PRESCRIPTION FOR POSITIVITY

The mountain tried to conquer Dr. Katie Combaluzier.
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“I get to be inspired every day by the women who come through the doors here,” says Susan Belyea, director, Ban Righ Centre and Foundation. As the Centre turns 50, we meet some of those women.
On Campus

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A compendium of the latest Queen’s news – and the people and things that are making it.

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Life is a highway for the School of Computing’s Autonomous Robots Research Group.

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Kwela Brews supports women practising the art of brewing traditional African beer.

07 “It began at age six when I found a pair of mating Cecropia moths ... I was enchanted by their size, colour, and smell.”
— DR. PAUL HEBERT, P. 35

In Focus
Katie Combaluzier, photographed at Groupe de Médecine Familiale de Gatineau in Gatineau, Que., by Koko King on Dec. 19, 2023.

Photographer Koko King captured Dr. Combaluzier in her office on a dark winter night. There was no natural light inside the clinic, no time for a change of clothing, and no backdrop other than sterile medical rooms. But despite the less-than-ideal conditions for a photography shoot, Ms. King captured a moment in time that exuded both the defiance and joy that are part of Dr. Combaluzier’s story. “Katie arrived poised and focused after a full shift at the hospital,” recalls Ms. King. “We took some time to warm up. But Katie has a distinct energy, a rebelliousness, that I wanted to capture. She is bewitching – her strength and grit. I tried to bottle that essence in the photographs we took that night.”

Work in Progress
What happens when your doctor experiences cognitive overload?

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About the Cover

Katie Combaluzier, photographed at Groupe de Médecine Familiale de Gatineau in Gatineau, Que., by Koko King on Dec. 19, 2023.
The presence of international students on Canadian university and college campuses became a matter of broad public interest when, this past January, the federal government imposed a cap on the number of study visa applications it would process annually for at least the next two years. This year the number of visas issued nationally will decline by approximately 35 per cent over 2023.

One stated reason for the imposition of the cap is that international enrolments have grown dramatically in recent years, giving rise to concerns about the impact on housing, about abuses of the postgraduate work-permit system, and about the ability of institutions to provide appropriate levels of support for such large numbers of students from abroad. Queen’s international undergraduate enrolment peaked in 2019 at a little over 14 per cent and remains well below that level today, so it is low by comparison with peer universities and especially Ontario’s colleges, at least one of which exceeded 70 per cent in 2023.

There has been much talk about “bad actors” at the root of this issue, and it is undoubtedly true that responsibility for the situation Ottawa is trying to address is not evenly distributed between or within the university and college sectors. But the problem originates in an impoverished and dehumanizing attitude to international students that predates current excesses and abuses, and in recent decades has been held to varying degrees by “bad actors” and governments alike: namely, that international students’ primary value is economic, that their elevated tuition fees are at best a boon to Canadian taxpayers who can invest proportionately less in higher education, and at worst a source of profit to private-sector operators.

In its first sentence, the Government of Canada’s news release announcing the caps on Jan. 22, 2024, acknowledged there is more to the issue than money. “International students,” it read, “enrich our communities and are a critical part of Canada’s social, cultural, and economic fabric.” In the ensuing public discourse, however, it is economic considerations which have figured almost exclusively, whether as the motive for such a rapid escalation of numbers, or in relation to the national housing crisis supposedly exacerbated by foreign students. When reacting to Ottawa’s decision, even postsecondary institutions have been largely focused on the prospect of diminished revenues. But in calculating the loss to Canada that the caps will potentially inflict, it is critical to consider the social and cultural as well. This is especially true in universities, which have historically sought to diversify their student and faculty populations as a challenge to parochialism and narrow thinking. No university can be great that does not situate itself firmly in a global network of inquiry and discovery. Queen’s Global Engagement Strategic Plan1, launched during this past year, sees the future of the university in precisely these terms. The institution, it declares, “aims to be a truly global actor – applying our intellectual curiosity and talents, within and beyond academia, to address complex global challenges in equitable ways.” To achieve that goal, global engagement and action must be “woven through all that we think and do,” and it is difficult to imagine that being possible if, in addition to sending our research and our graduates out into the world, we are not permitted with equal passion and commitment to welcome the world into Queen’s.

1 https://www.queensu.ca/international/sites/ovpiwww/files/uploaded_files/Queens-University-Global-Engagement-Strategic-Plan-2023-2028-Final-Accessible%20().pdf
The Queen’s Alumni Review is vying for some of the top honours in Canadian magazines, having been nominated in two of the country’s most prestigious competitions.

In the National Magazine Awards B2B contest, the premier competition for Canadian trade and professional magazines, the Alumni Review was honoured with 17 nominations in multiple categories, receiving nods for its design, photography, and writing. And in the National Magazine Awards, which accepts submissions from all Canadian magazines, including newsstand publications, it received five nominations.

In both programs it was lauded for overall excellence, receiving a nomination for Best Magazine in the B2B contest and Best Magazine (Special Interest) in the National Magazine Awards.

The juries of both contests praised the magazine for the quality of its content and design.

“The Queen’s Alumni Review sets an impressive standard for telling the stories of people and innovations that matter to a university community,” the jury from the National Magazine Awards said. “The mix of stories and design presentation made it an engaging read from start to finish.”

The jury in the National Magazine Awards B2B contest noted the magazine “clearly dedicates itself to building and maintaining a sense of community. The magazine is so beautifully layered, rich in content with design and bold visuals to back it up.”

The magazine was recognized repeatedly for excellence in photography, receiving five nominations across both contests, and in design, with in-house graphic designer Wendy Treverton named a finalist four times in a field of eight nominees in the B2B’s Best Art Direction of a Single Article or Opening Spread. Alumni Review writers were also recognized – two alumni, Carly Weeks, Arts’03, and Tka Pinnock, Arts’07, were named finalists in the B2B contest’s Feature category for stories they wrote in the Spring 2023 issue.

The magazine’s covers, all designed by Ms. Treverton, were also finalists – its unique fold-out cover featuring the Black Studies program, the magazine’s first such cover in nearly seven years, was a finalist in the Cover Grand Prix category in the National Magazine Awards, putting it up against covers from Toronto Life, Report on Business, The Walrus, Maisonneuve, and the Literary Review of Canada. It was also a finalist for Best Cover in the B2B competition.

The magazine’s spring and summer issues were finalists in both the Best Art Direction of a Complete Issue category and the Best Issue category in the National Magazine Awards B2B contest.

Ruth Dunley was also named a finalist in the Editor Grand Prix category, along with the editors of Chatelaine and The Walrus.

The jury noted that she impressed them “with her exceptional leadership in making an alumni magazine a fresh and engaging forum for celebrating and understanding the world of the Queen’s University campus and beyond.”

Alex Beshara, Director of Marketing and Publications, oversaw a full redesign of the Alumni Review in 2021, and noted that the contest results reflected the input of colleagues across Advancement and a roster of exceptional contributors – including many alumni.

Winners will be announced in Toronto on June 7.

These honours follow three Merit wins from the Society of Publication Designers in April – two for Ms. Treverton’s designs and one for a video created by multimedia producer Callum Linden to promote the summer 2023 cover story. These awards put the Alumni Review in the company of The Economist, Rolling Stone, and Vanity Fair, who were also declared Merit winners.

Don’t forget the ’40s

I enjoyed reading the Fall 2023 Class Notes. The 1950s and the 1970s are there – but where are the 1940s? I am a graduate of Arts 1948. There cannot be many of us left (I will be 98 in December!) but here are a few memories I’d like to share.

Enrolment for 1948 and 1949 was huge. The war was over and young Canadians who had been in the armed forces abroad were happy to stop fighting, put aside their uniforms, and go back to school. Jim Barker, (Captain, Canadian Artillery, and D-Day veteran) was one of these. He enrolled at Queen’s in 1948 and so did I, a high-school graduate from Kingston.

Aside from academics, there were, of course, plenty of extracurricular activities. There was a good football team and great rivalry between Queen’s, the University of Toronto, Western University, and McGill. I was a cheerleader (not a very good one – I had difficulty doing a cartwheel and I mostly remember being very cold!).

In those days, the Queen’s Journal office was a long, cold, windowless room in the basement of the old Arts building. We thought it was fine and weren’t bothered by the chill or the cigarette smoke (almost everyone smoked in those days).

I applied for a job on the Journal and was told that I would be assistant to the sports editor, who knew a lot about sports but was somewhat lacking in literary skills. So, he wrote the sports column and I corrected his grammar and spelling. I knew very little about sports, but the sports editor’s desk happened to be beside the Journal editor’s desk, and I was very interested in the Journal editor, Jim Barker.

We both graduated in 1948. After graduation, Jim went to Switzerland to pursue a doctorate in Geneva. Seeking employment after my graduation, (proudly saying, “I have a BA from Queen’s”) I was inevitably asked, “That’s very nice, dear, but can you type?” I couldn’t, so I took a crash-course
in typing and shorthand. This enabled me to go to England, live in London with family friends, and work as a stenographer.

Switzerland was not very far from England, and Jim kept showing up in London “to do research for his thesis” – at least, that’s what he said. We were married in 1951 and led a happy and peripatetic life with two sons. Jim died, age 93, in 2014.

Barbara Barker, nee Bermingham, Arts’48

Editor’s note: The Alumni Review welcomes Class Notes from all years. Regrettably, we receive very few from the ‘40s and ’50s but do publish all those that we receive.

Jennifer Campbell

Jennifer Campbell is a veteran journalist who covered daily news for the Ottawa Citizen for 18 years and wrote a column on diplomacy for the same newspaper for 12 years. She has edited magazines, including Diplomat, since 2004 and has covered stories on four continents, including the 90th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme, the first Arab Economic Summit, the Capitals of European Culture, and Expo 2017 in Kazakhstan. A transplanted Maritimer, Jennifer lives in downtown Ottawa with her husband and two enigmatic cats.

Antonia Heil

Antonia Heil is a Cape Town-based photographer working worldwide. She regularly does commercial shoots for brands such as Porsche and Mercedes-Benz but enjoys documentary work just as much. Her career originally started in journalism before expanding into photography, videography, and producing, where she discovered her niche in car, commercial, and people-based photography. “Life is not about existing but about making this world a better place,” she says. “I like being in the company of courageous people who look at the road ahead and see no barriers.” See “For the Record,” on page 40.

Koko King

Koko King is an Ottawa-based photographer known for provocative portraits and colourful subjects. A makeup artist and bodybuilder, she has a keen eye for detail and seeks out subjects that explore the human form. Raised by artists in the French countryside, she honed her photography skills from a young age before branching out into urban environments. Inspired by renowned photographer Herb Ritts, she endeavours to “bring a little edge” to every photograph she captures. See cover and “After the Avalanche,” on page 16.

CONTACT US

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HOMEcomings

Save the date • October 18-20, 2024
With community engagement at the heart of the design process, Agnes Reimagined envisions an entirely different architectural approach to museum building and practice in Canada.

**What:** Agnes Reimagined, a living art museum for the 21st century  
**Where:** New entrance faces Bader Lane  
**When:** Construction begins May 2024, reopening in 2026  
**Learn more:** agnes.queensu.ca/agnes-reimagined
The Groundbreaking

Agnes Reimagined construction phase begins

The Agnes Etherington Art Centre transformation is underway, after a groundbreaking ceremony on May 6. The ceremonial event signalled the beginning of the construction phase of the project, with the new space set to open in 2026.

The new facility will double the existing gallery space and serve as the perfect home for the Bader Collection at Agnes, which includes the most comprehensive collection of authenticated paintings by Rembrandt van Rijn and his circle in any institution within Canada.

Agnes Reimagined was made possible by a US$75-million gift from Bader Philanthropies, Inc., and through the leadership and philanthropy of the late Alfred Bader, Sc’45, Arts’46, MSc’47, LL.D’86, and the late Isabel Bader, LL.D’07. Thanks to generous donations from the Bader family, Agnes will be the largest public university-affiliated museum in Canada.

The Innovation

Student creativity recognized by City of Kingston

This year’s Mayor’s Innovation Challenge top honour was awarded to two Queen’s student teams working on original approaches to issues facing the local area.

The Eclipse

Queen’s ambassadors guide community

On April 8, the Kingston community was treated to a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to observe a total solar eclipse, as the region fell within the path of totality for the first time in 375 years.

The university’s preparations for the eclipse began in earnest in 2022. A team from the Department of Physics, Engineering Physics and Astronomy ran outreach efforts by
leading workshops in over 80 local schools and other community sites.

More than 100 Queen’s students, faculty, and staff served as eclipse ambassadors to help prepare the community for the big event. Queen’s provided over 120,000 certified eclipse glasses to the community through local schools and through the Kingston Frontenac Public Library.

The on-campus community gathered on Tindall Field when, for a few unforgettable moments, day turned to night.

The Recruitment

Undergraduate applications soar for 2024–25

Queen’s is connecting with top prospective undergraduate students from across Canada and around the world after receiving a record number of applications for 2024–25.

The university received nearly 58,000 applications for 5,000 first-year undergraduate openings, an eight-per-cent increase from the previous year.

“Outstanding students continue to be drawn to our university and the promise of our exceptional academic programs, vibrant campus life, and strong, supportive community,” says Ann Tierney, Vice-Provost and Dean of Student Affairs. “This is an exciting time for those who have been offered a spot at our university, and we are here to provide information, answer their questions, and support them every step of the way.”

The Expert

Queen’s welcomes celebrated CERC scientist

In March, Queen’s announced that world-renowned nuclear materials scientist Dr. Yanwen Zhang will join the university as the Canada Excellence Research Chair (CERC) in Impact of Radiation in Energy and Advanced Technologies.

The internationally recognized scientist’s research into nuclear materials aims to help the industry find ways to build safer and longer-lasting reactors, which can play a key role in the low-carbon transition.

CERC is among the most prestigious and well-funded programs supporting leading-edge research globally. Dr. Zhang’s chair is valued at $8 million over eight years and will relocate her research program from the Idaho National Laboratory, where she also holds a joint faculty appointment at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

The Recruitment

New Board of Trustees chair named

David Court, Com’79, has been named the new chair of the Queen’s Board of Trustees. Mr. Court, a senior partner emeritus with McKinsey & Company and current Queen’s trustee, will begin his four-year term June 1. Mr. Court will succeed current chair Mary Wilson Trider, who concludes her term May 31.

“David’s extensive experience and dedication have been invaluable to the Board of Trustees and its work,” says Patrice Walch-Watson, who led the Governance and Nominating Committee’s selection process. “We’re confident that his experience and demonstrated leadership make him the right choice for this important role at this time.”

A former chair of the Smith School of Business Advisory Board, he joined the Board of Trustees in 2020 and has since served as both vice-chair and chair of its Finance, Assets, and Strategic Infrastructure Committee.

The Race

Queen’s students to sail the Atlantic in prestigious race to Bermuda

Eight sailors from the Queen’s sailing team are embarking on the Newport Bermuda Race June 21, a four-day, 1,200-kilometre event from Newport, R.I., to St. George’s, Bermuda, featuring 200 yachts in one of North America’s biggest sailing races. Skipper Julian Hill says the group will be racing under the name HoldFast Ocean Racing, hoping to “inspire a younger generation to hold fast in their skill, passion, and competitive ability.” The Queen’s students will be the youngest participating team – the median age of sailors in the race is 56, and HoldFast Ocean Racing members are all younger than 24. To prepare, the team will participate in five
Queen’s Varsity Athletics had a very successful end to the 2023-24 season. The athletic season’s conclusion was highlighted by Queen’s men’s basketball – the team won their first Ontario University Athletics (OUA) championship since the 1956-57 season in dramatic fashion at the Athletics and Recreation Centre (ARC) in early March. The Gaels’ 79-76 win over the Brock Badgers in the OUA Wilson Cup was accentuated by a highlight-reel buzzer beater by Kingston native Cole Syllas. The OUA championship was the highlight of a record season for Queen’s men’s basketball, which also finished with a program-best 19-3 regular season record and captured the U SPORTS Men’s Final 8 silver medal.

Queen’s women’s basketball also played deep into the season, advancing to their second straight Critelli Cup, capturing the OUA silver medal and their third straight trip to the U SPORTS Women’s Final 8.

Queen’s men’s volleyball also earned the OUA silver medal before hosting the U SPORTS men’s volleyball championship, tying their program-best finish at the national level with a fourth place.

And Queen’s women’s squash continued their dynasty on the court, winning their ninth straight OUA championship in February, while the men’s team captured the silver medal.

The Change

New system to increase medical-school diversity

Queen’s Health Sciences (QHS) announced changes to its MD Program admissions process in an effort to create a more inclusive entry point for all applicants, minimize systemic barriers to becoming a doctor, and increase student diversity. Beginning this fall, in time for 2025 admissions, the renewed medical student admissions process includes a pathway for lower socioeconomic-status applicants and adjustments to the current Indigenous pathway. A second phase of admissions changes will also support the recruitment of Black students. The new process will be unique in Canada and will give any qualified candidate the potential to reach the interview stage.

“We have thousands of qualified medical school applicants each year who would make excellent doctors,” says Dr. Jane Philpott, Dean of Queen’s Health Sciences. “Our new admissions process will give them equal opportunity to be selected for the interview stage. This will help level the playing field for prospective students.”

The Farewell

VP (Advancement) Karen Bertrand stepping down

Principal and Vice-Chancellor Patrick Deane announced on April 11 that Vice-Principal (Advancement) Karen Bertrand, Arts'94, will be stepping down from her position at Queen’s, effective June 14, 2024, to take on the role of Vice-President (University Advancement) at Western
University, starting Aug. 1.

Bertrand joined Queen’s in 2018 as VP (Advancement) and successfully cultivated numerous large gifts, doubling the university’s fundraising results since taking on her role. She has also strategically managed the university’s alumni relations and the broad range of advancement activities at Queen’s, including strengthening relationships with both internal and external stakeholders, streamlining advancement operations, and undertaking preparations to position Queen’s for future philanthropic success.

“It is fair to say our loss will be Western’s gain. Karen has been an exceptional colleague and invaluable member of the senior leadership team,” says Principal Deane. “While I am very sorry to see her leave our institution, I wish her every success in this next step in her career. She assures me she will always be a proud alum.”

**The Chancellor-Designate**

**Shelagh Rogers to succeed The Honourable Murray Sinclair**

Principal and Vice-Chancellor Patrick Deane has announced that award-winning broadcast journalist Shelagh Rogers, Artssci’77, will become the 16th Chancellor of Queen’s. University Council members confirmed her selection following a process led by an advisory committee with wide-ranging representation from across campus.

Chancellor-Designate Rogers will begin on July 1, 2024. She will succeed outgoing Chancellor, The Honourable Murray Sinclair, who will become Chancellor Emeritus and a Special Advisor to the Principal on Reconciliation.

“Shelagh’s remarkable career, wide-ranging experience, and her roots at Queen’s make her an ideal representative for our institution and its values,” says Principal Deane.

**The Appointment**

**Gordon E. Smith named director of the Isabel**

Queen’s has appointed Gordon E. Smith as director of the Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts for a two-year term effective July 1, 2024. Dr. Smith has served as interim director of the Isabel for the past two years. During this time, he oversaw the planning of the 10th anniversary season of the Isabel and has provided leadership in advancing the Isabel’s strategic priorities of Indigenization, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in its programming and operations.

An ethnomusicologist in the Dan School of Drama and Music, Dr. Smith has served in a number of administrative roles in the Faculty of Arts and Science, many of which intersect with the creative and performing arts. These include vice-dean in the Faculty of Arts and Science (2013-2021), interim dean (2016-2017), associate dean (2006-2012), and director of the School of Music (2003-2006). His current research examines music and intersectional cultural and social practices in Mi’kmaw communities in Cape Breton, specifically Eskasoni.

**The Discussion**

**Principal, QUAA president host webinar regarding budget challenges**

On Feb. 28, Queen’s Principal and Vice-Chancellor Patrick Deane hosted a webinar with Queen’s alumni, supporters, and friends to discuss budget challenges the university is currently facing and how it is navigating this period while planning for the future. The one-hour conversation, moderated by Queen’s University Alumni Association (QUAA) President Colin McLeod, Artssci’10, covered topics on financial management and transparency, student recruitment, and long-term planning and sustainability.

Up-to-date details about Queen’s current financial situation and the measures taken so far to address the budget deficit can be found online at queensu.ca/budget.
Behind a plain grey door in Goodwin Hall, Dr. Sidney Givigi is playing with a mini car on a mini track. Well, “playing” may not be quite right, but from the big smile on his face, it’s clear his research is tons of fun.

The associate professor of computing leads the Queen’s School of Computing’s Autonomous Robots Research Group, where part of his work involves making self-driving vehicles safer. He and his team do that by applying the lessons learned from this model autonomous vehicle – called a QCar after its maker, Quanser – and this model road, to real ones in the real world.

This kind of research will lead to more fully self-driving vehicles on public roads some day, says Dr. Givigi. And that’s good news for safety, he adds. “We can safely say that autonomous vehicles can, indeed, save lives.” For one piece of proof, he points to a 2023 U.S. study that found the self-driving vehicle Waymo had an 85 per cent lower crash rate than human-driven vehicles.

What’s the biggest hindrance to more self-driving vehicles on the streets? It’s not technological, says Dr. Givigi. “It’s developing the laws and regulations. Even if it’s a self-driving car, eventually it will get into an accident. So, who’s responsible? The owner maintaining it? The company because of a software glitch? This is a very difficult problem to solve, but it has to be figured out.”

The QCar’s LiDAR system uses laser technology to track obstacles up to 18 metres away.

The lithium polymer battery lasts for about 35 minutes – or three kilometres – when everything is running.
One main camera sits atop the vehicle, while four other cameras can provide 360 degrees of vision.

The track can be reconfigured into seven different road layouts. Each takes up between 144 and 972 square feet.

BY THE NUMBERS

1.19 million
Number of traffic fatalities worldwide in 2021 (World Health Organization)

94
Percentage of U.S. car accidents related to drivers (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration)

5- to 29-year olds
Age bracket for which traffic accidents are the leading cause of death worldwide (World Health Organization)

$2.4 trillion
Estimated cost of traffic injuries worldwide between 2015 and 2030 (The Lancet)
Calm at the centre of the storm

Dr. Adam Szulewski’s research helps us understand how physicians combat cognitive overload

By Jeff Pappone

When a patient arrives in Dr. Adam Szulewski’s (Artsci’06, Med’10) trauma room at Kingston Health Sciences Centre, the ability to focus on what’s important while tuning out distractions can be a matter of life and death.

Strategies such as breathing techniques, planning, and leaning on experience and teamwork work together to limit cognitive overload and help Dr. Szulewski cope with the huge amount of emotion, stress, anxiety, and uncertainty he often faces in the emergency department.

“When I’m in a resuscitation room, all my energy is focused on trying to help this one person,” he says.

“In a system where things can be chaotic, you need to have approaches to identify when you feel stressed and overwhelmed, so you can use them to be as effective as possible. For example, when I’m resuscitating a patient, announcements on the hospital’s overhead speaker system about a chemical spill or missing patient on another ward are pure noise. This used to bother me, but I’ve developed an ability to tune these types of irrelevant distractions out completely.”

Now an associate professor in Queen’s emergency medicine and psychology departments and Fellowship Director, Resuscitation and Reanimation, Dr. Szulewski can trace the origins of his research on these strategies back to his days as a resident physician. He’d watch his emergency-room mentors almost instinctively pause and gather their thoughts by doing a “recap” where they summarized the treatment and discussed next steps with everyone in the room.

“It provided a bit of a silence for...
domains: for example, when a basketball player pauses and takes deep breaths at the free-throw line.”

Understanding the ways to avoid cognitive overload starts by delving into the three main types of human memory: sensory, long-term, and working. Sensory memory refers to all the transitory stimuli your brain receives and quickly discards, such as tastes, smells, and noises, while long-term memory holds all of a person’s stored information. In between the two lies the working memory that interests Dr. Szulewski, where all the complex thinking happens.

His work also builds on the research of Nobel Prize winner and Princeton University professor emeritus Daniel Kahneman, who developed a theory of System 1 and System 2 processing. The first relates to recognizing patterns in about 90 per cent of situations, which allows automatic processing of information, while the second occurs when people face unfamiliar or unexpected situations when they need to think to respond.

Dr. Szulewski’s research centres on the ways learning and experience help reorganize the mind’s information systems, so that basic skills become so ingrained and automatic that they allow more brainpower to be applied where it’s really needed. Although his research focuses on achieving a better understanding of physicians’ decision-making under pressure, the lessons learned apply to almost any complex professional field, or even when something completely unexpected comes up in everyday life.

Dr. Szulewski likens this to people turning down the radio in their car to increase their ability to concentrate on driving in a worsening snowstorm or when someone simply asks for quiet because they need to think.

“Certainly, if I have time to breathe and to relax, that’s going to help. I think there is something to be said for having a general approach to uncertainty, which is something that we get very comfortable with in resuscitation and emergency medicine,” he says.

“As we develop and mature as human beings, we acquire different experiences that help us listen to our ‘spidey sense’ to know when we need to slow down and think things through. At the end of the day, we’re all humans, we all have the same type of brain, and we all need the same kinds of pauses and resets.”
KATIE COMBALUZIER NEARLY LOST HER LIFE IN A SKIING ACCIDENT. NOW SHE’S A DOCTOR AND A SIT-SKI PARALYMPIAN GUNNING FOR THE PODIUM IN 2026. HER STORY IS A TESTAMENT TO HER RESILIENCE, COURAGE, AND THE POWER OF POSITIVITY.

BY JENNIFER CAMPBELL
IT IS FAIR TO SAY THAT MOST OF
Katie Combaluzier’s plans for life were shattered on a French mountainside in 2018. But how she rebuilt that life, piece by painstaking piece, is the story of a force of will that turned out to be just as strong as the avalanche that hit her like a snow-covered freight train, took the life of her friend, and robbed her of her mobility.

Dr. Katie Combaluzier, Artsci’16, is, herself, a force of nature. Her tenacity, courage, and resilience are testaments to the human spirit, packaged as they are in the joy with which she lives her life: a badge of triumph and, perhaps, defiance. For after all she has been through, and all the things that might have stopped her, Dr. Combaluzier has never surrendered.

When she woke up in a hospital in France and was told she might never walk again, the then-24-year-old, who had childhood dreams of going to the Olympics, briefly paused and then said to herself, “Well, maybe I can go to the Paralympics.”

That’s also the first thing she told her parents when they arrived at her bedside. Then she started talking herself through how she would return to medical school and finish the remaining years of her degree at University College in Dublin.

Today, Dr. Combaluzier, a Toronto native who completed her undergrad in kinesiology at Queen’s, is finishing her residency in Gatineau, Que. When she’s done, she and her fiancé, Adam Doran, will move to Squamish, B.C., where she’ll continue to work part time while skiing and training full time. She’s aiming to return for her second Paralympics after competing in 2022 in Beijing, China, and is now training for Milano Cortina, Italy, in 2026. This time, she’s determined to bring home a medal for Canada. “That would be my biggest dream.”

Dreams of competing in the Olympics were a real thing for young Katie.

“I’ve been skiing since I was two years old,” she says, with her irrepressible smile. “I ski-raced and competed growing up and, of course, had dreams of going to the Olympics. So, when I had an accident, it didn’t matter that it happened skiing. It wasn’t something I was going to give up.”

In March 2018, Dr. Combaluzier had booked a reading week ski trip to Grenoble, France, with three students she’d connected with through a mutual friend. The four were backcountry skiing when an avalanche broke beneath their feet. Dr. Combaluzier screamed before a river of snow swept the skiers down the mountain. Suddenly, the earth was moving beneath her, she lost all sense of direction, and felt as if she was being crushed before she slammed into an avalanche barrier. Her back was fractured.

When it finally stopped, the horror of it all began to set in as she and her skiing...
companions shouted into the wind for help. The fourth member of their party, Sven Reichert, was missing. When they found him, his helmet was broken and bloody – he had been killed by the impact.

At the time, CBC reported that rescuers’ attempts to use a helicopter had been thwarted by rapid cloud cover, so when Dr. Combaluzier was finally found, her crumpled body was strapped to a toboggan and lowered by ropes down the mountain. She later recalled that she was in excruciating pain, crying out for morphine, which rescuers administered on the spot. She didn’t need her early medical training to tell her the lack of feeling in her legs was a good indication of spinal-cord injury – she knew it in her heart.

It was, she later recalled, “the worst experience of my life.”

It was also a profound turning point, triggering a fierce determination in the face of an unthinkable tragedy. At the hospital in France, surgeons used a titanium plate to fuse three of her spinal discs. She was told she had little chance of ever walking again.

Yet, she was determined to overcome the injury and dedicated to realizing her new dream of becoming a Paralympian. She moved from diagnosis to the international pinnacle of Paralympic ski competition in fewer than four years – she graduated from medical school in the spring of 2021, as planned, despite having missed much of her second semester while in rehab in Canada; she was in the gym by July and on the slopes competing in elite races by November of that year; and, by March 2022, she was competing in the Beijing Paralympics.

“It came down to a lot of determination and focus,” she says. “I reached out to different coaches to get as much training as I could.”

In her joy, there’s a healthy, if occasionally dark, sense of humour. Pulling into Camp Fortune, a ski hill near Chelsea, Que., that she frequented last winter to keep up her skills, her Hyundai Santa Fe, retrofitted with hand controls, is parked in a plum spot on an extremely busy day – one of the perks, she jokes, of being disabled (the word she uses).

“The parking benefits, I tell ya!” she says.

A few days later, after she’s returned from placing fourth in a world championship competition in Switzerland, she’s at the Gatineau apartment she shares with her fiancé and their enthusiastic cockapoo, Perogi. Her phone rings and she excuses herself from an interview. In French, her second language, she speaks to the caregiver of a 90-year-old patient who needs an emergency infusion. Dr. Combaluzier tells them the test results that she just received indicate it’s urgent and she advises them to go to the emergency room. She’s well into overtime on another stressful day, but she’s doing something she loves – practising family medicine.

Her passion for her profession stems from her interest in the way the human body works.

“The classic answer for any doctor is ‘because I want to help people,’ but [for me,] it’s more just an interest in the science behind things that led me to this pathway. Kinesiology scratches the surface. As a family doc, we need to know absolutely everything there is to know. And I still learn something every day.”

The road to medicine started at Queen’s, where she learned to love athletics and academics, and to “nail” time management. In addition to a full course load, she had five practices a week as a member of the university’s sailing team. She also competed many weekends.

“I learned teamwork and communication from my coaches,” she says. “Queen’s was great for creating a sense of community. My Queen’s roommates are still my best friends today.”
She also volunteered with two programs for disabled adults at Kingston General and Hotel Dieu Hospital; this commitment gave her the experience she needed for medical school applications.

She pauses, realizing the significance of her past work with patients with disabilities. “I’ve actually never made that connection before.”

“After the avalanche, she immediately decided she would return to medical school.

“When the accident happened, I asked myself about the positives. Once something like that happens to you, there are opportunities thrown at you. I said yes to as many as I could. I felt fortunate to be able to go back to med school. I’d lost use of my legs, but my brain was still good.”

First, she had to persuade school administrators she was capable.

“I had to convince people I still deserved my place in medicine,” she says, as they offered her the option of dropping out. “I’m like, ‘Well, no, I want to come back.’”

There were obstacles to overcome in a less-than-modern medical school – no elevators, and doors that were too narrow. Participating in anatomy labs and surgeries was a challenge.

“I wasn’t allowed in the emergency room during medical training because they thought I would be in the way because of my chair,” she says. “I’ve had to advocate for myself. Just because I’m sitting doesn’t mean I’m not able to accomplish tasks; it just might take me a fraction longer.

“Having adaptability and the desire to overcome the obstacles helps. I’ve always been a very determined person. This was just a bump in the road.”

During her medical training and residency, she’s also had to deal with “prying” questions from skeptical patients and had to convince some patients – and even some colleagues – that she is a doctor.

“One time a random staff member told me to return to my room because they thought I was a patient,” she says. “Comments like that hurt, but you have to roll with it. I hope, with time, the public will become more used to seeing people with disabilities in the workforce.”

Recently, a supervising doctor she was meeting for the first time laughed when she saw Dr. Combaluzier in a wheelchair and asked why she was kidding around.

“I answered ‘No ... I’m disabled,’” after which the supervisor was shocked and embarrassed. “She apologized for the rest of the shift. I don’t think she will ever make that mistake again.”

These hurdles add to the broader challenges of being a woman in medicine.

“It’s not that different from a female physician being mistaken for a nurse. I get that all the time, too. It’s one of those misconceptions and stereotypes people hold.”

After the accident, Dr. Combaluzier finished her first year remotely and returned to Ireland to complete her degree. In another example of the scale of her determination, she rejoined the rock climbing
club she’d been part of before the accident. That’s when she and Mr. Doran, who had been a climbing acquaintance, started spending more time together. He’s a passionate, able-bodied rock-climber and he gives her the confidence to climb without the use of her legs. “He’s always going to make sure I’m safe.”

When she finished her medical degree, the couple moved to Canada for the 2021–22 ski season. Again defying expectations, they lived in a van in Whistler, B.C., to save money. Was it cold living in a van in the Rocky Mountains in winter? “No!” she laughs. “We had a heater. I was going to be on the road for most of the year, so we were kind of bums. We ate a lot of perogies that year.” That’s where Perogi the cockapoo got his name.

At this point, she was racing with the Paralympic prospects group in Europe. After two silvers and a bronze at the world championships in Norway, she qualified for the Paralympics. Would she be invited? She trained, and waited, and finally got the call for Beijing.

“My Paralympics were everything!” she says. “They were a mix of fun and excitement, and the most stressful time of my life ever. All of a sudden, you’re on a world stage and there are cameras on you and you know your friends and family back home are watching you even though it’s 3 a.m. their time. It’s your time to shine, and I did not shine. For the first three races, I fell early on. It was the pressure to perform just mounting.”

She was not happy with her performance, but says there was value in knowing what it’s like to compete at the Paralympics. She hopes to use that knowledge to earn a medal at the Paralympics in Italy in 2026. And if she does, she’s heartened by the recent decision that Canadian Paralympians will be awarded the same prize money as their Olympic counterparts for winning medals, something that’s never happened in the past. That’s $20,000, $15,000, and $10,000 for gold, silver, and bronze respectively.

“I think it’s important, and it should have happened long ago.”

What Dr. Combaluzier describes as a bump in the road would be an insurmountable challenge for many. Her prescription for resilience? Focus on the positives and break challenges into smaller, more readily achievable goals. In other words, roll with it.

“It would be cool to go to the Summer Games,” she says, showing photos of herself at Stawamus Chief (Siy’ám’ Smánit), a granitic dome at Squamish. She also enjoys handcycling, another summer Paralympic sport, and she’s intrigued by the idea of vying for a spot on Canada’s cycling team.

She’s also focused on her career, with a goal to become a doctor for a Paralympic team. “That would be full circle for me.”

“IF YOU THINK TOO MANY STEPS INTO THE FUTURE, IT’S EASY TO GET OVERWHELMED.”

Sport
Para Alpine

Hometown
Toronto

Career Highlights

2022
Paralympic Winter Games
7th-Slalom
8th-Giant slalom

2022 World Para Snow Sports Championships
2nd-Super combined
2nd-Giant slalom
3rd-Downhill
NO PEOPLE LIKE
FOR 50 YEARS, THE BAN RIGH CENTRE HAS PROVIDED SUPPORT, COMFORT, AND PLENTY OF HOT SOUP TO CREATE A SISTERHOOD THAT IS UNIQUE TO QUEEN’S.
a woman walks through the door of the Ban Righ Centre, she’s not just entering a 100-year-old house; she’s entering a home – a home with a long legacy of Queen’s women supporting each other.

There is a spacious living room with couches, and the upper floors have desks for study time, a bed for nap time, and a dedicated room for breastfeeding. In the kitchen, there’s an ample supply of tea and coffee, and at lunchtime there’s a pot of fresh, hearty soup on the stove.

The homey atmosphere is also fostered by the people who spend time there: students and dedicated staff who are quick to offer a smile, a shoulder to lean on, a hug.

The Ban Righ Centre is designed to feel like a home away from home; that feeling is part of its mission. The raison d’être of the old brick home at 32 Bader Lane is to be a supportive space for female students who are a little – or maybe a lot – older than their classmates. All female-identified students are welcome, but services are geared toward mature students and their unique circumstances.

The centre is marking its 50th anniversary this year, which is a cause for celebration as well as reflection. Society and women’s place in it have changed over the years, and the Queen’s campus certainly looks different than it did in 1974.

One constant that has remained is a strong tradition of Queen’s women looking out for one another and giving back once they leave campus, to help the next generation.
They declined office space and secured the university-owned house on Bader Lane (formerly known as Queen’s Crescent). It’s fitting that one of its original occupants had been the first Dean of Women, Caroline McNeill.

Over the past five decades, devoted staff have kept the original vision of the centre alive and well. The current director, Susan Belyea, says she has the best job on campus.

“I get to be inspired every day by the women who come through the doors here,” says Dr. Belyea, who used the centre as a PhD student.

Two advisers guide students through their challenges and a board of directors oversees policies and finances. Funding is derived from the original endowment, donations, fundraising, the university’s budget, and student fees.

The centre hosts guest speakers and family-friendly activities, and offers financial aid and academic counselling. Perhaps the most valued service, though, is the moral support.

“We remind them that they’ve already crossed amazing hurdles and they do have it within themselves to do whatever needs to be done to fulfill their academic dreams or pursue the careers they’re looking for,” says Dr. Belyea.

In addition to the emotional sustenance, a nutritious soup lunch is served daily. It’s not clear when this tradition started, but it is a beloved one. It’s helpful for students on a budget and it brings people together to take a break from the books and to chat. It’s a small but significant gesture, an important ingredient in the Ban Righ Centre’s recipe for success.

After 50 years, there’s no shortage of alumnae who have fond memories of the Ban Righ Centre and sing its praises. The Alumni Review spoke with four of them about how the centre impacted their time at Queen’s.

JILLIAN BURFORD-GRINNELL
Artsci’09, Law’14

Jillian Burford-Grinnell put her undergraduate degree in women’s studies and religious studies on pause in 1995, leaving Queen’s after her first year to have her daughter. More than a decade later, she returned to campus as a mature student and tried to pick up where she had left off – but she was intimidated and overwhelmed. Technology had changed, paying for school was stressful, and she now had three young children.

“It was my home away from home,” says Ms. Burford-Grinnell, who was there almost daily. Sometimes she would have her children in tow and they enjoyed the books and snacks that were on hand.

She bonded with other moms – “kindred spirits” who were similarly juggling a family and school.

After completing her undergraduate degree as a mature student in 2009, Ms. Burford-Grinnell pursued her dream of becoming a lawyer and went to law school at Queen’s.

One year, just two days before an exam, she broke her hand. The Ban Righ staff sprang into action to make arrangements with the university so she could still complete the test.

They were there to help, says Ms. Burford-Grinnell, “even if it’s just to sit there and have an ugly cry” or to serve up the tasty soup. “It’s just homey, it nourishes your soul.”

Ms. Burford-Grinnell, a lawyer in Napanee, Ont., believes if she hadn’t had the support of Ban Righ, it would have taken much longer to finish her degrees.

“They were the wind at my back.”

NINGJING ZHANG
MA’20, Law’23

Ningjing Zhang first went to the Ban Righ Centre when she was attending Queen’s in 2013 as an international student from China. Her four-month-old son was with her, and she could comfortably breastfeed there.

Dr. Zhang went back to China and finished her PhD in history. She returned to Kingston in 2016 as a visiting scholar, but was experiencing the effects of trauma after fleeing an abusive husband and wasn’t able to work. She lived in a shelter with her two young children and applied for refugee status in Canada.

Dr. Zhang went back to China and finished her PhD in history. She returned to Kingston in 2016 as a visiting scholar, but was experiencing the effects of trauma after fleeing an abusive husband and wasn’t able to work. She lived in a shelter with her two young children and applied for refugee status in Canada.

Dr. Zhang says a government social worker suggested she get work as a janitor at Tim Hortons.
Instead, she went back to the Ban Righ Centre. The advisers encouraged her to go back to school at Queen’s, and she started her master’s in gender studies.

“Even if I didn’t believe in myself, they had faith in me,” she says.

When she felt overwhelmed with stress and wanted to give up, the staff would tell her, “Just survive the day.”

Money was tight and when her daughter’s eyeglasses broke, she couldn’t afford to replace them. Ban Righ to the rescue. They provided an emergency bursary.

“The people who work at Ban Righ Centre are amazing,” says Dr. Zhang.

After finishing her master’s, Dr. Zhang took on another challenge in 2020: Queen’s law school. She was called to the Ontario bar in March and is now working as a lawyer, employed by alumna Jillian Burford-Grinnell, whom she met through the Ban Righ Centre.

Dr. Zhang says the Ban Righ community “changed my world,” and without its financial and emotional support, “I wouldn’t have come this far. I would have been stuck in the janitor’s job just like other refugees.”

DOROTHY LELE
Arts’71

Within a few years of graduating from Queen’s, Dorothy Lele married and had a baby. Ms. Lele says this was during a transition period for women, from the traditional roles of housewives and mothers to working for pay outside the home, something she was eager to do.

In its early years, the Ban Righ Centre was a welcoming place not just for mature students, but for faculty wives, as they were known. Ms. Lele was among them and became a frequent visitor. The director at the time, Barb Schlafer, was “a lifesaver for me,” she recalls.

Ms. Schlafer would listen to Ms. Lele’s frustrations and encourage her to pursue her career interests. “They understood very well the struggles we were going through, intelligent women who couldn’t get recognition for what we could do,” Ms. Lele says of the staff.

For years, they were a sounding board for Ms. Lele, and her cheerleaders. “They would make you believe in what you could do for yourself, bolstered your spirit – and you need that. That can get beaten down by years of housework and caring for babies,” she says.

In 1986, when Ms. Lele was in her late 30s, she went back to academia, attending Carleton University’s Norman Paterson School of International Affairs. What followed was a fulfilling career in international development.

Ms. Lele, now 74, praises the Ban Righ founders for putting the centre in a house. “A home for women that was welcoming, with no judgment, safe and supportive through our struggles, was just what we needed,” says Ms. Lele. “I really am grateful to them.”
Sanober Umar remembers constantly wading through a sea of students on campus when she started her PhD in 2014 and breathing a sigh of relief when she reached 32 Bader Lane.

“You walk in this beautiful, cosy space and you smell warm soup, and you are greeted by friendly student advisers and you are surrounded by a diverse crowd of mature women students,” says Dr. Umar, who was an international student in her late 20s.

“For people like me, it became more than just a shelter for resting, it became a place for thriving.”

Dr. Umar had health issues at the time and would make use of the bedroom on the top floor to rest. The soup lunches were “a lifesaver.”

She loved meeting other international students and bonding with women as they shared their struggles. When mothers would bring their children by, everyone would help care for them.

“It felt like a collective sisterhood in that sense,” says Dr. Umar, who finished her PhD in 2020.

She describes the student advisers as her “guardians” during her time at Queen’s.

When her laptop broke and money was tight, they calmly helped her through the crisis and secured a new computer for her.

“We just need a place to feel heard, and hugged, and that’s exactly what Ban Righ Centre offered,” says Dr. Umar, who is now a professor at York University.

One of the features of the house she fondly remembers is the photos on the walls.

“They have these beautiful historic pictures of the women who started the centre – a gentle reminder of the giants whose shoulders we stand on,” says Dr. Umar.

“I wonder if these women could have possibly comprehended how much this space would mean for generations after them.”

The Ban Righ Centre “changed my life profoundly,” says Dr. Umar, who has this wish for the future:

“I hope in years to come, Queen’s will really value the centre and keep it continuing the way it is.”
How a former Gael stirred Canadian excitement in basketball with Toronto’s first professional team

BY 

TONY ATHERTON
NAME ON THE QUEEN’S register was Paul Benjamin Rudolph Newman, Arts’39, but he was Benny to family and friends. His fellow Gaels, when he pounded the rock on the hardwood at the Queen’s gym in the early ’40s, called him “O’Toole,” an admittedly odd nickname for a Jewish kid from St. Catharines, Ont.

The Globe and Mail in 1946 called him “one of the Dominion’s greatest authorities on [basketball],” after the two St. Catharines teams he coached or managed won three national titles in two years and he had been recruited to mount Canada’s first two big-arena basketball games, a charity doubleheader at Maple Leaf Gardens.

And on June 6, 1946, in New York City, high-powered U.S. sports promoters and the owners of North America’s largest arenas called him Mr. Newman when they conferred upon him, at no cost, a 25 per cent ownership in the Toronto Huskies, one of 11 founding teams in the league that would become the National Basketball Association (NBA).

By then, Benny “O’Toole” Newman was just 26 years old.

The various sobriquets applied to young Benny Newman tell you a lot about the man. He was Benny, not “Benjamin” Newman, because he never took on airs, according to his grandson, Jordan Williams, even as he was transforming his father’s St. Catharines scrapyard business into a nationwide metal-processing corporation big enough to supply structural steel for the construction of Toronto’s SkyDome (now Rogers Centre).

Mr. Newman’s nickname from his Queen’s basketball years – O’Toole – was “known to all court fans,” according to a column in the Kingston Whig-Standard in March 1942. He earned it, the column said, for his “clowning” on the court. The reference is likely to Ollie O’Toole, a then-popular radio personality whose schtick included trading celebrity impersonations with comedian Art Carney.

Mr. Newman remained “a cut-up and a card” throughout his life, his grandson says, particularly at the big family gatherings he hosted. But it is the Globe and Mail’s assessment of Mr. Newman as a kind of national basketball guru that most defines his early life, says Mr. Williams, who has been campaigning to get the former Golden Gael into both the Canadian Basketball Hall of Fame and the international Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield, Mass.

Benny Newman didn’t make the cut at the international hall of fame this year, his first nomination for the honour. However, NBA commissioner Adam Silver took a personal interest in Mr. Newman’s file, says his grandson, assigning someone to liaise with Mr. Williams in documenting his grandfather’s contributions to the sport.

The culmination of Mr. Newman’s contributions came on Nov. 1, 1946, when the first game of what would become the NBA tipped off at Maple Leaf Gardens. The Toronto Huskies – the franchise Benny Newman had helped to create and had a stake in – met the New York Knickerbockers on the same hardwood floor that Mr. Newman had paid to have built for the charity match he promoted the previous year.

The game, attended by more than 7,000 fans paying up to $2.50 a ticket, was hard fought to the end. The Knickerbockers prevailed by a single basket; the final score was 68–66. The game was the highlight of the Huskies’ underwhelming single season. The league would not embrace another Canadian team for almost half a century.

Seventy-five years to the day after that first game – Nov. 1, 2021 – the NBA kicked off its 75th anniversary season with a matchup between the
Mr. Newman had been an all-around athlete in high school, starring in football and track at St. Catharines Collegiate, according to the Standard, but he was passionate about basketball, inspired, says his grandson, by the hardwood exploits of his older brother, Norman Newman, Arts’39.

As a young Jewish athlete in the 1930s, he may also have felt a special affinity for the game. In the sport’s early years, because of its popularity among inner-city immigrant kids, some of the biggest names in basketball were Jewish – names like Shikey Gotthoffer, Sonny Hertzberg, Nat Holman, and Red Klotz, according to Douglas Stark’s book, When Basketball was Jewish: Voices of Those Who Played the Game. Abe Saperstein, founder of the legendary Harlem Globetrotters, had already done more to promote the game than any other single person.

And in August 1936, just a month before Mr. Newman began studying at Queen’s, a basketball team of players from Windsor and Victoria called the V8s had won the silver medal in the first-ever Olympic appearance of the sport, a tournament played in Berlin in Hitler’s Germany. Among the V8s’ stars was Irving “Toots” Meretsky, a Jewish kid who had been only too happy to thumb his nose at “der Führer.”

Benny Newman came to Queen’s, according to his grandson, because it was the choice of his brother, Norman. Mr. Newman the younger arrived on campus at just 16 years old, apparently as successful in the classroom as in the gym. Because of his early admission to Queen’s, he and his older brother were able to graduate the same year.

But one degree was not enough for Mr. Newman. After graduating with a major in history, he started a second degree in biology, according to Queen’s records. The degree wouldn’t be completed, but it meant that Mr. Newman was a Golden Gael in both the ’30s and the early ’40s. By then, Queen’s had a long history in basketball. Canada’s first-ever intercollegiate basketball game pitted Queen’s against McGill at Kingston’s YMCA gymnasium on Feb. 6, 1904. The game was played just 13 years after basketball had been invented by McGill alumnus James Naismith.
Mr. Newman, a 5’10” forward, was described in a 1942 Whig-Standard column as “a great team player, fine ball handler, consistent scorer, and all-around player.”

In the Tricolour yearbook for 1939, Mr. Newman is seated front row in the senior men’s team photo. His brother Norman, the team manager, is standing right behind him. The team went 2–13 that year, but the win–loss record doesn’t tell the whole story. The Gaels had close-fought contests against rivals McGill and the University of Toronto and held their own against highly ranked U.S. college teams during a tour south of the border.

In the 1941 Tricolour, Benny Newman is listed on the university’s intermediate men’s team. By then, his beloved big bother Norman had left campus to work at the family business in St. Catharines. Tragedy, however, was just around the corner, and it would cut short Benny Newman’s time at Queen’s.

A squib on the sports pages of The Queen’s Journal on Nov. 14, 1941, tells the story: “It was with regret the news of the death of Norman Newman, Arts’39, was learned here the other day. Although Norm was not known to many of the present student body, he will be ‘remembered as an athlete and a student.’ He played on the senior basketball team in 1937–38 and managed it in his final year. His death came after a lengthy illness. He was a brother of Ben Newman, an undergraduate from St. Catharines, Ontario.”

Benny Newman would stay on at Queen’s for another year. By then, three years into the Second World War, the university had cancelled intercollegiate sports. But Queen’s allowed its facilities to be used by the Combines, a regional basketball team composed of the university’s student athletes, including Mr. Newman, and others in the city.

Mr. Newman left Queen’s in 1943. His father needed help with his business after Norman’s death and Benny had to step up, says his grandson, Mr. Williams.

Benny Newman was not through with basketball, however. In the fall of 1943, inspired by the belief that sports make boys into better men, he created the first of two St. Catharines basketball teams that would bring the city glory.

“The first thing that had to be done was to organize a real good senior team,” Mr. Newman wrote in a retrospective for the St. Catharines Standard in 1961, “one which would give the lads something to aim at.” He padded his team, the Merriton Hayes Hellcats, with American stars and coached them to a Canadian championship in 1944.

The ensuing basketball fever in St. Catharines allowed Mr. Newman to pursue his real goal: creating a strong local minor squad. The Hellkittens won the junior national championship in 1945, the same year the Hellcats won their second senior title. “Without exception,” Mr. Newman would later recall, “those boys have gone on to be successful in many lines of business.”

Suddenly, the former Golden Gael was the most talked-about man in Canadian basketball. The Toronto Rotary Club approached him to put together a charity basketball event at Maple Leaf Gardens, the cathedral of Canadian sports. Frank Selke, acting on behalf of the Toronto Maple Leafs’ managing director, Conn Smythe, granted permission to use the Gardens, but would not spring for a hardwood floor to be laid over the ice. Undaunted, Mr. Newman paid for the new floor himself.

The doubleheader, featuring the Canadian champion Merriton Hayes Hellcats against U.S. amateur...
champion Phillips 66ers and the Rochester Royals taking on the Fort Wayne Pistons (now the Detroit Pistons), was a sellout.

Two weeks after the event, an impressed Mr. Selke approached Mr. Newman to represent the Maple Leafs in a meeting in New York City in which big-city arena owners and NHL team bosses would hash out the details of a new pro basketball league, the Basketball Association of America (later the NBA).

That June, 26-year-old Benny Newman found himself in the vast, ornate lobby of New York’s Commodore Hotel getting ready to negotiate with NHL legends such as Walter Brown, owner of the Boston Bruins, and James Norris, owner of the Detroit Red Wings. It didn’t faze him a bit.

“This kid had unbelievable gumption and chutzpah,” Mr. Newman’s grandson says.

With a Toronto franchise in his pocket, Mr. Newman returned home to help put together his team. The Huskies hired Ed Sadowski, a 6’5” centre from Seton Hall University, to be player-coach. The team reportedly made overtures to Jackie Robinson, then playing baseball with the Montreal Royals, but Robinson was already having talks with the Brooklyn Dodgers and decided to stay with baseball. Among the other Huskies was 6’8” George Nostrand.

To promote the opening game, the Huskies offered a free ticket to anyone taller than the big man.

Benny Newman’s team made history with its first game that fall, but its fortunes soon waned. Sadowski quit after the first few games, shifting to the Boston Celtics. General manager Lew Hayman and one of the team’s major backers, Eric Craddock, had divided loyalties; they both had a piece of another Canadian sports franchise just finding its feet, the Montreal Alouettes. And when Mr. Newman’s father fell ill early in the season, the Huskies’ most avid promoter had to reluctantly pull back.

The team went 22–38 for the season, finishing in last place. The crowds in Maple Leaf Gardens dwindled and the Huskies folded after one season. And yet, Canadian interest in basketball grew exponentially in the next two decades, thanks largely to the success of the professional basketball league Benny Newman had helped create.

When a star-studded Canadian men’s basketball team takes to the floor at the Paris Olympics this summer – representing Canada’s best hope to medal in the sport since its 1936 Olympic debut – they might want to spare a thought for a stocky former Golden Gael who stirred Canadian excitement in basketball long before the Toronto Raptors were hatched.
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Hear inspiring stories of philanthropists and their passions in this award-winning podcast hosted by Deborah Melman-Clement.

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Dr. Paul Hebert, Arts’69, can't recall a time when he wasn’t “insect fixated.” It all started with a couple of naughty moths, which sparked a 70-year fascination with biodiversity. In April, Dr. Hebert received the 2024 Benjamin Franklin Medal in Earth and Environmental Science for his work as the “father of DNA barcoding.” Previous Benjamin Franklin Medal laureates include Nikola Tesla, Pierre and Marie Curie, and Albert Einstein. Only the fourth Canadian to receive the honour – Queen’s Nobelist Arthur McDonald is another – Dr. Hebert invented DNA barcoding: a method capable of identifying all the world’s species and a technology that underpins the work of the International Barcode of Life Consortium based at the Centre for Biodiversity Genomics in Guelph.

I don’t remember much about my parents – well, that’s not true, I remember a lot about them, but my earliest memories in life are of insects, not my parents. My first job was delivering the Kingston Whig-Standard when I was 12, but my childhood preoccupation was collecting insects. It began at age six when I found a pair of mating Cecropia moths – they’re about 15 centimetres across. I was enchanted by their size, colour, and smell; I believe this encounter set me on a lifelong quest to understand the species that share our planet.
My meeting with these magnificent moths stimulated the desire to collect insects. At the time, Kingston had farms on its edge, so the collecting fields were just a five-minute walk from my home. I was not alone – a small band of boys roamed the neighbourhood with nets in hand.

When I was 15, I developed plans to manipulate moth sizes by transplanting their endocrine glands and dispatched letters seeking advice to Queen’s, the Royal Ontario Museum, and the University of Western Ontario (now Western University). All responded, but one opened an encounter with Father Jules Riottte at the ROM. It was particularly impactful because he asked if I might like a summer of mothing at the Queen’s University Biology Station. I accepted in a flash – this unpaid position involved collecting until midnight, rising at 5 a.m. to take a second sweep of the lights, and then tending caterpillars by day. The next summer brought more mothing with Father Riottte – July in Rondeau Provincial Park, based in a garage owned by one of his parishioners, before repositioning in August to the Harkness Field Station in Algonquin Park.

Over these summers, I met several professors in biology at Queen’s, and this soon led to my involvement in the gig economy. While at high school and throughout university, I probed fish stomachs for Allen Keast, counted black flies for Allen West, raised caterpillars for Bev Smallman, and hunted colonies of tent caterpillars for Dolf Harmersen. I’m certain these experiences catalyzed my transition from an insect-fascinated kid to a successful career in science. And that’s why I’ve found life as a professor so rewarding: it provides endless opportunities to mentor the next generation of biodiversity scientists.

As told to Jeff Pappone
in English at Queen’s, she was again drawn to linguistics. In her third year, she volunteered for a linguistics lab that was testing kids’ pronunciation of nonsense words. Researchers noticed that they would read them using the same rules of English even though the words were made up. It demonstrated, she says, that we intuitively understand certain conventions of our language.

Telling a story with palindromes was Ms. Bontje’s original idea for Was It a Cat I Saw? – an idea that began during the pandemic after she had been laid off from her job and found herself at home with her two kids. One day the name Hannah popped into her mind and she recalls thinking, “Hey, that’s kind of fun. That’s a palindrome.”

Her original concept was to write an entire book, line for line, that could be read forwards and backwards. She struggled with that concept, she admits, and eventually shifted gears to having Hannah and her friend head off on an adventure around palindromes, which are never gone. She started out in a classroom who has discovered palindromes for the first time and thinks they’re the coolest thing.

“Maybe the average kid doesn’t notice [palindromes], but I know somewhere out there, there’s a kid sitting in a classroom who has discovered palindromes for the first time and thinks they’re the coolest thing.”

Was It a Cat I Saw? is available now from Amicus Ink.

– Matt Harrison
Gord Wetherall, Sc’49, didn’t get a room of his own until he was 22. Just back from convoy duty in the North Atlantic and about to begin his classes at Queen’s, he moved into a room at the back of the second floor of 391 Brock Street, a student boarding house since the early ’30s.

“I felt pretty important,” says Mr. Wetherall, who turned 100 this year.

Though the move was significant, it wasn’t very far. For nine years before the war, he had spent his nights on a pull-out couch in the living room of 391 Brock. The redoubtable woman who ran the boarding house with miraculous efficiency over three decades was referred to by most of the students living in her home as Mrs. Wetherall. To Gord Wetherall, she was Mom.

Mr. Wetherall never really got to know the other students in the boarding house during his years at Queen’s.

“I was too busy during noon hours to really have any contact with them,” he says. “I remember grabbing a plate of food in the kitchen between washing dishes and setting tables and so on. I was part of the workforce.”

He had been “part of the workforce” since the family moved to 391 Brock St. in 1934 from a smaller house on Nelson Street, where they had also taken in student
boarders. Mr. Wetherall’s mother, Lulu, needed all hands on deck to make the massive undertaking at 391 Brock work.

Until male residences were built in the 1950s, most Queen’s students lived in boarding houses like Mrs. Wetherall’s, according to Testing Tradition, the third volume in the official university history by Duncan McDowall, Arts’72, MA’74.

The home at 391 Brock had five bedrooms available for students, two of them doubles, so room for seven young men altogether. The family slept downstairs. A bedroom had been carved out of the home’s big living room, and Lulu Wetherall, her husband, Frank – a guard at the Collins Bay penitentiary – and Gord Wetherall’s younger sister, June, slept there. That left Gord on the living room sofa until he became a Queen’s student himself.

Mrs. Wetherall offered both room and board to her students – three full meals a day – and linen service, all for about $30 a month. “I even remember her making the beds,” says Mr. Wetherall. But her responsibilities didn’t end there.

She also provided meals to other students in rooming houses that didn’t offer board – a lot of other students. Twelve young men sat around the big dining room table for each meal. Then Gord Wetherall and his sister quickly cleared and reset the table for another 12 waiting in the foyer. Twenty-four meals. Three times a day.

“It sure was a lot of cooking, and she was all alone,” says Mr. Wetherall. For supper, he recalls, “she would usually have a soup, a meat-and-potato-type dish, and a dessert, which would usually be pie. It was a substantial meal.”

Mr. Wetherall’s daughter, Jacquie Arbuckle, Arts’71, Ed’72, says her grandmother’s years feeding famished scholars left her wondrously fast in the kitchen. “When I was a youngster,” she remembers, “and we would go and visit, it was always at Christmas and Easter when the roomers were gone. I remember she could peel a potato in a second. And make pies? She just made hundreds of pies and she was so fast at it.”

Gord Wetherall doesn’t remember missing anything growing up in the busy household, except maybe a quiet place to study. Living with seven virtual strangers and having 17 more troop in three times a day was just “normal life,” he says. “It was what I was used to.”

Tell us about the University District house you lived in and the memories you made: review@queensu.ca

FROM THE QUAA

Working together to find solutions

A call for alumni support – and a fond farewell

In February, I had the opportunity to moderate a conversation with Principal Deane regarding the budget challenges Queen’s is facing. I was impressed by the number of Queen’s alumni who joined the online conversation, and the thoughtfulness of the questions. It was clear that alumni care deeply about the future of the institution and are keen to find ways to assist Queen’s.

How can you help? Let me start with a plug for the Queen’s University Alumni Association Board of Directors. Over the last year, the Board of Directors has reviewed our operations and has proposed changes in order to be more inclusive and ensure a meaningful experience for volunteers. These changes were recently approved by the Alumni Assembly and, at their core, add a lens of Indigenization, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Accessibility and Anti-Racism to everything we do. This includes a more horizontal decision-making structure, the addition of an equity representative, and the creation of committees that allow participation of alumni outside the Board of Directors.

Recruitment for open positions occurs annually, so if you are committed to serving others, I encourage you to check the Queen’s alumni website or reach out to the Board for future openings. We need strong communicators – alumni who can convey key messages and engage with and advocate for diverse alumni audiences. This is a chance to be at the forefront of setting and achieving strategic goals that define the future of alumni engagement.

Other opportunities to engage in the life and work of the university include running for University Council, applying to be a part of Alumni Assembly, getting involved with your local branch or chapter, or putting your hand up to be a reunion coordinator. If you’re able to do so, donating to an area of the university you are passionate about can also go a long way. Each of these roles helps create the vibrant fabric of the alumni community, reinforcing the strength and resilience of Queen’s. We have faced difficult times in the past but have always worked together to find innovative solutions and emerge stronger. This is one of those times, and your university needs your support.

Lastly, after a decade of volunteering for the QUAA, my time with the Board has ended. The QUAA is in good hands with the incoming President, Allison Williams, Artsci’09, whose volunteerism with Queen’s goes back almost two decades. Allison is an Agnes Benidickson Tricolour Award winner and was the inaugural President of the Queen’s Student Alumni Association and is exceptionally well-suited to guide the Alumni Association forward. As I sign off, I want to thank the alumni community for their engagement, thoughtful discussions, and their commitment to Queen’s. It has truly been an honour.

Cha Gheill!

Sincerely,
COLIN MCLEOD,
PRESIDENT, QUAA

QUEENSU.CA/ALUMNI REVIEW
Reitumetse Kholumo started her company, Kwela Brews, to help support South African women who practise the art of brewing traditional African beer. Kwela Brews works with women to help them find new markets for their beer and supplies ingredients to help ensure they brew a safe and high-quality product. Ms. Kholumo applied to be part of the Jim Leech Mastercard Foundation Fellowship on Entrepreneurship program as an undergraduate at the University of Cape Town. Following the successful completion of the program, she took home a $10,000 prize in the Dunin-Deshpande Summer Pitch Competition.

Can you tell me a little bit about Kwela Brews?
My grandmother, Mamodise Matjele, was a home brewer of traditional African beer and I first thought that I wanted to be a brewer myself, but that wasn’t enough – I wanted to imagine a world in which Black women could create employment for themselves and where we could reimagine this method of self-empowerment in a way that still centres home brewers but allows more people to access our heritage, which is something we’re very proud of.

What is traditional African beer?
Traditional African beer is made from sorghum, and it is very sacred in African spirituality, but it’s also very linked to our culture. Women mainly brew it and are the custodians of our Indigenous knowledge systems. It’s food before it’s alcohol: in traditional African beer, you use wholesome grains and, unlike barley beer, you don’t separate all the solids out, so you still have grain in the final product. You also drink it while it’s still in the fermenting state, so you get good bacteria along with it.

And you’re honouring your grandmother a little bit as well with Kwela Brews?
Oh, yes, a whole lot. I see myself as a continuation of my ancestors. My grandmother is on our advisory board because we need somebody who has the lived experience. Just having that relationship with my grandma has been a huge learning opportunity for me. Had I not done chemical engineering, I probably wouldn’t be worried about beer, or rethinking how we do development through beer.

When did you do the summer pitch for Queen’s, you talked about a three-year plan. How are things going?
We were still at around Year 2. Since winning, we’ve been building a core team. I’ve learned that $10,000 isn’t enough to enter the broader market, but the funding really helped in terms of actually grounding Kwela Brews and really affirmed that my idea and work were valid. It’s been very helpful in actually allowing us to operate and in getting the resources for the home brewers so they can do the magic.

Tell me a bit about your experience with the Jim Leech Mastercard Foundation Fellowship on Entrepreneurship.
When I applied, I was new to starting a business and still very wishy-washy in the planning. The program gave me a chance to really reflect on what work I’m trying to do and really opened me to the idea that it is a journey: you’re not going to get it figured out on the first try.
“It is intriguing how Indigenous knowledge holders can intuit process steps that are scientifically sound.”

Did you ever think that a university 10,000 kilometres away would be helping brew traditional African beer?
Not at all, but I often find that people who are far away can actually imagine something that is different quite easily compared to somebody who is rooted locally. I feel like it was also wholesome, because the people who were 10,000 kilometres away were sometimes my biggest cheerleaders.

Can you talk a bit about your personal journey with Kwela Brews?
From an Indigenous sort of perspective, I see myself as a continuation of my ancestors, so this is a twist of what they would have done a few generations ago. It’s really bringing together our connection to the Earth once again and our connection to each other, because I’m seeing opportunities where other children will want to learn about what the malting process looks like when their grandmas do it and then they can also see the science behind it. It’s been a very wholesome experience to know that school isn’t the only place where knowledge is produced and valuable.

– Jeff Pappone

What led to some beer makers in South Africa compromising on quality?
Traditional African beer was outlawed for a long time in South Africa and cutting corners became very popular. If you don’t know when the police are going to raid your home and you spend time and resources on making an authentic product that is actually nutritious and then the police arrive and just spill it out, then you’ve wasted food, you’ve wasted money, you’ve wasted energy. Whereas if you have cut corners, it’s not a good product, but it will still generate an income for you, and you won’t lose as much when the police show up.

Quality is important at Kwela Brews – can you tell us a bit about that?
We are working with home brewers who use the authentic process, and we provide the ingredients so they don’t compromise on them. We also do quality testing because methanol poisoning is a prominent concern when it comes to home-brewed beer. We know that when brewed according to the authentic process, the good bacteria will out-compete the bad bacteria, because the first stage of brewing creates enough acidity to prevent the pathogenic bacteria from growing in the beer. It is intriguing how Indigenous knowledge holders can intuit process steps that are scientifically sound.
In today’s social media-saturated environment, businesses are working harder than ever to provide the highest degree of customer service. By providing unique services, attention to detail, and a dedicated, caring team, companies earn the kind of loyalty and praise that helps them succeed and speed their growth.

Every satisfied customer today is an influencer. No one knows this more than the team at Gordon’s Downsizing and Estate Services, a thriving company serving individuals and families with real estate and downsizing or estate-settlement needs throughout southern Ontario.

Adam Gordon, President of Gordon’s Downsizing and a graduate of Queen’s University, says he is proud to head up a dynamic, experienced team who all share a similar goal.

“We come to work every day to provide the best possible service to the people who hire us to help them through some of the most stressful times in their life,” he says. “Through experience, we’ve developed an ability to understand when they’re struggling and provide the clarity and direction they need to successfully complete the process.”

Gordon’s began as an auction house over 60 years ago, downsizing farmers and farm estates. Today it has evolved to become a respected one-stop-shop real-estate company for downsizers, estate trustees, and powers of attorneys. Services include include real-estate sales expertise; move management; appraisal of property and possessions; certified executor advisers; and start-to-finish project management.

Adam Gordon remembers that when the company began offering these bundled services, people were skeptical. “People weren’t sure if they should be trying to get all of their downsizing needs as part of one managed service.”

But customers quickly learned the benefit of being able to work their way through downsizing and estate tasks while working with one company focused on them and their goals.

Customer testimonials highlight the intense satisfaction they derived from working with Gordon’s Downsizing.

Customer Patrick Johnston praised the team after a move to a smaller house in a new city in late 2023. “(The experience) was much smoother as a result of our decision to engage Gordon’s to help with the transition,” he wrote on social media. “From selling our home to helping organize the move to post-move support, Gordon’s deep experience was evident throughout the whole process. And all of the Gordon’s team members we dealt with were unfailingly helpful and supportive. If and when we move again, our first call will be to Gordon’s.”

Like some other clients featured in this series, Linda Cross was so pleased with her first contract with Gordon’s, she became a return customer in 2023. Initially, she asked Gordon’s to help her with her late sister-in-law’s estate. Then, when her father passed away and her mother wanted to move out of the family home, the Gordon’s team was tasked with helping Cross’s mother select the pieces best suited to her new home, packed everything needed for the move and unpacked it at the new location.

“They even hung pics and curtains for her,” Cross recalled, adding that everyone in the office and on the moving crew “were so wonderful and responsive to her needs. They arranged the auction and took care of all disposals. Then Sherry came in and sold the house for over asking! It has truly been a life-changing experience for mom, and she is so happy she trusted Gordon’s to help her through it.”

Similar praise has been stated by customers throughout this series and on social media. Is it any wonder, as the Estate Services Manager Cathy Gordon says, “We hear the same sentiment from our clients all the time: ‘We couldn’t have done it without you.’”
Using her voice
Meredith Shaw is at the mic of Canada’s No. 1 morning show.

BY TARA JACKSON

The confidence to pursue opportunities and the stamina to stay the course. Those are the enduring gifts from Queen’s that Meredith Shaw credits for her dynamic career.

The ArtsSci’04 singer-songwriter, broadcaster, style expert, and inclusivity advocate was named co-host of Canada’s number one morning show, Citytv’s Breakfast Television, or BT for short, in September. Being part of a fast-paced morning television program has been a “joy” for the enthusiastic Ms. Shaw, who honed her skills at Queen’s through music and drama classes and extracurriculars such as the Queen’s Players, where she cemented lasting friendships.

“The Queen’s performance experience was a swirl of creativity giving me a network of people that have burst through, not necessarily in their original direction. I still meet up with many of those folks to this day – including on BT when they come on to promote a project.”

In addition to theatre work, Ms. Shaw regularly sang at Clark Hall and Alfie’s Pub and even inked her first record deal as a Queen’s student; she remembers waiting for the contract to come through on a fax machine in the John Deutsch University Centre.

She credits her opera and vocal training at Queen’s for much of that initial recording success – and for lingering benefits, too.

“Being a broadcaster and learning how to best use my voice, I learned 100 per cent through the music program.”

Ms. Shaw made three albums after graduating, earning accolades for her singing and songwriting talent from the likes of Willie Nelson, Joel Plaskett, and Geordie Johnson. It was on a tour stop in Winnipeg that she says she had a moment of reflection on where she wanted her career to go next.

“I always wanted to follow in the footsteps of Jann Arden or Sarah McLachlan, but I also looked up to [former Canadian TV broadcaster and current radio personality] Marilyn Denis, so one day I just googled how to host a radio show and found some opportunities.”

One of those opportunities was an on-air role at boom 97.3 in Toronto, which she immediately landed. From there, she rose to the top of the Toronto radio market at CHUM-FM, where she would spend nine years. It was during this time that Ms. Shaw found herself exploring the world of TV, doing style segments on The Marilyn Denis Show and co-hosting on another national lifestyle show, The Social.

When Breakfast Television came calling, Ms. Shaw hung up her radio headphones, albeit temporarily. She did not, however, move away from her commitment to advocating for inclusivity in fashion and style.

“I passionately believe in inclusivity and I hope that by being on TV it makes a difference,” says Ms. Shaw, who spotlights size-inclusive options in her on-air and personal style choices. “People aren’t necessarily used to seeing people like me on their screens, and if I saw me as a little girl, it would have made such an impact.”

She recently returned to the radio airwaves with a nationally syndicated brunch show airing Sunday mornings, but her weekdays are dedicated to the live four-hour TV program where she pivots from hosting cooking or fashion segments to interviewing politicians, discussing trending news topics, or covering pop-culture moments.

Ms. Shaw credits the improv skills she developed at Queen’s for the foundation needed to adapt to the rapidly changing nature of a live TV broadcast – and ultimately for much more.

“I was always focused on doing what I loved and I’ve learned the importance of showing up and being authentic. Queen’s really was the jumping-off point for where I am today.”

A DAY IN THE LIFE

4:15 A.M.
Wake up. Electrolytes and hydration, followed by coffee.

4:45 A.M.
Leave the house and jump on a call with the BT team.

5:15 A.M.
Hair and makeup with the “glam squad,” whom Ms. Shaw calls the unsung heroes of the early morning world.

5:45 A.M.
Dressed and mic’d up.

5:55 A.M.
Live on air until show ends at 10 a.m.

11 A.M.
Post-show meeting to prepare for the next day’s program. By noon, the rest of the day is typically her own.

4 OR 5 P.M.
Prep for next day’s interviews and segments.

8:30 P.M.
Ms. Shaw’s ideal bedtime, but evening appearances or tuning into events likely to be discussed the next morning often mean a later lights out.
Sheila Cornett
Arts’69, MA’72
Sheila has published letters her father, Don Cornett, Arts’47, wrote to his future wife, Marjory Lindsay, Arts’41, when he served with the Royal Canadian Artillery during the Second World War. In *Hoping to Hear from You Soon: Canadian War Letters, 1940–1945*, Sheila’s father describes what army life is like for Canadian servicemen during the long years of training in the United Kingdom. He also critiques Canada’s political leadership, discusses current affairs and the progress of the war, and expounds his views on bureaucracy within the army. The letters reveal that after his disembarkation in Normandy, Don’s endurance is tested further as he commands a battery through the battlefields of northwest Europe. The book is available from the FriesenPress Bookstore.

William E. (Bill) Roscoe
Sc’66
Bill was inducted into the Canadian Mining Hall of Fame.
in January. He, along with John T. Postle, founded the geological and mining consulting firm Roscoe Postle Associates (RPA) in 1985; the company grew to become a leader in the industry with an international reputation for excellence.

1970s

Hugh Agnew
Artsci’75
Hugh spent the 2023 fall semester teaching at Palacký University in Olomouc, Czech Republic, as a Fulbright Visiting Scholar. He is on sabbatical from his regular position as professor of history and international affairs at George Washington University (GW) in Washington, D.C., and was accompanied by his wife, Nancy MacLachlan, Mus’75. During the

1980s

David W. Barber
Mus’80
After more than 40 years working in newspaper and magazine

William David Cowling
Artsci’74, MBA’76
William retired at the end of 2023, after 35 years with the Ontario Public Service. This included five years at the cabinet office, mainly as their manager of planning and development for information technology. During his six years at Queen’s, he was best known for announcing and producing a range of CFRC programming, with a year as the classical music director, then two years as the FM programming director. After graduating, he worked for 10 years at the head office of C-I-L Inc., Canada’s largest chemical company (formerly Canadian Industries Limited), first in financial planning, then introducing automated office systems. Two family members are also Queen’s graduates: his sister, Anne Helena Cowling, Artsci’78; and his daughter, Louisa Rose Cowling, Ed’14.

David Hain
Arts’71, LLB’74
The Brockville Concert Band has been entertaining Brockville audiences for 50 years and now

Ruth (Olson) Latta
Arts’70, MA’73
Ruth has published her sixth Canadian historical novel. A Striking Woman is the story of true love and trade union organizing, loosely inspired by the life of Canadian activist and feminist Madeleine Parent. She’s encouraging those who’d like to know more about her books to visit her blog: ruthannelatta.blogspot.com.

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journals, David has retired from full-time work (though not from freelance writing, editing, or music). He began freelancing while still studying music, first for the Queen’s Performing Arts Office and then for the Kingston Whig-Standard. The Whig hired him full time in 1982, and his various roles there included night news editor, region editor, acting city editor, and entertainment editor—all while continuing to write news and arts stories and reviews, which earned him a special citation for critical writing from the National Newspaper Awards in 1986. In 1994, he left the Whig and co-owned a bookstore/café in Westport. In 1996, he began working for the Globe and Mail as editor of Broadcast Week magazine, then for the National Post, and finally for the Postmedia newspaper chain as national assistant editor of arts and life. He remains active in music as a singer and composer and as the author of 16 books of classical music history, literature, and short fiction—his most recent is the mystery novel Hedshot.

Annette (Saulnier) Bergeron Sc’87
Annette was announced in February as the official representative of the Fort Henry National Historic Site in Kingston, Ont., becoming the sixth, and first woman, Honorary Guard Commander of the Fort Henry Guard to serve there. The Queen’s grad is a past president of Engineers Canada and a former chair of the board of the Electrical Safety Authority and has served in other roles as an active member of the Kingston community. She has received numerous honours and awards for her contributions at the community, provincial, and national level.

Daryl O’Dowd Artsci’84
Daryl has been appointed private-sector trustee for the Weather Modification Association, where he will liaise with Canadian, U.S., and international NGOs engaged in commercial cloud-seeding for the purposes of precipitation enhancement, fog dispersion, and hail suppression in relation to climate change. About his new role, Daryl says: “With climate change a clear and present danger, businesses and governments can’t afford to simply hope for the best. Proactive measures are needed, and cloud-seeding can make a measurable difference when applied properly.”

1990s

Kathryn A. Gregory MA’91
Following her graduation from Queen’s, Kathryn graduated from Osgoode Hall Law School and was called to the bar in Ontario and in New Brunswick in 1996. After practising for six years in a general practice law office in Fredericton, she went on to become a Crown prosecutor working in specialized prosecutions for New Brunswick Public Prosecution Services from 2003 until 2020. During that time, she was appointed as Queen’s Counsel (now King’s Counsel) in 2017. In November 2020, Kathryn was appointed a judge of the Court of King’s Bench, trial division, sitting in Saint John, N.B. She has her diploma from Queen’s proudly hanging on her office wall.

Joanna Kirke Artsci’97
Joanna is celebrating two milestones this year: she got married to Qayyum Rajan on Sept. 9, 2023, in Collingwood, Ont., surrounded by a close circle of family and friends; and she’s also celebrating 10 years as president of kirkeleadership.com, which delivers virtual training experiences in emotional intelligence, design thinking, and change.

Chloë Whitehorn Artsci’98
Chloë’s play, Blood River, about the crisis of women’s health rights,
was produced by Theatre Kingston in October 2023. Coming up, Bottle Tree Productions will produce her play *Dressing Amelia* as part of their studio series in Kingston. *Dressing Amelia* runs from May 30 to June 15, 2024.

2000s

Mark Haines-Lacey
MBA’03
Mark, principal and CEO at Atlantic Growth Solutions, launched RevTalent in August 2023; RevTalent is a talent recruitment service focused on filling revenue-generating roles (sales and marketing) for clients.

2010s

Michael Green and Taylor MacPherson
Artsci’15, MA’16 and Artsci’15, Ed’16
Michael and Taylor celebrated their marriage on Jan. 20. The ceremony took place at the McMichael Canadian Art Collection in Vaughan, Ont. They were surrounded by family and friends (and quite a few Queen’s alumni!) for the joyous occasion. The couple first met living on the same floor during their first year in residence at Waldron Tower. Over the years, their friendship evolved into a deep and lasting relationship. They became close friends, then housemates, and even served as residence dons together. They started dating just before embarking on their graduate school experiences at Queen’s. They are now proud parents in Kingston with a beautiful family and a home they cherish. Both have found careers within the Queen’s community: Taylor currently serves as the co-ordinator, student leadership and development, in the Student Experience Office, while Michael works as the co-ordinator, global engagement projects and events, in the Office of the Vice-Provost, Global Engagement.

IN MEMORIAM

Mary Ballantyne
BA’03

Todd Barr
BA’92, BEd’98

Stephen Bennett
BSc’82

Madaleine “Bandit” Brookes
BA’53

Ivan Campbell
Professor Emeritus

Patrick Earle Carr
MPhil’94

Helen Cooey Chalifoux
BA’53

Jocelyn Mary Davie, nee McDonald
BComH’82

Mark Fleming
BScH’89

William (Bill) Ross Frisken
BSc’56, MSc’57

Scott Garland
JD’22

Margaret Muriel Gibson
MD’76

Robert Melville Green
MSc’74, PhD’77

Marion Harbin
BA’54, BPHE’55

Robert (Bob) James Hubbard
BA’79, BEd’80

Roger T. Hughes
BSc’63

Simon Joseph Kovacs
MD’62

Hans Kummer
PhD’72

Harry MacPhee Lewis
BSc’56

Thérèse Gauthier Lynch
MD’55

Joel H. Mazer
BSc’54

Edwin John Mills
BSc’51

Vincent Mosco
Professor Emeritus

Dorothy Nixon, nee Herbst
BA’53

George Oliver
MBA’82

Marvin Olson
MD’56

Ray Peters
Professor Emeritus

James Ward Quinton-Clark
PhD’58

Michael Ross
LLB’79

Elizabeth Ann Shaver, nee Barrett
BA’67

(Carl) George Spencer
BSc’56

Richard Steinberg
BSc’49

Jean Tucker-Galiepeau
BA’41

Philip Ein Wannamaker
BSc’76

William Robert “Bob” Whyte
MD’55

NOTE

Full obituaries submitted by family members and friends can be found on the Queen’s Alumni Review website.
If the daughters of Tom Beynon, BSc’65 (mechanical) had only two words to describe their father, it would be “gentle giant.”

But they have a lot more to say than that.

Their dad had a full life and a full heart, says Michaela Beynon, Sc’11, MSc’13, who idolized him growing up.

Michaela, daughter Natasha Beynon, and son Adrian were by their father’s side when he passed away peacefully two weeks shy of his 82nd birthday in June 2023.

“He was just so giving. He did everything in his power to make things happen for anyone who crossed his path,” Michaela says.

That included his football teammates at Queen’s and in the Canadian Football League, his colleagues and clients during a 40-plus-year career in law and business, his community of Waterloo, Ont., and his wife, Gail Lockyer, and family.

“Big boy” are two other words his kids use to describe him – a phrase that suited him well as a star offensive lineman for his high school football team in Waterloo and later at Queen’s.

Their father arrived at Queen’s in 1961 to begin a degree in mechanical engineering. He thought he would join the Gaels right away, but one of his professors dissuaded him.

“Dad used to tell this story,” remembers Natasha. “In one of his first classes at Queen’s, this engineering prof said, ‘Look to the person to your right, look to the person to your left. Only one of you will graduate.’”

That scared the young lad enough to hang up the cleats – at least until his third year, when he thought he could balance the rigours of academic and athletic life.

He went on to make a name for himself on the Gaels offensive line and help win two Yates Cups, presented annually to Ontario’s top university football team.

But he didn’t usually talk too much about his football days at Queen’s, say his daughters.

“I think it was just the Queen’s community in general that was more important than anything else when it came to the school,” says Michaela. “It gave him that family away from home, and he had friends from Queen’s to the last day of his life. He was definitely a Gael through and through. He loved Queen’s.”

He also didn’t want to be known as a jock, says Natasha. “He loved football, but he wanted to be known as an academic, and he used sports as a way to do that.”

Take his decision in 1965 to enter the CFL draft and accept an offer from the Hamilton Tiger-Cats. It was all about funding a law degree at the University of Western Ontario that he would complete at the same time as playing professional football.

It didn’t quite work out as planned,
however. Mr. Beynon never played for the Ticats, and by the end of his first year in law school he was out of money.

He was ever the problem-solver, though. When the Ticats traded him to the Regina-based Saskatchewan Roughriders in 1966, he decided to report to the team until late September. That’s when he would have enough funds to quit football and go back to law school at Western.

But, another problem: the Roughriders were winning. Mr. Beynon was torn about his secret plan and told a teammate about it. Unexpectedly, that confession led to an offer to transfer to law school at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon (apparently the dean was a huge Roughriders fan). He took the offer and commuted the three hours back and forth between Regina and Saskatoon until he had his law degree.

Mr. Beynon ended up winning the Grey Cup in 1966 with the Roughriders and played in it again in 1967. In 1968, he was traded to the Ottawa Rough Riders, where he won another Grey Cup that year and a third in 1969 – all while articling at a law firm in the capital.

The whole CFL–law school ordeal was typical Dad, say his daughters. “He was the most calm, cool, collected human,” says Michaela. “It was always ‘If there’s a will, there’s a way.’”

That kind of stoic problem-solving would serve Mr. Beynon well as a lawyer specializing in corporate, business, technology, and intellectual property law. He was a partner at Gowling & Henderson and McCar- ter Grespan Beynon Weir, and also practiced at Sims Clement Eastman.

He was passionate about the tech startup scene as well. He became the president and CEO of Waterloo Micro Systems in 1986 and later co-founded two startup support organizations in Kitchener and Waterloo – Communitech and Accelerator Centre. At Queen’s, he was a director and vice-chair of PARTEQ Innovations, a not-for-profit that supported Queen’s researchers in marketing their inventions (it’s now part of Queen’s Partnerships and Innovation).

“He also fully and firmly believed in education,” says Natasha. “He always wanted to learn.”

That included regular guest lecturing gigs at the University of Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier University, taking corporate courses at Harvard University, and, at 65, getting his master’s degree of law in intellectual property at York University.

Yet, as full as his working and academic life was, he had a full life outside of it, too, say his daughters. He was an avid golfer, skier, sailor, and Baskin-Robbins aficionado. He also served on various boards, including the Grand River Hospital’s in Kitchener, and was on the founding committee of Hospice Waterloo Region, where he spent his final days.

But he always made time for Natasha, Michaela, and Adrian, whether that meant showing up for dance recitals, basketball games, equestrian competitions, or ski trips to Collingwood, Ont.

“He never said ‘no,’” says Michaela. “The man didn’t need sleep. So, I hope he’s resting peacefully now because he deserves it.”

She also hopes his legacy of being an intelligent, caring human lives on. “He cared so much about those different communities he was part of in his life. He loved Queen’s, he loved the Waterloo community, his work community. So, I hope people remember him for his love and passion for making all those communities better.”

Natasha wishes for the same. “He had such a huge heart, and his message was always that the world is your oyster. There’s never something that’s not within your reach. You just might have to work a little harder to get there. And he did that.”

– Jordan Whitehouse

PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF THE BEYNON FAMILY

▲ A family snapshot of Tom Beynon with his children, from left, Natasha, Michaela, and Adrian, in Nova Scotia.
One Last Thing

Thought that Canadians were largely dishonest and uncivilized. But the great majority of Queen’s people – students and academics – were decent and warm-hearted people – that I learned very quickly.

What is the best advice I can give you today? In life, most of us make two decisions that are far more important than any others. The choice of profession and the choice of our mate. I am reminded of the saying of one of the world’s ablest chemists, Vladimir Prelog, who celebrated his 80th birthday this year. Asked about happiness, he said, ‘If you want to be happy for an hour, buy a bottle of wine; if you want to be happy for a week, slaughter a pig; if you want to be happy for a year, get married; if you want to be happy for your life, enjoy your work: To which I would add, ‘Enjoy your work and find a mate with whom you can share everything, and you will be as close to paradise as you can be: As I am. By a happy coincidence, today is Isabel’s 60th birthday. We met on a boat from Quebec to Liverpool in 1949, and it took me nine days to propose. Today I wonder why it took me so long – I just had not proposed to a girl before and so I was a bit slow. The only flaw I discovered in Isabel in all these years was her going to the University of Toronto. None of us is perfect.

A great many Queen’s people have helped me, and I have tried to repay those many acts of kindness by helping others,” Alfred Bader told a convocation audience on Nov. 1, 1986.

The two most important decisions you will ever make

Remembering Alfred Bader on his 100th birthday

On April 28, Alfred Bader, who, along with his beloved wife, Isabel, is among Queen’s University’s most generous benefactors, would have turned 100 years old. As we mark this milestone, we remember him in his own words – a 1986 convocation address in which he shared what he learned at Queen’s, his secret to a happy life, and the value of helping others.

I am especially happy to be awarded the degree of LLD, Doctor of Laws, because I have sometimes secretly wished that I were a lawyer, and my good friends know how I have always enjoyed a fight when I knew – or thought I knew – that I was right.

Today, I want to talk to you very personally about what Queen’s has meant to me – how it has affected, nay, changed my life – and to share with you what I think is essential for a truly happy life.

To many people, a university is the place where you acquire a profession. And of course, at Queen’s I became a chemist – good enough to get into graduate school at Harvard, and to start a chemical company.

But Queen’s taught me more – it changed my outlook in very personal ways.

My first impressions of Canada were truly mistaken. From the time I came to [the internment camp in] Canada in July of 1940 until I came to Queen’s on 15 November, 1941, I thought that Canadians were largely dishonest and uncivilized. But the great majority of Queen’s people – students and academics – were decent and warm-hearted people – that I learned very quickly.

What is the best advice I can give you today? In life, most of us make two decisions that are far more important than any others. The choice of profession and the choice of our mate. I am reminded of the saying of one of the world’s ablest chemists, Vladimir Prelog, who celebrated his 80th birthday this year. Asked about happiness, he said, ‘If you want to be happy for an hour, buy a bottle of wine; if you want to be happy for a week, slaughter a pig; if you want to be happy for a year, get married; if you want to be happy for your life, enjoy your work: To which I would add, ‘Enjoy your work and find a mate with whom you can share everything, and you will be as close to paradise as you can be: As I am. By a happy coincidence, today is Isabel’s 60th birthday. We met on a boat from Quebec to Liverpool in 1949, and it took me nine days to propose. Today I wonder why it took me so long – I just had not proposed to a girl before and so I was a bit slow. The only flaw I discovered in Isabel in all these years was her going to the University of Toronto. None of us is perfect.

A great many Queen’s people have helped me, and I have tried to repay those many acts of kindness by helping others. At the end of my days, I pray that I will have succeeded as Queen’s succeeded with me – in helping others in their professions, in their perspectives, in their realization of their potential. The three P’s through Q – profession, perspective, potential through Queen’s.

– Edited from the original transcript, Nov. 1, 1986
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