

MEMORIAL LEGACIES



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Your legacy, your stories, our future

Forging a future for students

Ada Green-Nemec's story inspires a new generation at Memorial

“**T**ake a moment, step back, and remember what you learned. Think about it and do what needs to be done.”

That's how third-year nursing student Jessica Stephenson explains her approach to assisting with patient trauma. The no-nonsense mindset will serve her well in the surgery or the emergency units where she hopes to work following graduation.

As a recipient of the Green Family Scholarship at Memorial University, Ms. Stephenson shares that fearless attitude with the late Ada Green-Nemec, whose legacy gift made Ms. Stephenson's scholarship possible.

“Winning the Green Family Scholarship was a relief because it covers the financial aspect of my degree,” said Ms. Stephenson. “I can focus strictly on my studies, and I don't have to worry about finances. I'm very thankful; given the challenges of the degree, it would be very difficult to make time for studying and clinical prep if I had to do that while working part time.”

Hailing from Lethbridge, NL, Ms. Stephenson was moved by Ms. Green-Nemec's story, which resonated with her as a fellow resident of the Bonavista Peninsula.

It's hard to do justice to Ms. Green-Nemec's story in a few paragraphs – it could fill volumes. She was one of a kind. Heiress of a centuries-old blacksmithing family, Ms. Green-Nemec was an intrepid solo world traveller, and spent years navigating the seas of knowledge in her career as a librarian.



Bachelor of Nursing student Jessica Stephenson

Born in Boston in 1925 to Andrew and Jessie Green of Trinity, NL, she moved back to Trinity with her family at a young age so that Andrew could help his father with the Green Family Forge. The forge had been in continuous operation by the Green family since before 1750. The forge produced hardware for carriages and domestic purposes, but the main of the business was in creating fittings for schooners and other vessels – including the sort that Ada might use for her travels.

Ada would not be tethered to the forge. After moving to St. John's to finish high school, Ms. Green-Nemec entered Memorial College in 1942 and completed a bachelor of arts in history and French in 1944 after transferring to Mount Allison University in New Brunswick. She discovered a love for library science that she would pursue through a bachelor of library science degree from McGill University in Montreal, completed in 1948.

Back in St. John's, Ms. Green-Nemec put her training to work at Memorial College's library from 1948-1950. While she eventually finished her career at Memorial University, she spent many years working abroad.

Ms. Green-Nemec's penchant for travel was not for the faint of heart, particularly as she preferred to book passage on ocean freighters. During the period from 1950-1965, Ms. Green-Nemec travelled and worked in libraries from the University of Massachusetts and Bard College in New York to the Bureau of Statistics library in Oslo, Norway, all the way to the Fisheries Library in Western Australia. She was



especially fond of Norway, taking several trips there. She retired from Memorial University in 1972 and married 10 years later, three years shy of her 60th birthday.

The Green Family Scholarship was established by a bequest from Ms. Green-Nemec to support undergraduate students from the Bonavista Peninsula.

While she may share some of Ms. Green-Nemec's fearlessness, Ms. Stephenson chooses to stay closer to home, hoping to work in the Dr. G.B. Cross Memorial Hospital in Clarenville. It seems the two women also share a strong sense of self-determination.

"I made up my mind to be a nurse when I was in kindergarten," laughs Ms. Stephenson. "And ever since, I've been too stubborn to change my mind!"

Taking the scenic route

Rick and Nancy Flynn's legacy gift will support graduate students

Rick Flynn knows from experience that a road worth travelling comes with unexpected turns, and it may take longer than imagined to reach your destination.

A Memorial University alumnus, Mr. Flynn got the idea for a cross-country cycling trip after completing a bachelor of commerce degree. Life intervened, and instead he took a job that would lead to a career in the aviation industry. Eleven years later in 1993 Mr. Flynn realized his dream by joining a group that cycled

across the country raising funds for the Queen Elizabeth II Health Sciences Centre in Halifax.

He wasn't just spinning his wheels – he raised around \$10,000.

Philanthropy is in Mr. Flynn's nature, alongside a zest for exploration and discovery. He and his wife Nancy have made a donation to Memorial University that will be supplemented by a legacy gift, recognizing Memorial's role in his career success.

With an endowment generating \$5,000 in annual scholarship money for mature graduate students, the Flynn's gift recognizes the value of investing in a student who may not follow a conventional path to higher education.

Without role models in his family pushing the idea of university, the prospect of attending Memorial piqued Mr. Flynn's curiosity on a visit to the St. John's campus in 1969.

"I had a teacher, Mr. Carson, who organized a week-long study trip," says Mr. Flynn. "It was a four- or five-day visit to Memorial. We stayed in a dorm and were shown around campus. It spurred me to consider higher education."

That journey of discovery hit a few detours on the road. Starting university in 1970 at the age of 17, Mr. Flynn found his focus wasn't there.

He left after a year, eventually ending up back in his hometown of Stephenville Crossing, NL, working as a power engineer at the linerboard mill in Stephenville. With the mill's closure in 1978, Mr. Flynn had a half-year severance and time on his hands, and he and his wife Nancy relocated to St. John's. She worked as a nursing assistant at the Janeway Children's Health and Rehabilitation Centre, while he finished his degree graduating in 1982.



Rick and Nancy Flynn

"I was a mature student living off campus with my wife, so I was a bit removed from the core group of my class. I was focused on studying. There was a real sense of responsibility on my part. Nancy supported me, doing shiftwork at the Janeway. I owe her a lot of credit!"

Retiring in 2019 from his role as Executive Vice-President and Chief Development Officer with Chorus Aviation gave Mr. Flynn time to reflect on giving to Memorial. "Memorial University plays a large role in Newfoundland and Labrador by creating new leaders and being a centre of innovation. I'm really impressed with the way things have evolved there. The young entrepreneurs and innovators that are coming out of Memorial really make me proud. I have no hesitation in supporting such an institution, especially one that helped launch my career."

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The generosity of our donors creates incredible opportunities for student success and 100% of every donation goes to the chosen award or intended area of support. For more information about giving to Memorial University, or to make a donation to support our students, please visit <https://www.mun.ca/givel>.

Happy new year! Thank you for reading this latest edition of Memorial Legacies, which has an updated look for 2024. I hope you enjoyed learning about two high-spirited world-travellers, Rick Flynn and Ada Green-Nemec, both of whose gifts are transforming the lives of Memorial University students.

A new year often means new resolutions, and for some that might also mean it's time for making or revising a will. If you are thinking about doing so, and are considering a legacy gift to Memorial, please reach out to our office. Every gift, regardless of size, makes a difference to students like Ms. Stephenson.

Best wishes for 2024!

Catherine Barrett

Senior Development Officer, Planned Giving

Creating an Endowment

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