplished soil scientist and university administrator from western Canada, Dr. Kachanoski took on the role of president in July 2010. Since that time, getting to know Newfoundland and Labrador and the people who call it home has been a priority for Memorial’s new president. In this conversation with Luminus contributor David Sorensen, BA(Hons.)’91, MA’04, Dr. Kachanoski talks about exploration and discovery, the opportunities that lie ahead and what has made this place the perfect new-found home.

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KACHANOSKI: I felt as though it was the right time in my career, contemplating becoming a president, and I was interested in leading a flagship, public teaching research university—one that had made, and was making, a significant difference in the community that it serves. Memorial has this tremendous reputation for having a special connection to and impact on the province and on the people who live here … and it was intriguing because it was so far away.

KACHANOSKI: Not really, but I think in that situation you’re never quite sure. You tend to ask yourself those questions—are you going to like it a lot? Are you going to fit in? Frankly, I was pleasantly surprised by how quickly this felt like home and now feel that it is home. The other thing that stands out for me is that each part of the province is so different. I’ve done a fair bit of travelling around the province so far. I’ve been up the Northern Peninsula, spent a lot of time in and around Corner Brook, some visiting around central and the Notre Dame Bay area, through Change Islands and Fogo, all over the Avalon and to Labrador probably six or seven times. The variety of natural beauty here is absolutely amazing, unsurpassed by other places I’ve been.

KACHANOSKI: That’s a good question and I think it speaks to what has always been a passion for me—and that’s being out on the water fishing. I know that may sound strange coming from a Prairie boy but that strong affinity has always been with me. My first degree was in aquatic biology and I worked for two summers for the Saskatchewan Fisheries Research Lab up in Northern Saskatchewan near the Northwest Territories. We have a cabin in Northern Saskatchewan, which is inaccessible by road, it’s about 50km over water, through islands and cross reefs—and it’s a wonderful backcountry place with great fishing. So that passion is certainly one of the things that made this a logical step. The history of this place, the incredible work being done at Memorial to address the challenges and opportunities presented by our oceans and fisheries, it’s a natural kind of synergy for me.

KACHANOSKI: Well, from a personal perspective, my wife Teresa is a visual artist, so where we live has to feed that part of the soul and of course St. John’s, and the province in general, provides a wonderful community for that. The depth and breadth of visual and literary arts and music in this province, and where it comes from, is tremendous. The other side is how I approach that as the president of Memorial. We have a responsibility to help the arts and culture thrive. And we’re talking in very broad strokes here, but I need to ensure that we continue to play an important role, particularly when it comes to enabling access to resources and expertise. There are many examples, but a very good one is our School of Music. The community uses the facilities, the school itself fosters the preservation and dissemination of traditional music and performance, and provides a platform and voice for that, and our students are going back into the community to perform and teach.

KACHANOSKI: I’ve talked about this many times, the appeal that has for me. This university is involved in so many aspects of life here in the province—I see new and different examples every day. In fact, one of the projects we’ve undertaken is a comprehensive engagement strategy to make sure we have a very clear understanding of everything we’re doing. As we go forward, we have to make sure we explicitly and deliberately connect the university to our community and continue to have the needs and values of our community reflected in our activities.

KACHANOSKI: Memorial has experienced incredible growth in recent years, growth made possible by tremendous support from the provincial government. To that end, infrastructure renewal is a big priority, particularly our need for a new science building. We’ve got some wonderful modern facilities but we need to do more—and there are a number of plans in the works. Of course, the big-picture focus places a high priority on our expertise and research capacity as it relates to oceans. That spans faculties and campuses, and connects to work in natural resource development and exploration, fisheries and species research of all kinds, marine conservation, aquaculture and much more. Also, our work in Labrador is connected to this. In and of itself, Labrador is a priority for us. We’ve doubled the budget of our Labrador Institute and are co-ordinating a wide range of activities in research, teaching and community service—just tremendous potential, and we are committed to continued growth in Labrador. These are just a couple of examples. It’s a very exciting time to be at Memorial University.
LUMINUS: This issue of the magazine explores our connection to the land, and your work as a soil scientist has some interesting connections to this theme. Can you talk about that?

KACHANOSKI: That’s something I’m always keenly interested in, soils and geological material, so I’ve had some fun travelling throughout the province and making some observations. We’ve been talking a little bit about fisheries and the oceans here, but the opportunities provided by the land are definitely not to be overlooked. There are some incredible initiatives in agriculture happening in this province. I’ve had an opportunity to see some of the things going on in the Codroy Valley area, and out around Cormack—and it’s certainly not limited to these areas. This is something we’re also working on at Memorial. We’re actually in the process of formulating a new research and education initiative for agriculture and forestry on the West Coast.

LUMINUS: You have said that Memorial’s success hasn’t been by accident. What do you mean by that?

KACHANOSKI: The history of Memorial is one where every segment of society has contributed to its progress and success, and the university has played a pivotal role in the province. The founding of this institution comes from a very personal and emotional place, and I believe Memorial is a true extension of the pride that people have for Newfoundland and Labrador. I’ve had an opportunity to meet alumni across this country and beyond, and that pride is unmistakable. They identify with the university and the province, and they want nothing more than to see Memorial grow and prosper, to continue to play a positive role in Newfoundland and Labrador.

LUMINUS: That’s a good note to end on, is there anything you’d like to add?

KACHANOSKI: It’s been a tremendous first year and a half. Both my wife and myself are so grateful for the generosity and the warm reception that we’ve enjoyed. I can only thank everyone for it—I know I have done it in a number of different forums during the time we’ve been here, but we’ve been welcomed with open arms and I really do appreciate that.
When the Memorial University of Newfoundland Botanical Garden was established in 1971, little was known about horticulture, habitat enhancement or natural history in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Since then, the garden has showcased and studied plants suitable for this climate. Techniques developed during the habitat enhancement of the garden itself have been used in habitat restoration projects across the province.

The garden’s plant breeding and selection program has resulted in the international release of the mock-orange (*Philadelphus*) Starbright and marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*) Himalayan Snow. Related to this is the trialing of new plant varieties developed by Ball FloraPlant, one of the world’s largest developers of new ornamental plants.

The MUN Botanical Garden is a beautiful place to visit, but there’s so much more. Whether its investigating the health benefits of native roses, developing *ex situ* conservation protocols for endangered endemic plants, or exploring the potential risks to Newfoundland and Labrador posed by invasive species, research is also an important priority at the garden.

www.mun.ca/botgarden/
This dwarf willow is listed by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) as an endangered species endemic to the Cape Norman region of Newfoundland’s limestone barrens. This unique plant is part of the garden’s ex situ conservation program.
Established as a memorial to the men and women of Newfoundland who served in the First World War, Memorial University College included among its early students several veterans of that war. Samuel J. Hefferton, MUC’28, was one of them.

On Aug. 9, 1949, Hon. Samuel J. Hefferton, Newfoundland’s Minister of Education, rose in the House of Assembly to introduce a bill entitled “An Act Respecting the University of Newfoundland.” Four days later, on Aug. 13, the bill became law and Memorial University of Newfoundland was born. It was most fitting that the bill to establish the new university was introduced by Hefferton, as he was an alumnus of its predecessor, Memorial University College, and a member of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment, whose dedication and sacrifice in the First World War the university honours.

Samuel James Hefferton was born in Newtown, Bonavista Bay, on March 28, 1896, the son of Dinah Jane Boucher and Jacob Hefferton. He was educated at the Church of England school in Newtown and began his career there, teaching younger children in the morning while attending his own classes in the afternoon. He began teaching full-time at Pound Cove in September 1912. Four years later he moved to St. John’s, where he joined the staff of The Evening Telegram. His employment there was interrupted on March 28, 1918, when he enlisted in the Royal Newfoundland Regiment.

Hefferton’s stay in the regiment was relatively short, as he was discharged as being unfit for active service on Sept. 30, 1918, because of his poor vision and inability to function effectively without glasses. He worked at the Department of the Militia for several months after his discharge before returning to The Evening Telegram, and was later editor of The Industrial Worker, a biweekly labour journal. He soon returned to teaching, a career that lasted until 1949, with several interludes during which he pursued higher education at Memorial University College (1926-1928), at Queen’s University in Kingston, Ontario and at the University of London in England.

He spent most of his teaching career on the East Coast of the island, serving at Salvage, Trinity, Catalina and Bay Roberts, with a brief stint in Labrador, before moving to Bishop Feild College in St. John’s in 1941. Two years later he became president of the Newfoundland Teachers Association, a position he held until March 31, 1949, when he resigned from teaching to accept J.R. Smallwood’s invitation to enter Newfoundland’s first post-Confederation cabinet as Minister of Education. He held that portfolio until December 1952 when he took on Municipal Affairs and Supply, where he was instrumental in promoting the benefits of incorporation to many Newfoundland communities. In April 1955, he added the responsibilities for health to his cabinet duties and carried both portfolios until 1957 when he became Minister of Public Welfare. During that time, he represented first Trinity North
(1949-1956) and then Trinity South (1956-1959) in the House of Assembly.

As Minister of Education in 1949 one of his first duties was to prepare the legislation necessary to turn Memorial University College into a degree-granting university. In his speech on second reading of the bill on Aug. 11, he stated “I believe that every child in Newfoundland or elsewhere should have equality of opportunity. … The university can be the centre of that equalizing opportunity. … Think of Memorial University as a symbol, always pointing to higher things, inspiring us, and the people whom we serve.”

After leaving political office in 1959, Hefferton became chair of the St. John’s Metropolitan Board and of the Provincial Planning Board. He retired from both in 1966 and spent his retirement years in St. John’s. Throughout a long and distinguished career, he gave back to his community in many ways. He served on the executive of such organizations as the Newfoundland Historical Society, the St. John’s Housing Authority and the Canadian Institute for the Blind, and spent eight years as president of the Great War Veterans’ Association. A long-time member of St. Michael and All Angels Anglican Church in St. John’s, he edited the parish newsletter for almost 20 years.

Hefferton married Minnie DeGrish (1892-1984) of Trinity at Catalina on July 3, 1918. They were the parents of two boys, Calvin and Harold, and one girl, Audrey. He died at St. John’s on Feb. 16, 1980. The following year his wife and daughter carried out one of his final bequests, and presented his personal library of some 3,000 volumes to Memorial University. Many of these became part of the holdings of the Centre for Newfoundland Studies, and each contains a special bookplate indicating its provenance. A small collection of his papers is part of the holdings in the QEII Library’s Archives and Special Collections division.
MAKING AN IMPACT ON SPACE EXPLORATION

BY KELLY FOSS

Fiscally prudent space exploration and an unquenchable thirst for knowledge about the moon are creating opportunities for Memorial in the unlikeliest of places.
The lunar rover delicately picks its way across the barren rock on the floor of the 38-million year old crater, a huge basin of fragmented rock shards and fused glass formed by the massive force of the meteor impact. This could be the moon. In fact, this is the enormous Mistastin Impact Crater in central Labrador.

Lunar orbiters have recently confirmed the presence of ice in the permanently shadowed craters of the moon's polar regions. Further studies of these craters are desired, but budget cuts call for fiscally prudent space exploration. This has raised the profile of Labrador's Earthbound crater, and for Memorial University, it has created a unique opportunity.

About 90 minutes by float plane north from Happy Valley-Goose Bay, the Mistastin Crater was first discovered in the 1960s and originally believed to be a volcanic formation. The crater appears as a huge ridge where, almost 38 million years ago, a meteorite's collision disgorged an immense area of melted rock.

Inside the ridge is the 16-kilometre-wide Mistastin Lake and near the centre of the lake sits a small island, formed when the rock rebounded as the crater was punched into the earth. The rock surrounding the Mistastin Crater is unique from a geological perspective because it is about one billion years younger than rocks found elsewhere in Labrador.

Recently, the Mistastin Crater has been a stand-in for one of the moon's craters to test scenarios in which rovers are deployed with and without astronauts.

Dr. Paul Sylvester is a professor with Memorial's Department of Earth Sciences who has spent several field seasons in Labrador exploring the site with the Canadian Space Agency (CSA) and a number of American and Canadian researchers from academia and industry. Dr. Sylvester explained that with its similar rock formations and feeling of isolation, exploring Mistastin is much like exploring the moon.

“People who want to explore the moon are interested in the South Pole-Aitken Basin,” he said. “If we were ever to have a moon base, it would probably be located in this area because of the possibility of finding water ice nearby. So understanding how to explore this place and how it was formed is very important.”
The CSA has established a niche for itself in engineering mechanical devices used in space missions. Dr. Sylvester says geologists like himself are often called in to help determine what these rovers need to be able to do and which tools they should carry.

“The project we did at Mistastin this summer was to test scenarios using rovers independently of astronauts, and also with astronauts, to see how those scenarios would work,” he said. “The University of Western Ontario (UWO) led the project out of a mission control in London, Ontario. The University of Toronto and MacDonald, Dettwiler and Associates Ltd. (MDA) designed and built the rover. Our work helped determine what the rover does, what its capabilities are, how rugged it should be, what features it should have and how the missions should be carried out.”

Not only will exploring the Mistastin Crater inform scientists about how to best explore the moon’s craters, it may be able to answer questions about how craters are formed in the first place, and better describe the forces that meteorites exert when impacting into planets.

“Earth science studies are often centred around oil and mineral exploration which may bring immediate benefits, but that will eventually come to an end,” said Dr. Sylvester. “Cratering is probably one of the most important geological processes and providing opportunities to expose students to it is very valuable. At Memorial University we must think broadly about our research, and developing technology to support space research will be very important to our long-term future. Even with the current global financial situation, the world will always have an interest in space. There is still a lot of very exciting science to be done and MUN can continue to play a role in that.”

CLOCKWISE: Dr. Paul Sylvester (left) and Marc Beauchamp sample sand grains from the Mistastin River, looking for fragments of the meteorite that made the crater.
PHOTO: Cassandra Marion

Simulated astronaut Raymond Francis (UWO) samples impact rock regolith (soil) at Mistastin for chemical analysis in the laboratory. The Apollo astronauts had difficulty taking samples with a tube corer device because it became stuck as the soil was compacted. Research is needed to develop better sampling devices for astronauts returning to the moon.
PHOTO: Annemarie Pickersgill

Part of the field team at Mistastin in 2010, evaluating the geology at prospective sites for the rover deployment in 2011. (L - R): Niko Gorjup, Stuart Gilder, Ho-Kong Ng (MDA), Chris Shaver (UWO), Cassandra Marion, M.Sc. ’09 (UWO), Marianne Mader, M.Sc. ’05 (UWO), Annemarie Pickersgill (UWO).
PHOTO: Marc Beauchamp
Once a year, Kathleen Graham Birchall makes a journey to St. John’s from her home in Kingston, Ont. She has a standing luncheon date at Memorial University, at an event held to celebrate the current and former winners of the Graham Family Scholarship.

On Sept. 19, Mrs. Graham Birchall joined Memorial’s Vice-President (Academic) Dr. David Wardlaw and other honoured guests to congratulate Sarah Farewell, the 2011-2012 recipient.

Mrs. Graham Birchall established the award in 2003 in partnership with her son, Dr. David Graham, the former dean of arts at Memorial. The scholarship was established to provide an annual award of $2500 to an outstanding Memorial undergraduate student majoring in French studies, an area of study for which Dr. Graham found support lacking during his time at Memorial.

“My son was visiting me in Ontario a few years ago and at the time he was teaching in the French department here at Memorial. He mentioned that there was a need for more scholarships in that area,” said Mrs. Graham Birchall. “I told David that if he contributed $5000, then his mother would do the same,” she said with a smile. “Within a matter of weeks he wrote me and explained that he had set up a plan with the administration by contributing a portion of his salary every month. I gave my $5000. Today we awarded our eighth scholarship.”

Mrs. Graham Birchall is well versed in the art of giving. The Graham Family Scholarship at Memorial is one of four scholarships that she has established across Canada. The practice of celebrating with the scholarship recipients is also carried out at Queen’s University and the University of Winnipeg. Those opportunities to meet and stay connected to students are very important to Mrs. Graham Birchall.

“Of course it’s very rewarding for me to see their progress, but I think it’s more important for them as a group to interact with each other,” she said. “I like to include the recipients from previous years at these luncheons, because I think the effect they have on the younger people, the more recent winners, is really wonderful. Interacting with someone a little older, and seeing their progress, I believe it serves as a strong motivation for the younger ones. Far more than the words of someone who is too removed from their experience.”

As the 2011-2012 recipient of the Graham Family Scholarship, Ms. Farewell was appreciative following the luncheon.

“It feels really good. Of course it’s wonderful to win the scholarship, but being recognized like this makes it extra special,” she said. “Mrs. Graham Birchall is a phenomenal woman. To get an opportunity to meet her and understand where she’s coming from with the scholarship means a lot. It’s made it a lot more personal. I feel like it’s lifted me up that much more.”

Mrs. Graham Birchall insists that she is the one who has received the most from the experience.

“It’s been a vision for me, and it goes back a long way. I’ve had these universities in my life and they are all special for different reasons. I thought, why not bring them together - form a community of scholars. It’s been a wonderful experience. I’m lucky. Not everyone gets this chance.”
After 22 years, I still love to get out in the kayak and do hikes and show off this incredible place.
When Sue Rendell, B.Ed.’82, BPE’82, MPE’86 graduated from Memorial University she was armed with skills learned in the classroom and on the court. As well as holding three degrees from Memorial, she is also one of the most accomplished volleyball players ever to represent Memorial and Newfoundland and Labrador. Member of two AUAA championship teams, a CIS Second Team All-Canadian, member of Canada’s Senior National team—these are just a few of her athletic accolades.

One might wonder how that young MUN grad and energetic athlete would feel if she knew years later she’d be running a highly successful experiential adventure tourism company amidst the Appalachian Mountains in Gros Morne, NL. Sue and her partner Bob Hicks are pioneers in the experiential adventure travel business and have built a brand that endures in this province.

A quick review of the Gros Morne Adventures website shows some now familiar images: a lone kayaker on Bonne Bay, hikers reaching the summit of Gros Morne Mountain, back country skiing along the Tablelands. While Sue Rendell has been showing off this part of the world since 1990, images like these have become much more familiar in recent years, playing a starring role in the province’s successful advertising campaigns. But many of those shots in holiday albums and on desktops around the world feature clients of Gros Morne Adventures — long before these images developed an iconic status in print and on television.

“At a Toronto trade show 20 years ago, someone remarked, ‘New Zealand!’ about the images we were displaying at our booth,” she says. “When we corrected them and said ‘Newfoundland’, they walked away. The perception was a wet, cold place where there was nothing to do. We had to change that perception to grow our business, and we worked hard to do that. Now Newfoundland is a hot spot, and the image of the province has been transformed.”

The diversity of experiences that come with a trip to Gros Morne has been central to their business model. They have conveyed that message to potential visitors, and they have made it a reality by creating accessible experiences that meet the needs of their guests.

“You can walk along the volcanic coast one day, along the Arctic alpine another day, the earth’s mantle on another and through the boreal forest as well. You can experience completely different ecosystems and views. That’s the striking thing about Gros Morne,” she says. “These days, Gros Morne is more of an attraction destination, and we’ve adapted to focus more on the two and three hour kayaking and hiking tours that give visitors added flexibility in how they use their time.”

While Sue’s success is linked to tenacity, hard work and a keen understanding of the tourism business, she credits her time at university, as both a student and an athlete, for playing an important role. It was at Memorial that she explored her interests in recreation and education, and the path to adventure and experiential tourism progressed naturally from there.

After graduation her career took her to the West Coast, where she taught in local schools, worked for the provincial Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation and also helped develop a program with the College of the North Atlantic. “The program I helped develop, in adventure tourism and outdoor recreation, is still going strong, and over the years we have hired many of its graduates for our business,” she notes.

Hiring graduates and students isn’t the only way Sue Rendell has given back to the next wave of recreation specialists, leaders and entrepreneurs. The pay-it-forward approach is a common theme among Memorial alumni, and Sue Rendell has adopted that philosophy. “We’ve had many young entrepreneurs come to us for advice, and we always try to help them whenever we can.”

Talking about her life and work on the province’s West Coast, Sue doesn’t make a clear distinction between the two, and it’s something she credits for the passion she and Bob still have for their business.

“Bob and I are extremely hands on with this business, and after 22 years, I still love to get out in the kayak and do hikes and show off this incredible place. When it’s busy, it’s very busy. A regular day during the season starts at 7 a.m. and ends at 8 p.m.,” she says. “It’s funny, people often assume we leave in the winter, go south somewhere for a break. During the winter we get out our back country and downhill skis. This is truly a lifestyle for us, and that makes it very rewarding.”

For more information, visit www.grosmorneadventures.com.
1 | **Marjorie Doyle, MA’87**, has co-written/directed (with her brother John) a 45-minute documentary called *Regarding Our Father: The Life and Times of Gerald S. Doyle*. It tells the story of her father, using colour footage he shot in pre-Confederation outport Newfoundland.

2 | **Paul Coombs, B.Comm.(Co-op.)’94**, was recently named chief financial officer of Canada Fluorspar Inc.


4 | **Andrew Dunsmore, B.Mus.(Hons.)’04**, was appointed percussionist with the Montreal Symphony Orchestra in March 2011. Andrew holds a master’s in music from the University of Toronto and a diploma in orchestral performance from the Glenn Gould School.

5 | **Todd Dennis, B.Sc.’85**, has been serving the city of Guelph, Ont. as a ward councillor since 2010. Successful in his first attempt at running for political office, the Nicholsville, NL native is proud to represent his constituents in the city he now calls home.

6 | **Dr. Donald B. Dingwell, B.Sc.(Hons.)’80**, is the new secretary general of the European Research Council. Dr. Dingwell is a prominent geoscientist currently heading the Department for Earth and Environmental Sciences at Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich, Germany.

7 | **Carla Colbourne, B.Comm.(Hons.)(Co-op.)’06**, has been named senior analyst in the new Bermuda office of K RyS Global.
IN MEMORY (RECORDED FROM JANUARY 2011 – JULY 2011)

IDA MAY (DEE) BARTLETT, MUC’43  
July 31, 2011
RAYMOND CALVIN BREWER, BA’00  
April 23, 2011
JOHN MICHAEL (MITCH) BRISON, BA’82  
HARRIET VIOLET CLARKE, BA(Ed.)’73, B.Ed.’85  
Feb. 8, 2011
J. DESMOND (DES) COUSENS, PhD, Dip.Eng.’66  
July 10, 2011
DAVID WILLIAM CURRAN, BA’69  
June 29, 2011
SHIRLEY GRACE DUBE, BA(Ed.)’67  
March 11, 2011
JOSEPH (JEO) GERARD ENGLISH, P.Eng. B.Eng.’83  
July 5, 2011
EDWARD P. FARRELL, B.Ed.’73  
May 16, 2011
EDWARD PATRICK (RICK) FIFFIELD, BA’72  
May 14, 2011
ALMA PRISCILLA (NIE BURRY) FORD, MUC’40  
Jan. 17, 2011
JEFFREY PATRICK GALLANT, BPE(Co-op.’09  
March 21, 2011
JOSEPH THOMAS GEORGE, BA(Ed.’85  
ROY GREENING, B.Voc.Ed.’88  
April 1, 2011
DOROTHY GERTRUDE HALLERAN, B.Voc.Ed.’79  
April 14, 2011
ANNE COLEEN BUTLER (NIE BRYANT) HALLIDAY, BA’95  
April 23, 2011

Gerald Lloyd Hancock, BA(Ed.’66, BA’81  
July 12, 2011
ALMA BLANCHE HARBIN (NEE LAITE), MUC’46  
April 16, 2011
SYED ARIF HASNAIN  
(Fmr) professor of acting SWGC  
April 7, 2011
DR. DAVID HAWKINS, Dip. Med.’55  
(Fmr) Dean of Medicine  
Feb. 12, 2011
ERIC ARTHUR JANES, BA(Ed.’69  
Feb. 22, 2011
EILEEN KELLY, MUC’44  
April 11, 2011
MADONNA JEAN KING (NEE ABBOTT)  
B.Sc.’71, July 31, 2011
VAL KINSELLA, BA’87, B.Ed.’88  
July 31, 2011
MAUDE (GREEN) LEGROW, MUC’41  
March 28, 2011
BARBARA EDITH LILLY, BN’82  
June 15, 2011
BETTY MANDVILLE (NEE MAHONEY)  
BA(Ed.’82, May 14, 2011
MICHELLE DENISE MAYO, B.Ed.(Primary)’93  
GWENDOLYN LOUISE MILES, MUC’42  
May 2, 2011
CHRISTINE ANNE MOUSSEAU, B.Ed.’95  
March 13, 2011
RICHARD PAYNE, BA(Ed.’67, BA’69  
June 12, 2011
NEIL PELLEY, BA’72, B.Ed.’73  
March 31, 2011

ELIZABETH (BETTY) PEMBROKE, BA(Ed.’86  
May 12, 2011
ERICKA PIEROWAY, BA’91  
May 20, 2011
THOMAS POPE, PhD, BA(Ed.’60, BA’65  
Jan. 30, 2011
SHEILA MARIE (NEE CARROLL) POWER  
BA(Ed.’74, April 3, 2011
SHARON MARIE POWER-PIERCY, BA’78  
B.Ed.’78, M.Ed.’05, June 4, 2011
MICHAEL ALLAN SCAPLEN, B.Com.’75  
May 14, 2011
PERCY BRUCE SHORT, B.Sc.’76  
July 20, 2011
ERIC WALTER SPURRELL, MUC’49  
May 13, 2011
MALCOLM BRINTON SQUIRES, BA’66  
HUBERT R. THOMAS, BA’64, BA(Ed.’64, GDE’72  
April 9, 2011
PATRICIA MARY (BRETT) THORNHILL  
BA(Ed.’74, BA’76, March 13, 2011
DR. BRUCE VIRGO  
(Fmr) professor, School of Pharmacy  
March 3, 2011
DR. HARRISON HEDLEY WAY, MUC’39  
(RET.) professor, Faculty of Education  
July 16, 2011
JEFFREY J. YOUNG, B.Com.’72, B.Ed.’74  
June 4, 2011

EVENTS AND REUNIONS

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY AFFINITY NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR DINNERS  
The Alumni Affinity events are the signature alumni events held throughout the year. Since  
their inception these events have generated funds for scholarships at Memorial while also  
providing a forum for networking among alumni and friends across Canada and in the U.K.  
Our London event is scheduled for March 23, 2012 and will feature Memorial alumnus and  
world-renowned author, historian and journalist Dr. Gwynne Dyer as our keynote speaker.  
In Ottawa on Nov. 1, 2012, Canada’s Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and president of  
the Queen’s Privy Council for Canada, the Honourable Peter Penashue, will address alumni  
and friends.

Stay tuned for more details on the 2012 events that will bring together alumni in London  
(U.K.), Calgary, Toronto, Halifax and Ottawa. For regular updates or to register for any of  
these events, visit www.munalum.ca.
HAVIN’ A TIME: REUNION 2012
(St. John’s - Marine Institute, Elizabeth Avenue campus and Corner Brook – Grenfell Campus) Aug. 8-12, 2012

Renew your connections with alumni and friends on a grand scale! This first-of-its-kind reunion will bring together all faculties, years and classes for a celebration filled with Memorial spirit and pride. On Aug. 8-12, 2012, we are inviting alumni, as well as current and retired faculty and staff, to come to Memorial. Under the theme of Havin’ a Time, there will be tours, learning experiences, faculty/school reunions, family activities and more. It promises to be a fun-filled event for all!

For more information, visit www.munalum.ca or sign up to receive direct updates by contacting reunion2012@mun.ca.

DARE TO: THE CAMPAIGN FOR MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY

The biggest fundraising campaign in Memorial’s history was launched on Nov. 1, 2011 at The Rooms in St. John’s. Dr. Gary Kachanoski, president and vice-chancellor, along with General Rick Hillier (retired), Memorial’s chancellor and campaign chair, were joined by Premier Kathy Dunderdale and a large group of donors and special guests to celebrate the public launch of Dare To: The Campaign for Memorial University.

With a $50 million private sector fundraising goal focused on student financial support and academic excellence, as well as physical infrastructure, the campaign is part of an overall redevelopment initiative totalling over $250 million. Investment in scholarship and bursary funding, research chairs, professorships and fellowships, and improvements to the quality of facilities will help to position Memorial as a destination of choice for academics, students and staff from around the world.

The campaign was launched with $36.5 million already having been raised, including donations totalling $1.2 million from the internal university community.

Government has committed $200 million toward expansion and renovations across Memorial’s campuses. Projects include the St. John’s and Grenfell Campus student residences, the Grenfell Campus academic building, the Faculty of Medicine expansion in St. John’s, and the creation of the new Interdisciplinary Research Centre in Human Genetics.

Memorial will reach out to its alumni in the coming months, with regional campaigns in St. John’s, Corner Brook, Halifax, Toronto and Calgary.

For more information, please visit the campaign website at www.dareto.ca
OTHERWORLD

BY ANNE SIMPSON

~IN MEMORY OF ANNETTE AHERN~

You opened it
closed it, opened
another door. Frostfurred, wintered. Whoever leaves, returns
with hands of cloud. Undone.

Any face holds another face, the one before birth.

Rippled, lucent,
a current under ice. Who speaks of endings?

Pins flung against glass, snow translated to ice translated to rain.
Passages of light, grey-hemmed.

Spun, spinning—ecstasy
of whirl. Pulled underside of cloud, spiralled white. Storm
turn of a dervish,

otherworlded world.

Who speaks of endings speaks beginnings.
Hear it

against glass. Rain, its ten thousand words. You’re translated—

wavefroth tumbled in and in and in.

Springsurge and ebb. Out and out and out.
Foam’s lacelapped hem on sand.

Othervoice. This
dervished water, spun skirt. A trace,
so unfolded it’s almost gone.

Surge and ebb.

Speech of sea fronds,
Speech of water over sea fronds.

Unnamed trace. Glovepull of the vernal turn, a moon
so tender, unnamed. Unvoiced O.

Only this,
how gone you are.

How far

you’ve travelled. Beyond winter melt, sprung light, into air. Absence, presence, absence.

Gusted across water.
Wind to ocean, ocean to wind, wind to ocean.

Afterwards,

still,
still,
still.

Glassy surface,
unnamed traces in a glassy surface. In and in and in.

As if a door opened,
as if you went through.
Cloudy underside of breath. Hear it, no sound.

A door, opened. How unreturned you are, and yet—

Bent passages of light, grey-hemmed, blurred, as if you were a word in the language of rain.

Or the laddered wing of a heron, blurred, rising, the word for lifted.

Unlocked, whatever was locked. Ajar.

Scribbled curls of seaweed, untethered ligature. Summered air, swim of tide.

Rose-dusked hour of not-quite. Wind, a breath, as if you were cloudbushed distance, unfolded, almost gone. Wind to ocean, ocean to wind, wind to ocean. Utterly open.

as if you were the word for open.


Her poetry has been awarded the Griffin Poetry Prize, while her short fiction has received the Journey Prize and her second novel, Falling, was awarded the Dartmouth Award for Fiction and was longlisted for the Dublin IMPAC Literary Award.

Anne Simpson was Memorial’s writer-in-residence for the fall 2011 semester.
I pulled over to the side of the road where a little girl was selling bakeapples. When she told me the price I was a bit shocked. “My they’re a bit expensive,” I said. “Yes,” she agreed, and added, “Dey ain’t coloured gold for nuttin!” I grinned and handed over the cash. The impish little Eliza Doolittle knew the value of this land of ours.

Many early visitors and explorers didn’t. Newfoundland and Labrador is desolate and unproductive, they said, describing it as a land of fogs, bogs and dogs — the land God gave to Cain. Well, if Cain had been picking bakeapples on his property last year, he would have done all right. I know one fellow who gathered 100 gallons — and I don’t know how many partridgeberries.

We kept a barrelful of partridgeberries in water in our basement when I was young. Every day after school I’d sneak down to scoop a handful or two. I’ve since discovered they are a nutritious snack chock full of good things — though with my grubby paws it’s a wonder I didn’t poison everyone in the house.

With the province abuzz with talk of zillions of dollars from oil and iron and hydro-electricity it may seem strange to write about berry picking.

Yet the theme of this issue of Luminus is the land and our wild orchards — the bogs and barrens — surely deserve honorary mention.

To our ancestors who sailed here as migratory fishermen from England, Ireland and France, the land probably wasn’t important. They came to fish — out in the spring, back home in the fall. The land in the new found land was irrelevant. Filling the holds of their vessels with salt cod was all that mattered.

It changed drastically when women and children arrived and people began to overwinter and put down roots. Peat from the bogs enriched with kelp and capelin produced potatoes, turnips, cabbage, carrots. Kitchen gardens sprouted among the boulders. Root cellars dug into the turf kept the crops from freezing in winter. Men travelled into the country to hunt caribou and partridge and to cut timber and firewood.

Many families fishing on exposed headlands moved to winter homes in the forest to be sheltered from the winds and to be near sources of firewood.

The land was becoming as important as the sea.

It wasn’t always easy though, to find good sources of timber on parts of the rocky coast. Even firewood could be a problem.

I commented on the crooked sticks one old fellow had piled in a firewood teepee.

“Yes, my son”, he agreed. “I’ve got every letter in the alphabet except an I.”

Despite the toughness of climate and geography, our people survived and a distinct culture evolved — one that blended the land with the sea.

Land and Sea — that’s what we called the television program I helped pioneer in the 60s. We soon discovered we’d unlocked a treasure trove of stories, one that fuels the program to this day.

At times I’ve worried about the ephemeral nature of television. A half an hour minus openings, closing credits and commercials and we’re gone. We’re will-o’-the-wisps. With a weekly show you’re lucky to get two days to research. We skim the surface.

The university was always a source of ideas and information yet we were at the beginning a bit wary of academics.

Then came Jon Lien, out in boat helping fishermen untangle whales, Shannon Ryan with his encyclopedic knowledge of seals and salt fish, Gordon Handcock and John Mannion to steer us through our roots programs in England and Ireland, with on camera stars Aly O’Brien and Otto Tucker.

Professors all!

As this issue of Luminus clearly shows, from meteorites in Labrador to root cellars on the island, professors and students at MUN continue to strive to better understand and help develop the potential of this land of ours.

And as my little bakeapple entrepreneur might say, PROPER TING. ☀
Memorial@where you need to be.

Whether you are balancing a hectic schedule or are in a different time zone than your professor, online and distance education offers the flexibility and convenience of completing your program from a top Canadian university. With Memorial@Home™, take the same course, from the same professor, while completing your degree from Memorial University, wherever.

To discover more about online and distance education opportunities, visit www.delts.mun.ca
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