



**Canadian Association of Rhodes Scholars
Newsletter**

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Contributions, tributes, letters, comments, suggestions and complaints can be sent to the Editor at:

canadianrhodesnewsletter@gmail.com

Editor:

Luke R.G. Pike
Newfoundland and St. John's, 2007

Cover Photo:

"Fall Colours"
Julia B. Tejblum

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From the Editor

Dear Readers,

I hope this edition of the Newsletter finds you all in good spirits as winter inevitably will soon make a turn towards spring. The first bloom of crocuses in the gardens in late February was always a very welcome sight!

And again with another passing year, scholars met in Ottawa to see the next group off to begin their studies in Oxford at the Sailing Dinner. In this issue, you'll find their biographies, the toasts from the Sailing Dinner, and impressions eight-weeks-in by 2015 scholar Logan Graham. I'm sure that all of these will bring back fond memories to returned scholars.

In a similar vein, I want to encourage readers to please submit written pieces for consideration by the Newsletter. Thoughts on current events, social justice, or topics in law, science, medicine, are all more than welcome!

Yours Sincerely,

Luke R.G. Pike (Newfoundland and St. John's, 2007)

Luke read for a D.Phil. in Medical Oncology at Oxford after graduating from Memorial University of Newfoundland with a B.Sc. (Joint Hons.) in Biochemistry and Chemistry. He then went on to obtain a Medical Degree from Yale University School of Medicine. He is currently a resident physician at Massachusetts General Hospital and the Harvard Radiation Oncology Program. He is the author of numerous publications in cancer research and in his spare time lifts weights and explores strange lands by motorcycle. He lives in Boston.



From the President of CARS

To my fellow Rhodies,

I write this on a particularly chilly day in Ottawa, which suggests that the new 'sunny ways' of the city have not yet impacted meteorology just yet. Although I suppose it was indeed sunny, just freezing.

I've been kept warm, metaphorically at least, by the considerable signs of Rhodes community building that continue to manifest. My inbox, like yours I expect, has been overrun with ongoing dialogue (mostly respectful) on how we live out our lives as Rhodes Scholars while acknowledging history, both our own and that of our award. At the same time, we've seen a flourish of community gatherings across the country, all highlighting that there is still great desire for Rhodes Scholars to gather, debate, and build community.

It is this spirit that the Canadian Association of Rhodes Scholars aims to cultivate and ennoble. We saw it in fine form at our Annual Sailing Dinner (quaint anachronism intended) this past September, where we celebrated a great crop of new Scholars. The dinner highlighted for me (again) the fantastic dialogue and idea germination that our extended community offers. The dinner toasts and speeches (nearly all catalogued in this issue) provoked fresh thinking, invited questioning, and audaciously nudged us to consider how to, like the Scholarship requires, use our talents to the full to fight the world's fight.

We'll have the chance to push this dialogue even further this coming autumn, when we plan to combine both the Sailing Dinner and a second iteration of the Alumni Weekend we successfully convened in May a few years ago. The weekend-long event will feature panels, time for reflection, and a series of extended social gatherings that can act as a platform to allow Rhodes Scholars and our extended community to do what it does best: cajole, agitate, consider, and network. Watch this space for dates and details, but we'll be leaning on you for attendance, suggestions, and inspiration.

All of this is part of the continued effort to make CARS relevant, and we invite you to be part of it. At the biennial general meeting we elected a fabulous committee that includes broad membership across years and geographies, but we invite you to help, be it with a newspaper article, a regional gathering, or simply attending one of our functions. We aim to continue to grow this community, and to create a sustainable alumni organization that can serve to bridge, bond, and bolster our interactions.

Finally, a word of thanks: in my continued role as President of CARS, I have been buoyed by the support of our members. Thank you for your dues, your attendance, your service, your encouragement, and your ideas.

I look forward to when we can next gather and I can thank you in person. All best wishes,

Mark

Mark Schaan (Manitoba and New, 2002)



Original Contributions

“Oxford Burn: The First 8 Weeks”

Logan Graham (British Columbia and Balliol, 2015)

If you’re reading this, you fit into one of two types of people. One—like my friends, and family—you probably want to know what I have been doing in life. Two—like the Rhodes community, or others—you may be interested in my reflections. (Aren’t the intangibles the hardest to read?) For the benefit of both, I’ll cater to the first here:

- In eight weeks, I found a home, an intellectual family, a place to push myself, and a future.
- I became a PhD student (almost by accident), and nominally (so far) an engineer.
- I spent more nights coding than nights sleeping soundly.
- I rowed hard (and won the novice championship for Balliol!).
- I flew to Spain to interview Nobel Peace Prize laureates.
- I taught myself fundamentals of neuroscience, genetics, and Artificial Intelligence.
- I found comfort in books, tweed jackets, and buildings hundreds of years old.
- I found a potentially next home in China.

“The Zeitgeist of Oxford & Rhodes, Right Now”

Logan Graham (British Columbia and Balliol, 2015)

A pinky finger on the pulse of Oxford. The buzz of Oxford is alive and well.

If you aren’t familiar with the Rhodes Scholars, let me share a common and grossly general observation: they are reputed for being public intellectuals, geared towards service, extremely diligent, sometimes bookwormish, and focused on a niche social issue. They typically go into academic or political roles—chairing committees, running for office, leading think tanks, writing books. In the United States, they have become a sort of cultural institution: a Rhodes Scholar is the highest personal benchmark, a do-no-wrong individual that represents flawless character and brilliant intellect in our time. A Rhodes Scholar is eloquent and athletic (and often gorgeous). They take themselves seriously.

This is an outdated, generalized, poor representation. But it’s not *wholly* inaccurate. Things have changed around Rhodes House. My year of Scholars is a good indicator. First, the makeup of our class is different—and encouraging. This year, we have seen a big push towards the hard and computational sciences. There are more mathematicians, engineers, bioinformaticians, physicists, neuroscientists, computer scientists. I believe this reflects leadership in the 21st century: we are entering,

quickly, a world where technological development creates states, destroys populations, engenders inequality, offers exponential solutions to the hardest scientific problems.

Second, we have medics. Everywhere. Many MD-PhDs—research medics, pushing the frontiers of health forwards. “Oh, they’re going to cure cancer” is a trope that’s easy to dismiss after so much repetition growing up. But you suddenly, and alarmingly, realize it’s a very real future—at a chat you’re having over apple juice at a Meet & Mingle at Rhodes House.

Third, existential crises are different. It’s an unwritten rule that you can’t be a Rhodes Scholar without questioning your purpose and existence daily. (In discussion, around other scholars we often parody this: “*I don’t know, should we go to a pub right now, or should we go fight the world’s fight?*”) But now, I see classmates shirking grand responsibility, and also shirking traditional paths. I’ve met more entrepreneurial types, more proponents of “failure”, more innovators & public intellectual-types & technologists (having an ex-entrepreneur as a Warden helps). I love to find the cynics, the extreme personalities, the eccentrics, the weirdos. I believe that this is a very, very good sign: we need more of these people—less formulaic characters, more creatives and tinkerers, more people unafraid of social custom and limitations; step change innovation over incremental improvement. (I must recognize, though, the limitations of people’s personal circumstances in pursuing risky outcomes. I thank my friend Ali—with whom I really, really adore clashing, and also a Scholar—for this important note that I hadn’t considered well enough.)

[I particularly loved reading the daily forum updates of the online Rhodes Scholars network forum. There was one post by a former scholar asking if anyone felt shame for choosing a path that didn’t involve an arduous, worldly-scoped fight for good. I was so, so happy to see that even if you don’t follow the Rhodes model post-Oxford, you can’t avoid one thing: you have character, leadership, and inspiration, and that is a very good thing for whatever community you are a part of.]

To give you an idea of the conversational zeitgeist of the term, these conversations were particularly prevalent: open borders; refugees; Rhodes Must Fall and decolonization on campus; Black Lives Matter; feminism (including a controversial and electric workshop with Naomi Wolf); intersectionality and race on campus. But, my favourite conversation goes to a short late-evening one with Ben, a fellow Canadian Scholar—we asked: *should men cry more? How has visible emotionality benefited you? How ought you relate to your emotions, as a man?*

Editor’s Note:

Logan Graham is an entrepreneur with a passion for using the principles of economics to solve social problems. He has a lifelong history of engagement in social causes. Before he was 10 he co-founded the Children’s Arthritis Foundation to help other children living with juvenile arthritis, eventually leading to national

advocacy and a keynote speech at the world's largest conference on arthritis in Washington DC. At university he went on to co-found Yunus & Youth, a global fellowship program that connects mentors with young people using business to drive social change. Logan has completed research in auction theory and is currently writing his honours thesis on inequality. These pieces and others by Logan can be found online in his [blog](#).

**“Some Oxford Memorabilia”: The 1971 Oxford University Ice Hockey Team
After Beating Cambridge 13-5 at the Varsity Match**

Contributed by

Andrew Rowan (Diocesan College Rondebosch and Oriel, 1968)



From L to R, TOP: Colin Brizecki, Derek Wade, Bob Girley, Adrian de Hoog (Saskatchewan and Worcester, 1969); SECOND ROW: Danny Williams (Newfoundland and Keble, 1969), John Page (Nova Scotia and Magdalen, 1969)
THIRD ROW: Hugh Arnold, John Scott
BOTTOM: Andrew Rowan (holding cup) and unknown

Editor’s note: Please feel free to reach out to Andrew at arowan@humanesociety.org

“A Letter to the Editor”

Boudewyn Van Oort (Ontario and University, 1961)

Thank you for the Newsletter which I read with interest. Luke’s comment about Cecil Rhodes’ fall from grace at the University of Cape Town touches on my own, personal history in an oblique sort of way. I am not quite sure whether or not those who smeared the statue with feces were protesting against the scholarship, as is suggested by Luke’s comment. The daily fare of news from around the world is replete with similar mindless acts, often of greater import for mankind than the banishment of Cecil Rhodes to the dungeons. Mankind has always been prone to absurdities. That is the sad message conveyed by history.

I am just recovering from taking the Victoria Children’s Choir to the Netherlands to help that country celebrate the seventieth anniversary of its liberation by the Canadian army. The tour, lasting from April 25 to May 7, was a resounding success, and the children (11-16 years) did a wonderful job of representing Canada at six formal occasions. For the twenty-two children the tour was highly educational, entertaining and without a shadow of a doubt leaves a permanent imprint on them. My being in command of the Dutch language and also having some contacts in the country allowed me to flesh out the itinerary and secure performance invitations. Wherever they went, they stole the show.

Securing financial assistance for this venture was a challenge and illustrates my earlier point about history. Of all the theaters of war, where Canadian soldiers have lain down their lives, it is only the Netherlands that to this day says “Thank you”. This is remarkable, particularly given the limited attention that liberation campaign has secured in Canada. I wonder how many people who enjoy the tulips along the Rideau canal are aware of the reason for this generosity by the Dutch? Canada has done something to be very proud of.

The children of the VCC got a number of lessons in history on that tour. Of that I made doubly sure, and I was ably assisted by several people in the Netherlands. The children learned about anti-Semitism (Anna Frank), the logistical challenge facing the Canadian army, the founding of the Dutch Republic under William of Orange, and the struggle for survival in a country slowly sinking below sea level.

Those historical lessons were also eye-openers for myself. I spent the war years as a child prisoner in the Netherlands East Indies, and only heard about the experiences of the Netherlands through family members who survived the European war. Jan Pieterzoon Coen was arguably the founder of the NEI and today is as unpopular in Indonesia as is Cecil Rhodes in South Africa, and for similar reasons. Without Coen, the Netherlands Indies might never have come into existence, nor therefore Indonesia, and the same might be said of roads vis-à-vis south Africa. And so it goes around the world, including Canada. The memories of Champlain and Wolfe have

not suffered, but good old Sir John A. McDonald has in the recent past come under critical scrutiny. There are times when nonstop apologies seem to be called for.

Now that the Netherlands tour is fading into the past I will return to my writing interests. When I emerged in September 1945 from the prison camp on Java, I knew no other existence than that of the camp. The outside world was unfamiliar and alien to me, and some aspects were frightening. My parents by way of contrast were looking forward to taking up once again a life resembling their prewar existence. They knew what lay in store for them and I did not, and thus we started postwar life: their adjustment to normality was painless while mine was not. They were determined not to repeat the mistakes that got us imprisoned and nearly killed. I had to figure out over time how to cope with the mistakes that I then made while growing up and in my awkward reaction to the new environment. How to convey this peculiar coming of age into readable form is an intriguing challenge I hope to meet. Without the Rhodes Scholarship and the remarkable opportunity it provided me to retrace some developmental steps, I could not hope to have started this quest.

Kindest regards,

Boudewyn

The Sailing Dinner 2015

The Sailing Dinner to honour and send off our Scholars Elect for 2016 was held at the National Arts Centre, Ottawa on September 26, 2015.

Scholars Elect 2015



[Moustafa Abdalla](#)

Ontario, 2015

Current place of residence: Toronto

University: University of Toronto (Victoria College)

Current/recent course: BSc Biochemistry and Physiology

Other information: Moustafa is a senior student at the University of Toronto (Victoria College) studying in the departments of biochemistry and physiology. All three of his thesis (research) courses were conducted in affiliation with, and under the supervision of, faculty from the computer science department. He hopes to continue this track of interdisciplinary study at Oxford. Longer-term, Moustafa envisions contributing to a future where technology/artificial intelligence is incorporated ethically and compassionately in every aspect of medicine.



[Brittany Graham](#)

Maritimes, 2015

Current place of residence: Halifax

University: Dalhousie University

Current/recent course: BSc with Combined Honours in Microbiology, Immunology and Creative Writing

Other information: Brittany is completing a BSc with Combined Honours in Microbiology, Immunology and Creative Writing at Dalhousie University. She has received numerous scholarships and awards, ranging from a research award from the National Sciences and Engineering Research Council to literary awards for her short stories, and poetry. Brittany is interested in First Nations issues in northern Canada and issues related to indigenous people internationally. She recently worked as a facilitator of the Lieutenant Governor's Aboriginal Reading Camp program in Eabametoong First Nation. She serves on the executive of Dalhousie's chapter of the Global Brigades Society, contributing to public health projects in Panama and Honduras. She is an avid alpine skier, having competed at the provincial level in Quebec. Longer-term, Brittany envisages a career in research focused on disease in indigenous communities.



[Alexa Yakubovich](#)

Prairies, 2015

Current Place of Residence: Winnipeg, Manitoba

University: University of Manitoba, University of Oxford

Current Courses: BA Psychology (Hons), MSc Evidence-Based Social Intervention

Other information: Alexa was named University of Manitoba Gold Medallist in 2013. Having achieved this top standing in her BA in Psychology, she went on to complete the MSc in Evidence-Based Social Intervention from Oxford, with Distinction, this September. For years a volunteer in various social justice and public health causes, she is currently a research assistant in the University of Manitoba Social Justice Laboratory, working on strategies to spur public support for improved water and sanitation services for First Nations on behalf of a consortium of groups, including the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs and Amnesty International Canada. She hopes to pursue doctoral work in Social Intervention at Oxford, leading ultimately to a research and teaching career focused on the social determinants of child health and well-being.



[Colin Walmsley](#)

Prairies, 2015

Current place of residence: New Hampshire, USA

University: Dartmouth College

Current/recent course: BA Anthropology and Government

Other information: Colin Walmsley, of Fort Macleod, Alberta, is in the final year of a four year double major Arts program in Government and Anthropology at Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire, USA. A top tier high school age rugby player in Alberta he has continued this sport at Dartmouth as a starter and "Academic All-American" playing Center for the "First Fifteen" varsity team Ivy League Champions in 2013 and 2014. He is also an *a capella* bass and local rock radio personality, and student documentary film creator, at Dartmouth. He hopes to continue his anthropological study at Oxford University and, longer term, to work as an advocate for human social justice and fairness.



[Logan Graham](#)

British Columbia, 2015

Current Place of Residence: Vancouver

University: University of British Columbia

Current Courses: BA Economics (Hons)

Other information: An entrepreneur with a passion for using the principles of economics to solve social problems, Logan hopes to continue his studies in Economics at Oxford. Logan has a lifelong history of engagement in social causes. Before he was 10 he co-founded the Children's Arthritis Foundation to help other

children living with juvenile arthritis, eventually leading to national advocacy and a keynote speech at the world's largest conference on arthritis in Washington DC. At university he went on to co-found Yunus & Youth, a global fellowship program which connects mentors with young people using business to drive social change. Logan has completed research in auction theory and is currently writing his honours thesis on inequality.



[Devin Grant](#)

Newfoundland, 2015

Current place of residence: St. John's, Newfoundland
University: Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador
Current/most recent course: BSc Applied Mathematics

Other information: Devin is currently completing his Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Applied Mathematics, specializing in Numerical Analysis and Scientific Computation. He was the 2013 and 2014 recipient of the Book Prize in Mathematics, and has been named to the Dean's List for the Faculty of Science in every year of his undergraduate studies. Devin is heavily involved in student activism, as the Executive Director of Finance and Services with the MUN Students' Union. This position involves the supervision of all Students' Union services, as well as student advocacy on various university committees. Devin is also musically oriented, as demonstrated through membership in the award winning Newman Sound Men's Choir, and participation in community musical productions, including the role of Prouvaire in Atlantic Light Theatre's Les Miserables.



[Bernard Soubry](#)

Maritimes, 2015

Current place of residence: Sackville, NB

University: Mount Allison University

Current/recent course: BA English Literature and Anthropology

Other information: After completing a Bachelor's degree in English Literatures and Anthropology from Mount Allison University in 2013, Bernard became apprenticed to the craft of small-scale organic farming; he has since learned to grow vegetables and chase down chickens across Canada. He is committed to the study of small, resilient, joyful community systems that promote food sovereignty and sustainability. He is a member of Tintamarre, a bilingual theatre collaborative, and has worked on- and off-stage to engage with Maritime communities on a variety of social, political, and cultural issues. In addition to his interests in climate change research, indigenous-settler relations in Canada, and ecofeminism, Bernard is the co-founder of Chez Soubry et White, a Sackville-based croissanterie, and considers himself a fairly proficient knitter.



[Benjamin Mappin-Kasirer](#)

Quebec, 2015

Current place of residence: Montreal, QC

University: McGill University, Yale University

Current/recent course: Doctor of Medicine (In Course), Bachelor of Arts

Other information: Benjamin is from Montreal and is a medical student at McGill University. He graduated from Yale in 2014, where he majored in French Literature and was awarded the James T. King Prize for his research on science and the weather in Proust. As an undergraduate, he was involved in the Yale Journal of Public Health, Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism, and L'Amuse-Bouche, the Journal of French Culture. He is interested in humanities as a setting to think about medical ethics and health policy. For the past 10 years, he has been a competitive fencer, namely competing for Team Canada at the 2009 Cadet World Championships and as squad captain, manager, and member of the starting lineup of the Yale Varsity Fencing team.



[Joanna Klimczak](#)

Quebec, 2015

Current place of residence: Montreal, QC

University: McGill University

Current/recent course: Bachelor of Commerce

Other information: Joanna Klimczak, a native of Niagara Falls, is an entrepreneur with a passion for leveraging business, technology and innovation to solve social problems. In high school, she created an organization called Hand in Hand, to empower youth and help children around the world gain access to education. In 2014, she graduated from McGill, where she majored in International Management and received the Scarlet Key Award for her research and resulting co-creation of an academic Concentration in Social Business and Enterprise. During her undergrad, Joanna also co-founded MyVision, a global movement mentored by Nobel Laureate, Muhammad Yunus, of students creating social businesses and cultivating student social entrepreneurs. Joanna speaks five languages, is a competitive dancer and an avid runner, having recently completed a half marathon on the Great Wall of China.



[Bogdan Knezevic](#)

Prairies, 2015

Current place of residence: Calgary, Alberta

University: University of Calgary

Current/recent course: BSc Neuroscience

Other information: Born in Belgrade, Bogdan was two years old when his parents and he immigrated to Mississauga, Ontario, Canada. A few years later he started swimming in a youth program which led, in 2009, to his acceptance of an offer from the perennial powerhouse University of Calgary swim team and his entry into that University's Bachelor of Science (Honours) program. Having spent his summers in Toronto and each academic year in Calgary, in May, 2015 he will complete his degree in Neuroscience and conclude his year as Captain of the swim team and his run of five straight years as an Academic All-Canadian Scholar-Athlete. He aims to pursue further his interest in medicine at Oxford, ultimately hoping either to practice or to undertake medical research in Canada.



[Caroline Leps](#)

Ontario, 2015

Current place of residence: Toronto

University: Trinity College, University of Toronto

Current/recent course: B.A (Hons) Global Health & International Relations

Other information: In her final year of a BA in Global Health & International Relations, Caroline is co-president of the International Relations Society, and of Trinity College's Women's Athletic Association, and is co-captain of Trinity's basketball team. She volunteers at a children's hospital and at a camp for kids with cancer. Caroline holds an ARCT in Piano Performance, Grade 10 violin, and plays with the Hart House Orchestra. She hopes to become a pediatrician working in global children's health in low- and middle-income settings.

Toast to the Founder

Sheila Niven (South Africa-at-Large and Hertford, 1977)

At this point in the proceedings, tradition has it that a Toast to the Founder is proposed by the oldest (I prefer most "senior") scholar in attendance. Well, I'm getting up there, but am probably not the oldest. I am however the oldest female scholar in attendance, having gone up from South Africa in 1977, the first year that women were eligible. So, there is some "tweaking" of tradition this evening, and there is more.

Given the particular negative focus on Rhodes and his legacy in the first part of the year, I would like to spend a few minutes speaking to this, before proposing a toast that is somewhat different from the past.

I don't need to tell this group that Cecil John Rhodes has always been a controversial figure: his achievements were incredible in his short life time, but the associated costs were huge too. The negative consequences of some of his actions are still playing out for so many in Southern Africa.

And this is some of what I believe we saw in Cape Town earlier this year - most notably in the Rhodes Must Fall movement at the University of Cape Town. For those that followed the discussions on the Rhodes Scholar Network, or other media, you will be well aware of the issue: it centred initially on the fate of a statue of Rhodes that was prominently displayed on the campus (recognizing that the university is built on land donated by him). At risk of overly simplifying a complex situation, it seems to me that amongst the issues at play, the statue was more of a flashpoint for frustrations with the slow pace of transformation in the university and beyond in post-apartheid South Africa, than a focussed attack on Rhodes. And the Rhodes Must Fall movement has broadened and spread. It's active in Oxford, including attacks on Rhodes and his symbols, but more generally focussed on eliminating racist and colonial remnants.

So what does this mean for us, for the scholarship, and for this evening's toast? First, it is a reminder of Rhodes' bad legacy for those of us who benefitted from his "good" legacy; and importantly, it is a reminder that we have a role in how his legacy plays out. We shouldn't ignore his history, but make sure that it's lessons are learned everywhere.

In founding the scholarships, Rhodes ensured his legacy would continue to be built. The four criteria for selection set out in his will build on what have been described as universal virtues - and have undoubtedly been important to the building of a positive scholarship legacy. Rhodes wanted his scholars to "fight the world's fight". Today the fight is not what Rhodes envisaged at the turn of the 20th century, but the challenge remains relevant - whether it be in climate change, global health, physics, or the other many areas of interest of our Scholars-Elect this evening.

He founded the scholarships; the rest is mostly up to us. It is our responsibility to use the advantage we have had to the benefit of our communities (I use that term broadly), globally, nationally and/or locally.

Each scholar must find his or her own way of addressing the issues associated with Rhodes' history and legacy. Those of you about to leave for Oxford will find plenty of opportunity to engage in active debate on the topic, and I strongly encourage you to do so.

The focus on Rhodes' legacy also serves to highlight the role that the broader Rhodes community (the Warden, Trustees, selection committees and others) plays in keeping the scholarship relevant and in dealing with issues associated with Rhodes overall legacy. Over time, high profile actions have included opening the scholarships to women following passing of the UK Sex Discrimination Act of 1975, applying pressure on the South African schools with scholarships to open themselves up to all, and investing in African leadership capacity through partnering in the Mandela Rhodes Foundation. A more inclusive governance approach has also been introduced. Undoubtedly there have been decisions taken or not taken over time that some would challenge, but with the new governance approach, scholars and the broader Rhodes community can participate in or influence decisions more easily than was the case previously.

So, what about the toast? For me, the Founder's toast has never been about the glorification of Rhodes himself, or his role in history. It has been more about the recognition that Rhodes conceived and funded the scholarship. I have been lucky enough to benefit from this, so for me the toast was recognition or thanks to the founder; and also a reminder that I'm part of a living legacy, and had better shape up!

In the past, the toast has usually been a simple "the Founder". This year, I would like to propose a toast that reflects more explicitly what I believe we are actually toasting. I hope there is at least something for everyone in the toast that will resonate.

I would ask you to rise and join me in a toast to the founding and legacy of the scholarship:

- to Rhodes for founding the scholarship, and the Rhodes community for its work in keeping the scholarship relevant and the legacy strong
- to the legacy of the scholarships, that is, to all scholars, who have, are and will strive to make their communities better.

Toast to the University

Michael Urban (Prairies and Balliol, 2007)

Mesdames et Messieurs. Salut! Je suis ravi de me retrouver, ce soir, à Ottawa, au sein de la communauté Rhodes, auprès de nombreux amis, et présenter avec la chance de partager avec vous quelques réflexions au sujet de mon séjour à Oxford.

Thank you Mark for your kind introduction. Our shared monarchism seems to be paying dividends. More seriously, I can only respond by saying that I am honoured to share some thoughts and a toast this evening in such august company and among so many whom I admire.

It is a real privilege to be here this evening and I would like to thank all of you for attending. Thanks to those of you who have already gone down; I remember my sailing weekend in 2007 very positively largely because individuals such as yourselves took the time to mark and celebrate it.

Thank you most of all, however, to the scholars going up tonight. Thank you for the inspiration you and your amazing achievements offer us all. But thank you also for the estimable patience you are about to display as you endure my no doubt overwrought reminiscences.

The task set before me this evening is a formidable one if only because, as a former flatmate of mine would say, thinking about Oxford leaves me with all the feelings. Everyone's Oxford experience will be different, but mine at least was a real rollercoaster of genuine learning and self-discovery, of incredible friendship and painful heart-break, and of tremendous growth and some modest achievement. It was, quite simply, five very full years of my life which now rebel at this ham-fisted attempt to shoe-horn their various multitudes into a few minutes of after-dinner remarks.

Nevertheless, I will do my best to distill some essence of Oxford for you tonight. I'll begin with some broad thoughts on the university and close with some thoughts on the experience of being one of its members. And in between, I'll share one of the most magical personal memories of my time among the dreaming spires.

On the university Jean Monnet, one of the architects of the European Union, was fond of aphorisms and one of his favourites was that "nothing is possible without individuals, but nothing endures without institutions". If nothing else, the institution that is Oxford sets a fine example of endurance. While we don't know exactly how old the university is, we do know that teaching began there in 1096 at the latest, making the university at least 919 years old. My college, Balliol, arguably the university's oldest, finished celebrating its 750th anniversary not too long ago. In a country still just approaching the 150th anniversary of its birth, the sheer incomprehensibility of these numbers can actually obscure just how astonishing the university's staying power really is. Oxford has survived floods, riots, fires, plagues,

civil wars, world wars, Margaret Thatcher, revolutions, the reformation, etc. etc. etc. The list of calamities goes on and on and on. But still this remarkable institution endures.

Of course, while the word institution might conjure up images of grand marble buildings with columns, institutions are really only housed in buildings; they are comprised of individuals and ideas. You new scholars are about to join this institution and in so doing, join a parade of humanity studded with some truly remarkable characters that stretches back into the misty reaches of the Dark Ages. What membership in this grand parade ends up meaning to each of you will be the result of a highly contingent and individual negotiation. But as each of you engage in it and work out how you fit into this much larger picture, I hope that you'll remember that you are the beneficiaries of all those who have gone before you who have helped to build and renew the institution which you will now join.

Outside of my college, in the middle of Broad Street, there is a black brick cross embedded in the road. Most people never even notice that it is there, let alone inquire into its meaning. The cross marks the spot where, in 1555, Hugh Latimer and Nicholas Ridley were burned at the stake for their faith during the reign of Queen Mary. On the college's outer walls, a few paces opposite the cross, there is an inscription which records what are supposed to have been some of Latimer's final words: "Play the man, Master Ridley; we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out."

Oxford endures because its core purpose, the unflinching quest for knowledge and truth, is so fundamentally critical to humanity's peace, progress, and prosperity that many people are rightly inspired to dedicate their life's toil to this mission. But it has also survived because there have been individuals who have had the courage to stand up for their beliefs and have been willing to do what it takes to shake the place up from time to time. For all that is great and good about Oxford and the Rhodes scholarship, these institutions will only endure centuries into the future if individuals such as yourselves continue to refresh and revitalize them with the new ideas and perspectives necessary to keep them relevant.

I look back on my time at Oxford now and I feel almost as though I am squinting at a mirage. With each passing year, I wonder more and more if my time there was really anything but a prolonged dream. So different and strange do the memories that return to me seem sometimes that it often feels as if this dream hypothesis might be the one most likely to be true. Given that it is these fantastical moments that I remember most clearly, I thought I might share with you a glimpse of one such moment tonight.

The evening began with one of Balliol's bi-weekly evensong services in chapel, a musical treat that I seldom missed. But this evening was even more special because after evensong, I quickly made my way to the Great Hall for dinner. And not just any

dinner, for tonight I was dining at High Table. All the omens augured well: I had a few good friends joining me and had contrived, through some machinations which look embarrassingly elaborate and precious in hindsight, to have a girl I had a crush on seated next to me. Dinner unfolded as a perfect confluence of food, wine, and the sort of conversation that leaves your mind racing and your heart thrumming with stimulation and excitement. After dinner, we retired to the fellows' dining room, a darkened, wood panelled chamber lit only by candlelight, to enjoy second desserts, dessert wines, and even some snuff if one dared dip into the hollowed out rams' horn snuff box. But still, the most magical moment of the evening was yet to come. You see, for it was concert night and so after dinner and dessert were consumed, we returned to the scene of our earlier revelry only to find the great hall transformed into a dimly lit concert hall. Under the watchful eyes of college masters past peering from their portrait frames, a string quartet performed the mystical work of Arvo Pärt, an Estonian church composer who had laboured in the latter half of the last century under the yoke of Soviet oppression. Pärt's work, which derives much from the Gregorian chants that inspired him, is beautiful and haunting, minimalistic but awesomely powerful. It was totally new to me and the experience left me utterly breathless. Afterwards, as I walked home along a darkened Holywell Street, I honestly felt that I had, if only for an evening, left this mundane plane of existence and had ascended bodily into an abstract realm of truth and beauty, to truly dream among the spires. Only in Oxford.

But now we must return to reality and the task at hand. My time tonight is almost up and so I would like to close by sharing a few brief reflections on my experience, warts and all, of being a member of this truly amazing institution.

Oxford has many virtues. You will likely never again be surrounded in such close proximity by so many talented, interesting, intelligent, accomplished, surprising, enchanting, challenging, and ambitious individuals all at once. You will have time, or at least the freedom to use your time, to a very great extent in the way that you find most suitable. You will have some money thanks to Uncle Cecil and others. You will have the opportunity to travel afforded by your close proximity to Europe and to the centrality in global transportation links which Britain enjoys. You will have access to the incredible resources of the University, resources which can be used to further cutting edge research into areas ranging from machine learning, to the parsing of classical Sanskrit literature, to simply learning how you might print very limited runs of small books of student poetry using the antiquated equipment made available in the Bodleian library's basement. You will have more opportunities to socialize, usually with ample supplies of free alcohol, than you will possibly have time to responsibly take advantage of.

But Oxford has its drawbacks too. Paired with each of the virtues I've just listed are challenges. For those of us who might have previously built our identities on always been the smartest person in the room, finding out that this is no longer the case can be very jarring and can profoundly undermine one's sense of self. The corollary of having the freedom to allocate one's time without much interference or oversight is

that many find Oxford to be an isolating, unsupportive, and even hostile academic environment. Having accepted Rhodes' money, one is often invited to wrestle with its provenance and the ambiguous responsibility that attaches to the acceptance of this gift. One's opportunity to travel with relative freedom will differ from the limitations imposed on many classmates whose lives are much more circumscribed by the geopolitics of racism, inequality, and discrimination. And if you are at all introverted like me, the sheer magnitude of the opportunities for socialization with the carefully curated and charismatic public personas that you will encounter will sometimes leave you feeling frustrated, stretched, insufficient, and lonely.

I raise all of these points not to scare anyone, but simply to reassure you that, despite my earlier portrait, Oxford is, ultimately, still very much a part of the real world. Like anywhere else, it can sometimes be a very challenging place to be a human. Oxford will from time to time make you uncomfortable. And no matter how wonderful an opportunity this is, rest assured that not only is it okay to feel this way, but that most everyone else will also feel this way some of the time as well. Much of the time this discomfort will end up being for the best. I have few fonder memories than the week I spent in 2010 wrestling with a book whose philosophical contents was far beyond anything I had tackled previously. I spent hours trying to understand single pages of that book. Rarely had I felt so stupid and frustrated. But then rarely had I felt so alive than as when I slowly began to conquer each passage. Oxford will challenge, frustrate, madden, and stretch you. But hopefully it will also lead to the excitement of genuine growth and meaningful self-discovery.

Nevertheless, sometimes this discomfort will be too much and the challenge will be too great. Oxford can be an isolating and alienating place for some of us. It was often so for me and for many of my friends. And so tonight, I ask simply that you are kind and gentle with yourselves and with each other as you undertake this journey. For all its flaws, Oxford is full of caring people and help for those who need it. If you ever do need it, or know someone who does, please do not hesitate from calling upon it. That's what communities like this one are for.

And with that, I think I've probably said enough. Thank you for your attention tonight. To the new scholars, I wish you all good things. My heart longs to join you on the amazing journey on which you are about to embark. Good luck. You're in for a hell of a ride.

And so finally, ladies and gentlemen, I ask you to please raise your glasses. Tonight, I would like to toast the quest for knowledge and truth. I would like to toast that grand and variegated parade of humanity that stretches back to the dark ages. I would like to toast the courageous and the magical, the mystical and the ingenious. I would like to toast that venerable institution to which we all owe so much as well as its newest members. Ladies and gentleman I give you the University of Oxford and the Class of 2015.

Update from the Canadian Rhodes Scholars Foundation (CRSF)

H. Ian Macdonald (Ontario and Balliol, 1952)

In 2012, the Newsletter published a letter from the CRSF President, Richard French, advising that the Foundation would not solicit contributions during the initial phase of the Rhodes Trust Appeal. As that phase of the Trust's Appeal soon will conclude, we intend to renew our invitation to you to contribute, within the next couple of years.

I was one of the Rhodes Scholars, initially approached by Ralph Henson, in 1956. He recommended that CARS sponsor a 'Rhodes Scholarship in Reverse', as a concrete expression of gratitude for our experiences in Oxford. Using Rhodes Trust selection criteria, the idea was to sponsor Oxford graduates to pursue post-graduate studies at Canadian Universities.

Ralph's proposal was endorsed by the Association's 1957 Biennial meeting, which undertook an annual program of scholarships. The CRSF was established as an independent entity, in 1983. Subsequently, it was provided stable financing by a generous bequest from the Henson Estate. The Henson bequest was the first of a number of major contributions, the most recent having been from the McCall MacBain Foundation. These are held in a related organization, the Canadian Rhodes Scholars Endowment Trust. Income from the Trust, combined with annual contributions from CARS members, has allowed the Foundation to sponsor many, highly successful students, until recently, electing at least one scholar, annually. Since the launch of the Rhodes Trust Appeal, the frequency of election has been reduced to one, at least every second year, funded entirely by income from our investments. This year, the CRSF Board will consider timing for the election of our 100th scholar.

Our scholars are selected, in Oxford, by a committee chaired by CRSF Secretary-treasurer, Hugh Porteous. Last year, he was joined by the Warden; Tim Endicott, Professor of Legal Philosophy at Balliol; and by Janalee Cherneski. (John MacBain, a regular participant, has indicated he will rejoin the committee, this year.) Like the Rhodes Scholarship, the committee looks for all round qualities, starting with academic excellence and including breadth of interest and commitment to community-at-large. As such, we have sponsored scholars in a wide range of disciplines, including (in no particular order) medical doctors, lawyers, political scientists, historians, geographers, musicians, theologians, philosophers, psychologists, engineers, linguists, classicists, biologists, physicists and chemists. Each year, the committee is surprised by the wealth of choice and difficulty in narrowing the field to just one or two.

Scholars study in the Canadian university of their preference. While McGill, Toronto and UBC are often favoured, CRSF scholars have attended many other universities including: Dalhousie, Laval, U de Montreal, Queen's, York, Western, Alberta and

Simon Fraser. All three of our most recent scholars, opted for UBC. Hollie Carr Grant, who completed her two years on the CRSF stipend, last year, continues there, writing a dissertation on, '...the livelihood outcomes of communities that have been forcibly displaced from forestland by legal and illegal land grabs in Cambodia', and has been enthusiastically endorsed by her Canadian supervisor. She plans an academic career devoted to work on environmental/developmental issues. Joe Cock, who achieved a first on eight out of nine Oxford Final Examination papers, initially, read for an MA in Linguistics at UBC. Having realized, however, that this highly technical course was not best suited to prepare him for his intended career in diplomacy/international development, he has applied to MA programs at McGill and the Universities of Ottawa, in History and Public and International Affairs, respectively. In December, we elected Prashan Pandey, who will read for a PhD in Biomedical Engineering. His specialization is 3D Ultrasound technology for computer assisted surgery. He will develop tools to aid surgeons during complex orthopaedic procedures and is very keen on UBC, as it provides the opportunity for bio-engineering students to work, extensively, with surgeons, during their degree. During his undergraduate degree he has worked, among others, with Engineers Without Borders.

When we elected our first scholar, none of us could have imagined we were beginning a project, which would still be bringing Oxford students to Canada for post-graduate studies, sixty years later. Given the consistently high quality of our scholars and their excellent achievements, both at university and in their subsequent careers, the value of the scholarship has been well demonstrated. I hope you will share my enthusiasm for the CRSF work and that we might look to you for your engagement/support, when we resume solicitation. In the interim, should you have questions/comments/suggestions, please feel free to contact Richard French, President, rick_french2002@yahoo.ca or Hugh Porteous, borges_porteous@hotmail.com.

Editor's Note: Ian Macdonald is a CRSF director and Past President (1986-1992). His fellow directors are: Richard French, Hugh Porteous, Ches Crosbie, Astrid Guttman, Brett House, Jacques Hurtubise, Diane Nalini, Richard Pan, Paul Singer and Katie Sheehan. More information about CRSF can be found online at <http://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/crsf-scholarships>.

Honours, Appointments, Awards, and Announcements

Lisa McCormick (Prairies and Corpus Christi, 1998), was granted tenure and promoted to the rank of associated professor at Haverford and has recently accepted a lectureship in sociology at University of Edinburgh.

Ian Macdonald (Ontario and Balliol, 1952) delivered two papers to the Biennial Conference of the Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management (CAPAM) in Kuala Lumpur. He was [presented with a special award](#) in honour of CAPAM's twentieth anniversary, as a founding member of the organization and in recognition of support, informative contributions and advice over the intervening years. This was the first such award by CAPAM to an individual.

Wilson Parasiuk (Manitoba and St. John's, 1966) was appointed Chair of Manitoba Technology Accelerator and is director of several organizations—OCULYS, Institute of Health Care Innovations, and the Vancouver Airport Authority.

Peter Russell (Ontario and Oriel, 1955) is Principal of [Senior College](#), University of Toronto's youngest college for its oldest scholars.

Alfred Landry (New Brunswick and Queen's, 1960) retired on July 31st, 2015 as New Brunswick's Conflict of Interest Commissioner.

Robert Joy (Newfoundland and Corpus Christi, 1973) [received a doctorate from Memorial University](#) in honour of his extensive career as an actor, composer, singer, and songwriter.

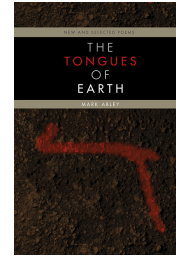
Toronto MP **Chrystia Freeland (Prairies and St. Antony's, 1991)** was appointed to the post of [Minister of International Trade](#) in Justin Trudeau's [first cabinet](#).



John Bergeron (Quebec and Worcester, 1966) was awarded the [Research Canada Leadership Award](#) in honour of his commitment to “fostering collaborations related to health research”.

Scholars in Print

In April, **Mark Abley (Saskatchewan and St. John's, 1975)** published a new collection of poems, entitled "[The Tongues of Earth](#)". It was very favourably reviewed in the [Montreal Review of Books](#) and The Edmonton Journal.



Two articles by **Remzi Cej (Newfoundland and St. Antony's, 2008)**, chair of the Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Commission, were published in the Globe and Mail on the controversy surrounding the immigration of Syrian refugees into Canada. These include "[From one refugee to another: What you need to know about Canada](#)" and "[If you seize refugees' valuables, you rob them of their dignity](#)".

Yan Yu (Prairies and St. John's, 2014) published a piece in the Calgary Herald entitled "[Tasting the benefits of reducing food waste](#)".

Lisa McCormick (Prairies and Corpus Christi, 1998), has recently published a new book, entitled "[Performing Civility: International Competitions in Classical Music](#)" which was well reviewed by faculty at Rutgers and Exeter.



Thomas Harpur (Ontario and Oriel, 1951) has been writing a weekly column on ethics and spiritual issues for the Sun Media chain. Tom has been the author of [several books](#), one of the most controversial of which being "The Pagan Christ".

Joanne Cave (Prairies and St. John's, 2013) published a piece in the Globe and Mail entitled "[Losing in the federal election taught me a valuable lesson in humility](#)".

Billy-Ray Belcourt (Prairies 2016) wrote a personal response to media reporting, entitled "[Dear Media, I am More than Just Violence](#)".

Robert Calderisi (Quebec and St. Peter's, 1968) published an article entitled "[A marriage of true minds](#)" in the Concordia news in response to the 10th anniversary of Canada's Civil Marriage Act, which legalized same-sex marriage.

Scholars in the News

Congratulations to **Paul Vogt (Prairies and Magdalen, 1983)** on becoming the fifth president and [CEO of Red River College](#).

George Stanley (Alberta and Keble, 1929), designer of the Canadian Flag, was saluted in a [piece on the flag's 50th anniversary](#).

Remzi Cej (Newfoundland and St. Antony's, 2008), chair of the Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Commission, was [named to the "Speak Truth to Power Canada" project](#).

Ayodele Odutayo's (Ontario and Brasenose, 2013) NGO, which works to mentor undergraduate students interested in careers in medicine, was featured in the [University of Toronto's online news section](#).

Caroline Roberts (Newfoundland and Trinity, 1993), CEO of Thoth Technology, was featured in [eCanada Now](#) and on CBC radio for her company's exciting work in the development of "space elevator" technology that might one day lead to the development of reusable launch and refueling platforms for spacecraft.

Liberal **Jonathan Wilkinson (Prairies and Exeter, 1988)** [won a decisive victory](#) against Conservative Andrew Saxton for a seat as MP in the riding of North Vancouver.

Congratulations also to **Randy Boissonnault (Prairies and Corpus Christi, 1994)** who resisted the wave of Tory blue in Alberta, [winning a seat in parliament](#) in the riding of Edmonton Centre.



In Memoriam

John Sandys-Wunsch
(British Columbia and Christ Church, 1956)
(May 7, 1936 – September 29, 2015)

Rev. Dr. John W.K. Sandys-Wunsch passed away on September 29th in Victoria, BC. He was born in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario to Lt. Colonel Theodore Sandys-Wunsch and his wife Jean (nee Rossiter). He attended high school in Duncan. After studies at Victoria College and UBC, a Rhodes Scholarship led him to study theology at Christchurch College, Oxford. As well as having an accomplished professional academic career as a professor of religious studies at Queen's College and Memorial University of Newfoundland and later as Provost of Thorneloe University in Ontario, he was an ordained minister in the Anglican Church. Prior to his academic career, he ministered to several congregations on the west coast including Tofino and Courtney with one year spent at St. John the Divine in Victoria. After his retirement he continued to be involved in the church as well as having an active interest in scholarly research in theology. He enjoyed gardening, travel and stimulating conversation on almost any topic. John is survived by his wife Sheila to whom he has been married for 54 years, and children Michael, Donald and Helen. A memorial service will be held in Victoria at Christ Church Cathedral on Wednesday October 14 at 2:00pm. The family requests that in lieu of flowers, donations be directed to the Alzheimer's Society of BC. Special thanks to the nurses and staff at the Royal Jubilee Hospital. – Published on Legacy.com