

*For the alumni and friends of Dalhousie's Faculty of Agriculture*

# Agricola News

Volume 40, Number 1, 2014

**Introducing Dr. David Gray  
Dean, Faculty of Agriculture and  
Principal, Dalhousie Agricultural Campus**



**DALHOUSIE  
UNIVERSITY**

*Inspiring Minds*

*Faculty of Agriculture*

# Agricola News

For the alumni and friends of Dalhousie's Faculty of Agriculture

## *A Message from the Editor*



Dear Friend,

It's hard to believe we are into the first few weeks of 2014. How quickly time flies!

This is my first *Agricola News* in well over one-year. I returned to work in September, after being on maternity leave with my first child. Friends and family always told me time FLIES when you have children. I can now say I've witnessed that first-hand! I can't believe how quickly my time at home passed and how

much our daughter grew and developed in those 12 months.

Returning to work was very bittersweet. As most parents can relate, it was very hard to leave our daughter and settle into our new "normal". Coming back to the office made me very nervous as so much had changed in my absence. I felt like I was starting a new job!

Thanks to an incredibly busy fall, I had very little time to dwell. During my first week back, I attended the Class of '56 reunion at Oak Island Inn. The Class of '56 has been meeting every year for quite some time. I had never had the opportunity to attend one of their reunions so I was very excited to be invited this year. The event made for a very enjoyable (and easy) first week.

By my second week back, I felt like I had never left. While many process, procedures and faces had changed on campus, it still felt like the same great place, much to my relief. Thankfully, I had the same wonderful group of alumni to continue to work with. In a very short amount of time, I was back into the groove.

One of the biggest changes on campus was of course our new leader, Dean, Faculty of Agricultural and Principal, Dalhousie Agricultural Campus, Dr. David Gray. You can learn all about Dr. Gray beginning on page 11. Dr. Gray began his new role in August and immediately hit the ground running. Check-out the timeline on page 16 for a glimpse at some of the places he's been already and activities he's participated with on campus.

Along with members of the Alumni Association board of directors, Dr. Gray and I toured the Maritimes in October and November, hosting alumni receptions in four locations. This was a great opportunity for alumni to meet Dr. Gray, ask questions and share their concerns. We received some great feedback and most importantly, everyone seemed to enjoy themselves.

We also held our annual Blue & Gold Awards dinner in November. Three very humble but deserving alumni received awards. Flip to page 19 to read more.

Things quieted down in December, which was most welcome as it provided time for us to create this – the latest edition of *Agricola News*. It's shaping up to be a busy 2014 and I can't wait!

I always love to hear from alumni. Please contact me if you have suggestions for an alumni event, want to plan a reunion, have an address update or even just to connect.

Happy reading!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alisha".

Alisha Johnson  
902-893-6022  
alisha.johnson@dal.ca

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## Agricola News

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*Editor:*

Alisha Johnson

*Contributing Writers:*

Jenna (Tingley) Forsyth (Class of '01), Ted MacNinch (Class of '56), Monica Sani (Class of '04), Stephanie Rogers, Colette Wyllie (Class of '10)

*Design & Layout:*

Matthew Leights, Agricultural Campus Print Centre

Please send your letters, comments or correspondence to:

## Agricola News

Dalhousie University, Faculty of Agriculture  
P.O. Box 550  
Truro, Nova Scotia  
B2N 5E3

phone: 902-893-6022  
fax: 902-897-9399  
email: agalumni@dal.ca

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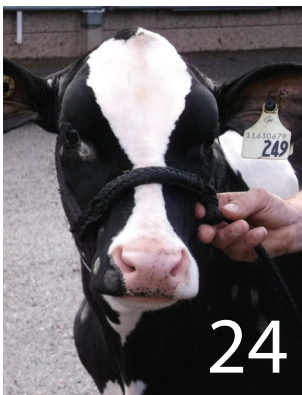
Meet Sarah Harding (Class of '13). Working for Marine Harvest Canada, Sarah's "office" is floating in the ocean, somewhere between Vancouver Islands and the mainland coast of BC. The views are breathtaking!

### International Food Business Double Degree 23

IFB is the product of a partnership between Dalhousie University Faculty of Agriculture and CAH Vientum University of Applied Sciences in Dronten, The Netherlands. The vision is to prepare the next generation of international experts for the world's largest industry – food.

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# A Message from... The Alumni Association



It has been a busy fall for the Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture Alumni Association. The board, which consists of seven members, includes representatives from the three Maritime Provinces (see side bar).

We were very pleased to recognize three deserving alumni at the Blue and Gold Awards in November. Audrie-Jo McConkey, Anna Fitzgerald

and Gabriel Comeau were all very worthy recipients. It was great to see a good number of alumni, family and friends of the recipients attend. The event was very special and made even more memorable when a power failure occurred just as the citations were being started. Nothing like "citations by flashlight" to make for an intimate evening!

For the third year, four alumni receptions were held in late October and November in Port Williams, Fredericton, Bible Hill and Charlottetown, respectively. The "Meet the Dean" receptions provided an opportunity for alumni and friends to meet Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture, Dean and Agricultural Campus Principal, Dr. David Gray. We were very pleased he was able to host these events despite his busy schedule. We had a great turn-out, especially in Port Williams and Charlottetown. If you have suggestions for different event locations and venues, in the future, please let us know.

I am a member of the Dalhousie Alumni Association (DAA) and in mid-October the DAA had an opportunity to meet with the new Dalhousie University President, Dr. Richard Florizone. The DAA had four main areas to emphasize with Dr. Florizone, one being the opportunity to build and enhance the Dal AC campus as part of Dalhousie University.

We are most pleased at the positive approach of Dr. Gray to our campus. He, I believe, understands the opportunities for the campus and supports the enhancement of degree and technical training as well as research.

Also in November, I had the opportunity to sit with a number of the student recipients of the Alumni Family Bursary. I was very impressed with the calibre of the students, the appreciation they had for those who contribute to the bursary. Please continue to contribute to this worthy cause.

The Alumni Association is there for all alumni. I encourage you to send along your comments.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to introduce you to the rest of you board. Keep reading to learn a little about them.

Dwane Mellish (Class of '75) P.Ag.  
Chair, Dalhousie Agricultural Campus Alumni Association

## Board of Directors



### Jean (Baillie) Lynds (vice-chair)

Jean graduated in 1990 with a B.Sc (Agr) in Plant Science. She is currently employed as the crops and ruminant coordinator at the Agricultural Campus farm. In 2010, Jean was named Alumni Volunteer of the Year for consistently and enthusiastically donating her time and talents to campus and her greater community. Jean lives in North River, NS with her husband Darren (Chub) and her two children Jack and Baillie.



### Brian Watts

Brian graduated in 1983 from NSAC's Technical Diploma Program. He went on to continue his education at UPEI, earning a BA and a Diploma in Public Administration. Brian is currently employed with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency as an inspector.



### Audrie-Jo (Vink) McConkey

Audrie-Jo graduated from NSAC in 2003 with a B.Sc. (Agr.) in Aquaculture. She is currently a lab instructor and performing research in the shellfish/phytology field with the Faculty of Agriculture. Last year, Audrie-Jo was presented the Young Alumni Achievement Award from the Faculty of Agriculture. Audrie-Jo lives in Valley with her husband, Mike (Class of '02), and their three children.



### Janice (McKenzie) Lutz

Janice's history with NSAC began as a Plant Science student, when she was a member of the first class to graduate with an NSAC degree in 1985. As an alumnus, Janice worked in NSAC's Plant Science Department and subsequently went on to work with a number of other agricultural associations in Nova Scotia. Janice now works at Johnston's Cranberry Marsh in Aylesford and she and her husband operate an apple farm near Berwick. Janice and her husband live in Berwick and have four children.



### Ashley (Gillies) Baskin

Ashley graduated in 2009 with a BSc Agr. Majoring in Agricultural Business. She served as Students' Union president in 2007-08. Since graduation she has been employed with Dairy Farmers of New Brunswick where she is the milk quality coordinator and transportation scheduler. Ashley has three sons.



### Colette Wyllie

Colette graduated from NSAC in 2010 with a BSc. (Agr.) in Environmental Sciences. She served as Students' Union president in 2009-10. She worked with NSAC Administration until July 2012, after which she earned an advanced diploma in public relations from NSCC. She is now working with the Christmas Tree Council of Nova Scotia as industry coordinator.

# Creating Opportunity with the P Y Hamilton Scholarships

Peter Hamilton (Class of '44) knows what it's like to struggle as a student. He looks back with fondness and a knowing chuckle as he relates his schoolboy days, working odd jobs to help pay his way.

While attending NSAC, Peter and his classmates were put to work harvesting vegetables before classes started. Peter often found himself on turnip duty. While attending the University of Maine, he was in high demand as a caponizer for local producers, specializing in the extraction of reproductive organs of roosters. He was so skilled in this area that it wasn't uncommon for him to caponize 1,000 birds a day. Perhaps his most fortuitous job came about when a friend's violin case fell open and a mouth organ fell out. Peter picked it up, started playing and a new band was formed. They played nights and weekends to earn enough to keep their tuition and living costs paid.

Recently, Peter was inducted into the Dalhousie Heritage Society and recognized at the Faculty of Agriculture's Scholarship Banquet for his generous legacy gift. In 2013, Peter established the P Y Hamilton Scholarships with a planned gift he began decades ago. On the suggestion of a colleague, he began to invest in an insurance policy to benefit NSAC. He started early and put aside a little bit at a time. Years later, his gift is now worth close to \$100,000 and will support three \$3,000 awards per year. Open to degree and diploma students, on a renewable basis, he hopes that the scholarships will help students all the way through their program. Peter finds great joy in knowing that students will be helped in such a significant way and great comfort knowing that their financial burden will be eased to allow them to focus on academic challenges.

Peter is no stranger to the benefits of earning an education. After graduating from NSAC, Peter attended Macdonald College (Class of '47) to complete his Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Science and then to the University of Maine (Class of '52) for his Masters degree, also specializing in Animal Science. Before returning to Macdonald College as a professor, Peter hosted Country Calendar on CBC radio, the precursor to Country Canada. For four years Peter's voice could be heard in living rooms across Atlantic Canada, celebrating the men and

women contributing to agriculture in this region.

Sharing these success stories was a rewarding experience, but Peter's interest drew him back to academia. After teaching at Macdonald, Peter's first *alma mater* called him back to Nova Scotia, where he began teaching chemistry and animal science at NSAC. Peter, affectionately called PY by his students and colleagues, became registrar, serving for 10 years in this capacity. At 89 years of age, Peter still attends alumni recep-

tions and the scholarship banquet, where he reconnects with former students and colleagues eager to bring him greetings.

During his many years of teaching, Peter forged a special bond with his students. He cared, he listened. He made them feel like they were the only one in the room. It is this special connection and love for teaching that motivated Peter to give back. He believes that students can do so much for the world if they are given the opportunity. With thoughtful planning and a generous heart, Peter has established a legacy that will help many students achieve their goals.

Peter feels fortunate to have had the opportunity to learn, to succeed and to pass along his love of agriculture to the next generation. He hopes that his scholarship will do the same for others. We know it will.



Many NSAC/Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture alumni and friends feel strongly about their experience at the Agricultural Campus and want to make a gift that will impact the lives of the young people that will follow them for years to come. There are many ways that you can leave such a legacy, and it is easier than you think. Through your will, life insurance, RRSP's, a gift of securities or other vehicles, a planned gift can help you achieve your tax and financial goals, as well as your philanthropic goals. Planning your gift can help you make a much larger gift than otherwise possible. With a little planning, you can create a truly lasting legacy for generations to come.

#### For more information, contact:

Cathrine Yuill	902.893.4413	cathrine.yuill@dal.ca
Ian Lewer	902.494.6981	ian.lewer@dal.ca
Ann Vessey	902.494.6565	ann.vessey@dal.ca

# Around & About...

## In the Middle of Nowhere Sarah Harding (Class of '13)



At the beginning of an eight-day shift, she makes the half-day journey to reach her work site (and that's when the weather is good). The days are long and the tasks can be exhausting. But it has its perks.

"Some days you start to get a little tired and run down." "But then you glance up, there's

a whale breaching beside, you catch a glimpse of the gorgeous mountains in the distance. Then you get this renewed energy and realize it's all worthwhile."

Sarah Harding works atop the structure of a sea cage site - her "office," as an aquaculture technician with Marine Harvest Canada. She is floating in the ocean, somewhere between Vancouver Islands and the mainland coast of BC. Sarah's view can't even be described with words. It's breathtaking.

"I'm in the middle of nowhere," says Sarah, with a laugh. "The next closest site is approximately a 20-minute boat ride away."



Sarah is responsible for feeding and caring of Atlantic salmon for Marine Harvest, which produces one-fifth of the world's farmed-raised salmon in Norway, Scotland, Canada, Chile, Ireland and the Faroes. Marine Harvest Canada produces 40,000 tons of sustainable Atlantic farm-raised salmon each year of the coast of British Columbia. The fish arrive on site as smolts and are raised in the sea cages until they have reached market size. The quantity varies per site, but these days Sarah is raising 12 pens of salmon for human consumption. There are approximately 50,000 salmon per pen.

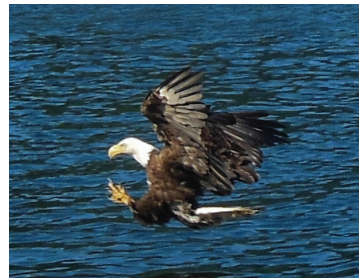


"There's no such thing as a typical day out here," Sarah says. Normally there are two to three staff members per site. Although it can vary demanding on the work-load. "It's harvest time right now, so there are a few others working with us."

As a team they spend most of their days feeding the fish

and monitoring their environments. It takes 60-90 minutes to feed

each cage. "Multiply that by the 12 cages and feeding takes most of the day. Just our daily routines keep us busy until 6 p.m."



Sarah's entire work space and living accommodations are floating on the ocean and are connected via walkways. Just because they're located in the "middle of nowhere" certainly doesn't mean they're roughing it. The crew has full amenities on-site, complete with internet and satellite television. Sarah says she

even eats better at work than on her days off.

"I pre-order my groceries online a few days before my shift starts. Then I stop at the grocery store the morning I'm heading to work and pick it up. My bags are pre-packed and everything I ordered is inside." Sarah worked through the Thanksgiving long-weekend but made sure she and her co-workers didn't feel homesick. "I made the boys a turkey dinner, complete with all of the trimmings."

In more ways than one, working for a company who produces one-fifth of the world's farm raised salmon in facilities across the globe, is not exactly where Sarah originally pictured herself.



She entered Dalhousie's Faculty of Agriculture (as the former NSAC) with the goal of becoming a large animal vet. In her second year, Sarah found herself taking an introductory aquaculture course, as an elective. To her surprise, she enjoyed it. She signed-up for a second aquaculture course the following semester. Before she knew it, Sarah found herself spending a lot of time in the Aquaculture department on campus and changed her minor, to aquaculture.



After seeing a recruitment presentation by Marine Harvest Canada a few months before graduation, Sarah got really excited and knew just what she wanted to do.

"It's definitely a huge shift from what I thought I wanted to do when I first started at NSAC," says Sarah, who is originally from N.B. "I was so happy I got the job!"

Days after receiving their degrees, Sarah along with roommate, Amanda Luxton (also Class of '13), packed their belongings and drove from coast to coast, together.

"I love the work. The company is amazing and their benefits are really great."

Sarah's heard horror stories about winter out on the sea cage sites.

"So far I've been lucky!"

But no matter how bad it gets out there, Sarah will just take a glance around to realize a few rough waves are definitely worth it.

*Note:*

*Amanda also works for Marine Harvest Canada in one of the company's fresh water hatchery's. Amanda is responsible for the egg to smolt stage salmon. She cares for the salmon from the time they hatch until they are smolts and are transported to sites like Sarah's.*

*Sarah and Amanda share an apartment on Vancouver Island. In their spare time, they enjoy fishing and hiking.*

## 2013 Fair Person of the Year

### John Dillman (Class of '76)



John Dillman, of Elderbank, has been in the agricultural business since 1977. Musqie Valley Farms Ltd. has provided he and his family all the benefits farming has to offer. But, he's the first to admit it takes determination and perseverance.

"I encourage young people to get involved in agriculture. There's a tremendous amount of opportunity. But,

this industry requires total commitment," he advises.

The first year he and wife, Gwen, established their farm, they participated in the Halifax County Exhibition. "Gwen and I took one milk cow to the Ex in 1977 and it was the only entry. We placed," he laughs.

Over the past three plus decades, the couple has continued to demonstrate their support for the agricultural fair. "We initiated the installation of the first milking equipment on the grounds," explains John. "We're proud to say we've been exhibiting ever since - 36 years."

By the example set by their parents, all six of the Dillman's children have grown up with an appreciation for agriculture.

"All six kids are grads of NSAC and four of their wives are too," he remarks. "Reg is here working with us, R.J. is dairy farming in Oxford and Trevor owns Blueline New Holland (tractor dealership). Josh is an agriculture engineer for the Department of Agriculture in PE, Briana is doing herdsmanhip in Truro and Nickolas

is an area rep for Atlas Cobco (heavy equipment and mining). We've infiltrated the agriculture industry in Atlantic Canada," he chuckles.

He goes on to say, "Gwen and I have a philosophy about raising our family. We will support them wherever they go in life." Then adds, "as long as their knees are under the table to milk cows every night!"

Although dairy farming is the primary business of Musqie Valley Farms Ltd., the Dillman family recognizes the secret to success is diversification.

"We run six different enterprises under Musqie Valley Farms Ltd.," explains John. "We are in the genetic business in three breeds of dairy cattle: Holsteins, Jersey and Ayrshire. Besides, we have forage sales, a seed agency, flight birds for sport hunting and we're also into custom combining."

Besides instilling a sense of ownership in their farm operation with their children, John and Gwen also reached out to share their enthusiasm with the community. "4-H is a wonderful organization," observes John. "All our kids participated. Now, even though we don't have any children involved, we still support 4-H. There are six kids using calves at the Ex from our farm this year."

For the past several years, John has been designated as the cattle barn superintendent at the county fair although he considers the position to be more of a coordinator. "Gwen and I are the go-between the exhibitors and the exhibition committee," he says smiling.

As the 2013 Fair Person of the Year, John considers himself to be a fortunate farmer. "I know people who have been chosen in the past," he says. "And I hold each of them in high regard. I am honoured to have been chosen this year."

*As written by Ellen McFetridge, for the Halifax County Exhibition.*

## Alumni Honoured by the Government of Canada

### Arnold Blenkhorn (Class of '41) & Donald Bishop (Class of '47)

Arnold Blenkhorn (Class of '41) and Donald Bishop (Class of '47) were presented the Bomber Command Bar, last fall, by the Government of Canada.

This new honour, which was established in 2013, recognizes Canadian Bomber Command Veterans for their commitment and bravery in facing some of the most difficult odds of the Second World War.

"Our Government is proud to honour Canadians who served in Bomber Command operations during the Second World War by presenting them with the first Bomber Command Bar," said Julian Fantino, Minister of Veterans Affairs, in a September release. "The brave men who served with the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) and the Royal Air Force (RAF) in Bomber Command operations did so at a very heavy cost; approximately 10,000 of them paid the ultimate price, losing their lives in the skies of



*Bomber Command Bar Presentation, Atlantic Canada Aviation Museum, Enfield, NS. Back row (L-R): The Honourable Peter MacKay, **Donald Bishop (Class of '47)**, Charles Emerson Currie, The Honourable Julian Fantino. Front row (L-R): Rex Fulcher, **Arnold Blenkhorn (Class of '41)**, Gordon McCully, Peter Lushington.*

Europe, in training accidents or in prisoners of war camps. There is no question that their courage and dedication played an important part in bringing victory to the Allies in the Second World War.”

“The Bomber Command Bar recognizes Canadian Bomber Command Veterans for their commitment and bravery in facing some of the most difficult odds of the Second World War,” said Rob Nicholson, Minister of National Defence. “Despite great risk—almost half of all aircrew never made it to the end of their tour—thousands volunteered. The nation stands forever grateful for their service, and we will always remember and honour their bravery and sacrifice. Lest we forget.”

Canada played a vital role in the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan (BCATP), a wide-reaching plan that was jointly undertaken by Great Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, whose graduates formed the backbone of Bomber Command. Many of the Canadians who trained under this program served with RCAF squadrons in the No. 6 Bomber Group—the only non-British group to serve in Bomber Command. By the end of the Second World War, No. 6 Bomber Group had carried out more than 40,000 sorties and approximately 8,000 decorations for bravery were awarded to its members. The Government of Canada created this official honour to formally recognize these brave Canadians.

In addition to the creation of the Bomber Command Bar, the Government of Canada also helped in creating the new Bomber Command Memorial in London, United Kingdom. This memorial honours all members of the Bomber Command from Allied countries and those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

## ***Playing with Lions and Walking with Cheetahs*** ***Holly MacNeil***

When Holly MacNeil ran into a fellow student who told her about her life-changing trip with EcoLife Expeditions, she knew right away that she too wanted to go on a journey of a lifetime.

Last summer, Holly spent three weeks in South Africa working on wildlife conservation efforts, experiencing different places, cultures and going on adventures, all the while earning credits towards her degree in Animal Sciences at the Faculty of Agriculture.

EcoLife Expeditions brings students to South Africa who are interested in conservation, wildlife management and want future careers in veterinary sciences. Holly, who grew up on a hobby farm in Cape Breton, NS, knew she wanted a career in veterinary medicine, but was unsure of what area within the field she wanted to focus on, and had never travelled further than Boston or New Brunswick.

“I believe that experiences, good or bad, are the best way to find out your strengths, weaknesses and interests,” she says. “So trying something completely out of my comfort zone was the best way to figure myself out.”

She set her sights on Africa.

### ***Hands-on learning***

During the first week of the program, Holly met with a professor from Pretoria University and visited the crowded and impoverished townships of Soweto. With Community Lead Animal Welfare, a non-profit veterinary clinic, she assisted in providing free vaccines, flea and tick treatment, and dewormer to local dogs, and assisted in the selected surgeries for the day.



She travelled to a big cat farm and played with lion cubs and walked with cheetahs, while learning how the farming of wildlife species has become incredibly important to their survival. A few days were spent tracking on foot, keeping a close eye on signs that would lead to wildlife.

“It is incredibly exhilarating and intense when you actually get an up-close look at these magnificent creatures,” says Holly, “from the sheer size of the rhino,

hippo and giraffe, to the gracefulness of the impala littering the shoreline. It’s all very awe-inspiring.”

Throughout the program, she got to explore importance of wildlife medicine and conservation while gaining hands-on experience. At the Khamai Reptile Center, she performed a necropsy on a boa constrictor (a snake) to help determine cause of death and at the Moholoholo Wildlife Rehabilitation Center she directly learned about the immediate impact of human encroachment on wildlife.





"Many rescues are from snares and traps, set by villagers fearing their own safety. We spent a few days in Me-jejane, located in Kruger National Park, where we again went on game walks and witnessed firsthand the devastation that mismanagement of wildlife areas can cause. The barren savannah is littered with dead and broken trees, and there are no more aloe plants or amarula trees within the park, apparently a favourite for elephants."

Holly also learned a great deal about the impact of poaching, as rangers and environmental consultants offered first-hand accounts and experiences about the illegal poaching industry.



## An eye opener

The final days of her journey were spent in the picturesque Waterberg Biosphere with wildlife veterinarians, darting buffalo from the back of pickups, trying to round up a stray giraffe and capturing nyala for sale and transport, all making for interesting and labor-intensive days.

"Prior to the program, I worked in small animal clinics, large animal agriculture and even some local wildlife, but nothing even comes close to this," she says.

The program certainly opened Holly's eyes to the importance of wildlife management and the interconnectedness of living things.

"Species come and go and this has been going on for thousands of years, but when its human greed and ignorance causing a greater rate of disappearance, someone should take notice and take action," she says. "Conservation of wildlife, anywhere in the world, is about finding a balance and working hard to keep it. There is a lot to learn from nature that we can apply to our own lives. We only have one world and in it nature is a necessity."

"The entire trip was very humbling," Holly claims. "Although I am still not yet 100 per cent sure where I will end up in the vast field of veterinary medicine, I do know that wildlife medicine will at the very least be a part of it."

For more information about the EcoLife Expeditions programs and how Dalhousie students can earn credit for participation, please contact Holly, who is the current EcoLife Field Associate. She can be reached at [hollymacneil@live.com](mailto:hollymacneil@live.com). Angela Younger may also be contacted at [wildlifepgm@winnetthouse.com](mailto:wildlifepgm@winnetthouse.com)

Written by Amani Saini

## Catching-up with Paul Manning (Class of '13)

If you're an alumnus of the Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture, the name Paul Manning probably rings a bell. Former student association president, varsity cross country runner, Active-8 ambassador, top-notch student, volunteer and all around do-gooder, the 2013 graduate was a well-known figure in the Dal AC community even before his most notable accomplishment: winning the Rhodes Scholarship.

Rewind two years. Paul, who grew up in Canning, NS and studied environmental science at the former NSAC, decided to apply for the world's most prestigious postgraduate award after reading an article about it early in 2012.

"I'd known for several years that I wanted to continue my education by studying beneficial insects within agricultural systems," he says. "I applied for the Rhodes Scholarship because I wanted a chance to broaden my horizons, collaborate and interact with some of the world's brightest minds and to gain new and interesting ideas to bring back to Atlantic Canadian agriculture."

When Paul learned he was one of two winners from the Maritime Canada region in November of 2012, making him Dalhousie's 87th Rhodes Scholar and the first ever to come from the Faculty of Agriculture, his first reaction was "complete and utter shock." Now, after finishing his first semester of studies at Oxford University, the shock may have worn off, but the awe has not.



"Oxford has certainly lived up to and surpassed my expectations," he says. "When walking through streets lined with dreaming spires and century old gardens, it can be easy to momentarily forget you're there to study, and not as a tourist. Friends and college members are happy to share historical accounts of Oxford - and there are plenty! It's truly a unique studying environment."

Oxford operates under the Oxbridge system, a distinct, decentralized university structure. Under this model, Paul is a student of Magdalen College, where he has settled in nicely. Magdalen has around 800 students and a community atmosphere similar to the one found at Dal AC, which has helped him feel at home there. Paul has spent much of his free time exploring his "breathtakingly beautiful" surroundings and taking in talks in a variety of fields including economics, global health, sustainability, gender equality, history and ethics.

Never one to neglect his extracurricular activities, Paul has been involved on campus since day one. "I was fortunate enough to work my way onto the rowing squad at Magdalen, which is fantastic exercise and a phenomenal test of patience and focus," he says. "I've also been writing for the Oxford science magazine, which has been a tremendous amount of fun."

Paul found immediately that he was missing student politics, so he ran and was elected as a general committee member on the Magdalen graduate student council. He is currently working on a campaign to help raise awareness of sexual violence on campus.

Academically speaking, Paul feels prepared to take on anything Oxford throws at him. He credits his time at the Agricultural Campus for that. "My summer research experiences gave me a huge leg-up in experimental design, writing and being able to critically discuss scientific literature," he says. "Having an agricultural background has given me a unique stance on environmental, social and ecological issues. It allows me to speak from a different and valuable perspective." According to Paul, he is also deeply grateful for the skills he acquired from being heavily involved with student life here. He is able to juggle a hectic schedule, which will come in handy as he works his way through the next three to four years of research.

Paul's studies are purely research-based. He is pursuing a PhD in zoology, focusing on dung beetle communities associated with Welsh cattle farms. When he's done, he hopes to find a career involving research, the natural world and creative communication. So far he is an expert at all three of these things, as he is pursuing research, is fascinated by the world around us and is maintaining an entertaining blog chronicling his experiences in England.

It's safe to say Paul's life as a Rhodes Scholar has been extremely successful thus far. He has settled in nicely in Oxford and although he is missed at the Agricultural Campus, he's certainly doing his *alma mater* proud. Don't worry about losing him to the mother ship, though. According to Paul, "though Oxford feels like home, Canada is where I would most love to be."

To find out more about Paul's life as a Rhodes Scholar, follow his blog, "PM in the UK", at <http://pauly-olly-oxford.blogspot.co.uk/>.

## **Marinus Van de Sande Honoured (Class of '62)**



Marinus Van de Sande was honoured to receive the Distinguished Co-operator Award and inducted into the Nova Scotia Co-operators Hall of Fame by the Nova Scotia Co-operative Council at their annual meeting and dinner June, 2013 at the World Trade and Convention Centre in Halifax.

The Distinguished Co-operator Award recognizes and honors Nova Scotian co-operators for outstanding achievement and service to the co-operative movement.

Marinus has dedicated his time,

talent and energy to the Nova Scotia co-operative movement by faithfully serving on many co-operatives and credit unions for nearly 50 years. Marinus has held various positions on many boards and numerous committees."

## **Ivarson Agricultural Scholarships Awarded Christina Straathof (Class of '12)**



Christina Straathof is one of the first recipients of the prestigious Dr. Karl C. Ivarson Agricultural Scholarship, as announced by The Agricultural Institute of Canada Foundation (AICF) in December. Christina is the \$10,000 award recipient for MSc students. She is recognized for her outstanding academic achievements, areas of study, leadership and career interests. In leaving a bequest to AICF to establish this award, Dr. Ivarson wished to support students from his home province of Alberta in their pursuit of studies in agricultural sciences.

Christina is a Master of Science student in the Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutritional Science at the University of Alberta. After earning her undergraduate degree from NSAC, Christina moved to Alberta to pursue her graduate degree. Her research program focuses on residual feed efficiency (RFI) and maternal nutrition in beef cattle. The goal of this research is to provide the beef industry with pertinent knowledge regarding the interaction of RFI and maternal nutrition with important production characteristics including fertility, carcass traits and growth traits.

Agriculture has always been an important facet of Christina's life and influenced her choice of academic studies. She grew up on a dairy farm in Ontario and completed over 50 projects during the 13 years she was a 4-H member. She is currently the secretary/treasurer of the University of Alberta Multi-Species Judging Club, a member of the university's collegiate 4-H club, and is an active hockey official. She enjoys being a positive role model to youth through community involvement, her work with the 4-H organization and as a coach for women's hockey.

The Dr. Karl C. Ivarson Agricultural Scholarship is made possible through a generous bequest to the AICF by noted Albertan soil scientist, the late Dr. Karl C. Ivarson.

# Dalhousie's Faculty of Agriculture Welcomes Dr. David Gray



Dr. David Gray, a native of Truro, England arrived in Truro, Nova Scotia with his family in mid-July. He officially became the first, full-time dean, Faculty of Agriculture and principal, Dalhousie Agricultural Campus on August 1, 2013.

## **Biography**

David graduated with a degree in Marine Biology from UCNW Bangor in 1993 and immediately jumped on a plane to South Africa where he spent the next four years completing his PhD in Zoology at Rhodes University. Upon completion of his PhD, David then took up the post of lecturer in Marine Biology at The University of the Western Cape in Cape Town and then returned to a lectureship at Rhodes University in 1998.

In 1997 David was awarded a research fellowship from The University of Hong Kong to investigate biological rhythms in intertidal gastropod molluscs. During his tenure he was based at The Swire Institute of Marine Science, Cape d'Aguilar, and in The Department of Ecology and Biodiversity, delivering lectures to the postgraduate school.

From 1999-2004 David worked at Hartpury College, an Associate Faculty of The University of the West of England, first as a lecturer

but latterly as deputy principal (academic) and dean of Faculty. In 2004, David moved to become principal and dean of The University of Derby Faculty based at The Devonshire Campus in Buxton and was awarded a personal professorial chair in 2007. As dean of faculty, David was responsible for 7,000 students, 300 staff and oversaw a budget of £17.5 Million.

In 2008, David took up the post of director of The NAFC Marine Centre based in The Shetland Islands, a founding academic partner of The University of The Highlands & Islands Millennium Institute.

David has worked for, and on behalf of The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education since 2000 as a subject specialist reviewer (Biosciences) and an institutional auditor of collaborative provision. David is also a fellow of the British Higher Education Academy.

David is married to Janine and they have three daughters, Rebecca and Emma (14) and Bethan (10).

## ***Dr. David Gray's Great Adventure!***

David is finally feeling settled after embarking on yet another adventure, packing up his family and moving to Canada.

He is no stranger to big moves having travelled from the UK to South Africa as well as Hong Kong.

Discover what motivates David on a more personal level.

### **What role has international travel played in your overall career and education and that of your family?**

*"The world is the biggest classroom there is! The chance to travel around the world and meet people from other cultures and backgrounds is simply some of the best education you can get, especially in the modern era of global communication! You never stop learning and being able to visit other countries and see how they approach the same challenges we face is a wonderful opportunity.*

*My wife is South African by birth. We met when we were both undertaking our Doctoral studies at Rhodes University. If you ask my daughters where they are from they have a quite unique reply*

*"We are half English, half South African...but ALL Cornish!...perfect!"*

### **What is the one piece of wisdom or guiding principle you try to bring to your work every day?**

*"A good question. I have picked up a number of "pearls of wisdom" over my years in academic leadership and management but the one I always keep coming back to is that I want people to enjoy their work. I want to walk around the campus and see smiling faces, hear laughter and know that people are truly happy to be there. I have found that a happy and content team delivers way above expectations, plus its healthy...after all, you work to live you don't live to work. Work hard, play hard...and let's be honest, nobody plays harder than Aggies!"*

### **You have three daughters, twin girls Rebecca and Emma, 14 and Bethan, 10. What is your biggest challenge in raising three daughters?**

*"Apart from being the only male in the house you mean? My family means the world to me and I suppose I take that approach into the workplace too and understand that many of my team are juggling work and family commitments in the same way I am. I am incredibly lucky in that my daughters have been very supportive and understanding of the move. They remember the days when they used to come milking with me at Hartpury College and helping out during lambing...so they're pretty excited about the whole thing. I just want to ensure I do the best I can for them and preparing them for the chaotic modern world we now live in...after all I have two full-time jobs, principal/dean...and...dad!"*

### **You have a young family. How do you prioritize your demanding work schedule with family life?**

*"This one relates back to my earlier answer about getting your work/life balance right. My family all enjoy my work and so also get involved whenever possible. The girls have all been "assistants" on research projects and field work with me and have regularly joined me on my early morning campus walks. I'm in a very good place in that what I do for work is also what I enjoy for leisure...if you can find that combination then you've won!"*

### **What is your favourite way to unwind?**

*Simple...my family. Being a dad means that when you walk through that front door then your focus and attention has to be on your family...Janine often says that I'm addicted to my Blackberry and email and will one day need to have it surgically removed...and she is right...but modern technology allows me to keep in constant touch with the campus and with what's going on whilst being with my family. Obviously music also plays a big part in my "down time"...I have played since I was little and find it relaxing and great fun. The fact that my three daughters have also followed me into music is a huge bonus as we can share activities and spend time together doing what we all enjoy."*

### **What was it that attracted you to the opportunity to lead the Faculty of Agriculture as its dean/principal?**

*I was well aware of the reputation of The Faculty of Agriculture from its days as Nova Scotia Agricultural College. It was held in very high regard internationally and we kept a close eye on what it was doing when I was at Hartpury College in the UK. I've also gained quite a lot of experience in leading specialist institutions that have merged with larger universities and know what great opportunities this can bring with it...I'm obviously also aware of the challenges too. I suppose I'm also incredibly passionate about vocational education and applied research and in working very closely with our key stakeholders and industries that we serve and support. At the end of the day it is about putting our learners at the centre of what we do...Dalhousie and the new Faculty of Agriculture believe this too and I want to be a part of that!"*

### **You have a dual position – Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture and Principal of the Agricultural Campus. Describe what these two positions mean to you?**

*I was campus principal and dean of faculty when I was at the University of Derby in Buxton so have sat in the chair before and have managed the dual roles. In the early period of the Faculty the two roles will be very closely aligned as the only Faculty based in Truro is the Faculty of Agriculture...but as we develop and evolve there are many opportunities for other Faculties of the university to have a presence on campus, working*

collaboratively with the Faculty of Agriculture and so the campus principal role starts to change at that point... but won't it be exciting... watching both the Faculty and campus evolve?

## What do you see as priorities for the Faculty of Agriculture and Agricultural Campus in the months ahead?

Coming from leading a marine and nautical college I would say "steady the ship". The Faculty has been through a major change through the merger with the university. This will obviously mean that staff, students and stakeholders may be feeling a bit unsure as to the direction of the Faculty and our vision. I want to ensure that the Faculty is fully aligned with the agricultural industry across the region and that we understand their needs and are delivering the training, education and research they need rather than what we THINK they need. I'll also be working hard to ensure that our offer is aligned with and complements the offer of our sister Faculties within the university. We are part of a much larger family now and need to make that work to our advantage and to the benefit of the sectors we serve.

## What is it that excites you most about the Faculty of Agriculture?

Everywhere I look I see opportunities. I see curriculum which is rooted in the needs of the region, developing skills for the future of the economy. I see a Faculty that will be a crucial economic driver across the Maritime region and a leader in agricultural education, research and knowledge transfer. I see a team of dedicated and highly skilled staff with the same passion and drive as I have to make the Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture a renowned centre of specialized excellence.

## Leadership Ideals:

1. I believe in "leading from the front and leading by example" and do not believe in asking my staff to do anything that I myself am not prepared to do. I tend to be very hands-on and am more than happy to "roll my sleeves up" when required.

2. I am a dynamic leader who is not afraid to tackle and change cultures as and when required. I believe my best and most valuable resource is my staff team... a Faculty without good staff is just a collection of buildings; good staff without buildings can still produce an exceptional Faculty!

3. I teach, even if it is just one unit a semester, as I believe it is essential to gain that experience and understand the challenges faced by both staff and students in the classroom. I get immense satisfaction from an ongoing engagement and interaction with my students and it keeps me current.

## Top five things you might not know about David. Did you know....

### 1. David is a talented musician.

David began playing musical instruments when he was seven-years-old and began to learn to read and play music on the recorder before moving on to piano and brass instruments.

"Most of my playing has been in brass bands which are big in the mining areas of the UK and are graded depending upon their standard into "sections" for contests. I played in championship section bands (top level) and have played against some of the best bands in the world including Black Dyke and Grime Thorpe."

Since moving to Truro, David has joined the Truro Concert Band. He has also played on a number of musical CD recordings including a jazz band while in South Africa.

"My daughters play too. Rebecca and Emma both play brass whilst Bethan is learning the violin though her real passion lies in the direction of the drums!"

### 2. David is a certified Trekkie.

"I LOVE Science Fiction and so Star Wars, Star Trek, Babylon 5 and Firefly are all up there as some of my favourite viewing....of course nothing compares to the BBCs Dr. Who though!"

### 3. David has an adventurous spirit.

"I have travelled quite a bit having lived in South Africa for seven years. I have spent time in the Falkland Islands and also Hong Kong whilst on a research scholarship to the University of Hong Kong. I have swum with killer whales and great white sharks and I have a scar from where I was bitten by a tarantula when it was in my sleeping bag on a hiking trail in South Africa."

"I've also had my clothes stolen by Vervet monkeys and had to chase them through the African bush to get them back!"

### 4. David is a Judo enthusiast.

"I love Judo and had been trying desperately to get a Judo club up and running in Shetland but due to distance from the mainland that proved difficult. I hold a 1st Kyu (top Brown Belt) grade and will be looking to get involved in the local club in Truro and work towards my 1st Dan Black Belt!"

### 5. David is a proud Cornishman.

David Gray is Cornish and even has a passing acquaintance with the Cornish language. Being Cornish allows him to wear the Cornish tartan and kilt which he does on formal occasions.

"My girls and I are all very proud of our Cornish roots and regularly have homemade Cornish pasties for tea. The Cornish are a bit touchy on whether Cornwall is actually part of England or not. Cornwall is the historic site of Camelot (Tintagel) and the seat of the first truly British Monarch. The Cornish also have their own language... A wre'ta kewsel Kernewek?"

## **It's often said that a Faculty of Agriculture is different from other faculties. True or False?**

Now how many times have those exact words passed my lips? Yes a Faculty of Agriculture is different for a number of reasons but the biggest difference is that our entire campus is our classroom. The grass, trees, gardens and fields are not just there to give our students a pretty environment to work in, they are a fundamental part of our delivery and, as such, need to be managed carefully and effectively. Add to that the additional responsibility of caring for a large number of animals on campus and ensuring that we maintain strong links and dialogue with the industries we are there to serve and support and you can start to see the differences.

## **The Faculty of Agriculture is the only Dalhousie Faculty to provide diploma programming? What are your views on this?**

It's exactly what we should be delivering. We need to be delivering qualifications which are relevant to the industries we serve and have "currency" in the workplace. The diploma does exactly that and has an important place in the progression of our students up the educational ladder. Modern education should be viewed like an escalator... students should step on and move up through achieving appropriate and relevant qualifications with us and then step off into employment... but their progress shouldn't stop there... they will continue to learn whilst in the work place and we need to have a system in place that allows us to recognise that progress so that when they return to us for further study and CPD they step back on the escalator higher up.

## **Agriculture impacts those not directly involved with the industry but those stakeholders do not often realize it. How do we make agriculture more relevant?**

Hmmmm... I don't think it's about making agriculture more relevant... there isn't one person on this planet whose life isn't significantly affected by agriculture so it cannot be any more relevant... I think our challenge is to make people more aware of that fact. Without agriculture where would we be? Where would our food come from? Our job is not just to educate the students that enrol with us each year, we have a responsibility to help the wider community understand the importance of agriculture and the contribution it makes to the local, regional and national economy.

## **You mention our job is not just to educate the students that enrol with us each year, but that we have a responsibility to help the wider community understand the importance of agriculture and the contribution it makes to the local, regional and national economy. How do you see us accomplishing/ approaching this?**



I'm passionate about community engagement and outreach. In my previous faculties and institutions we have developed programmes of engagement with our feeder schools, locally, regionally and even nationally. It is important to get to our youngsters and introduce them to agriculture, aquaculture and environmental issues at an early age... this can also help to engage parents and the wider community too. Taking what we do into their classrooms... "Growing our own wood" (excuse the pun). It is also important for the faculty and campus to be seen as a full part of the community and so opening our doors whenever possible, holding regular events to bring the broader community to us, open days, a series of public talks, "bite sized" taster courses... obviously we also need to communicate with the modern generation using the medium of choice... so we need to have a presence on Facebook, Twitter, we need to utilise blogs, wikis, podcasts.

## **Approximately 60 per cent of our students are from Nova Scotia and 20 per cent are international. What is your vision to help us reconnect with the other Atlantic Provinces as per our regional mandate?**

When you are the only Agricultural Faculty in the Maritime region it is easy to become complacent. I don't want our students to come and study with us because we are the closest, their "local" university... I want them to come out of choice because we are the best at what we do. So not only should we view our mandate as being regional but also national. We have some key unique selling points which we do far better than anyone else and people across our region and across the country need to know that... we need to find a way of getting that message out there. We need to be more visible in the industry, we need to have a constant dialogue with our key customers and stake holders, they need to truly believe that we are listening and are able to help them benefit economically.

## Why are Faculties of agriculture important in this country?

I think my previous answers may have started to answer this question. Faculties of agriculture, by definition, should be grounded in the industries we serve, we should be a "one stop shop" for our customers who need advice, guidance, research, training and education and we should be applying theory to practice and having a direct impact on the bottom line wherever possible. We should be a cornerstone of our community and work with our local schools in educating the next generation as to the importance of agriculture and help to dispel some of the myths surrounding our industries. We are there to help government develop realistic policies that will help take the Atlantic region forward as a major player in global agriculture. We should be approachable and not seen to be sat in "the ivory towers of academia"... not afraid to get our hands dirty, lets understand why we are here and always keep that in our vision.



## How's he measuring up? Here's what some folks have to say about Dr. Gray...

"Since day one, Dr. Gray has been breathing new life into our campus. He respects our history as NSAC, yet has a vision for where we are headed. Dr. Gray has gotten to know many of our students already and it's a welcoming feeling when he greets you by name as you encounter him around campus.

Dr. Gray's speeches have certainly stood out. His use of hilarious anecdotes at a variety of gatherings has enriched our campus social events.

Dr. Gray has taken the time to meet with DASA on a regular basis- something we have never seen before. He addresses questions and concerns promptly and recognizes the need for a strong connection between students and administration.

Our future is bright with Dr. Gray on our campus and he is exactly who we need to lead us on the other side of the merger. DASA has enjoyed working with Dr. Gray and his team, and looks forward to continued collaboration."

**-Robyn McCallum, Dalhousie Agricultural Students' Association**

"From an alumni perspective Dr. Gray has been received extremely well - for his short time here he has excellent knowledge of the agriculture in our region and the challenges and opportunities facing the industry. He is committed to positioning the Faculty of Agriculture to be the "go to" place for knowledge and training in agriculture.

"I love his humour, his appreciation of people and their efforts in the work we are doing; his no nonsense approach and ability to

provide guidance and direction, his commitment to agriculture."

**-Jean Lynds (Class of '90)**

"I first met Dr. Gray at the alumni reception in Port Williams. Prior to this event I had read articles, heard interviews and followed him a bit on social media. One thing that has impressed me about Dr. Gray is his visibility. He is EVERYWHERE! He goes to student led events, alumni meetings, student leader meetings, recognition dinners, - all this on top of his dean's business with faculty, campus staff, research staff, research community, Dal administration, deans from other agricultural colleges, conferences, travel, etc. This has been great for him to immerse himself into the role early on and make himself so visible. It has been very easy to get past the "new guy" phase.

It is impressive that his past work experience was at colleges so similar to Dal AC. He has been involved in mergers, running smaller campuses an hour away from the main campus, Sound familiar? I am excited about his vision and enthusiasm. He is interested in (and has relevant experience in) aquaculture, online/remote learning, technical and degree programs... but mostly he wants to make (or keep) Dal AC a leading agriculture school in Canada.

I think he was a great choice - besides all of this he is interested in alumni, is a great listener, has lots of energy and is open and friendly (and his accent is a bonus)!

**-Janice Lutz (Class of '85)**

## The First Months

Wondering how Dr. Gray has spent his first few months, getting acquainted, on campus? Check-out some photo highlights!

### July

*Hanging out with Rocky the Ram during campus' Open House festivities*



### Aug

*Checking out the "living wall of lettuce" in Cox*



### Oct

*Participating in National Kale Day*



### Aug

*Serving ice cream to campus, on his very first day*



### Sept

*Getting dunked during Orientation week*



### Oct

*At the grand opening of the new student lounge*



### Aug

*With his family, taking part in the N.S. Provincial Exhibition parade*



### Sept

*Entertaining members of the community at Embrace Truro*



# Oct

Showing a cow during College Royal festivities



# Nov

Speaking at the Blue & Gold Alumni Awards



# Nov

Visiting the University of Sao Paulo, Brazil



# Nov

Participating in Movember



# Nov

Discovery Day (he got in!)



# Nov

Daughter, Emma, being "put to work" in the barn during "Take your Kid to Work Day"



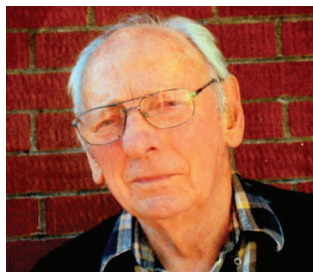
# Dec

Visiting The Fujian Agriculture & Forestry University, China

# Professor Intrepid Remembered

Vernon R. Vickery (Class of '47)

By Ted MacNintch (Class of '56)

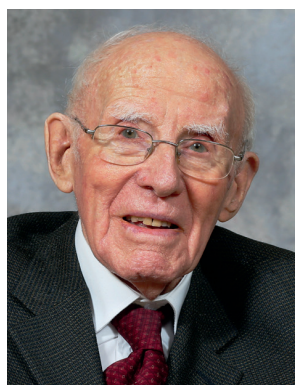


What people may not appreciate with respect to the Dalhousie/NSAC merger is that when Dalhousie University inherited this distinguished Agricultural Faculty, together with the records of the historical diaspora that passed through its ranks for over a century, it also inherited a roster of outstanding achievers, both living and deceased. One of these was Professor Vernon R. Vickery who passed away in August, 2011. Vic lived a full academic life after surviving WWII.

Dr. Vickery was a Yarmouth County lad who overcame a poverty-stricken youth of hardscrabble farm work while his father was stricken with tuberculosis. Vic progressed through Normal College in Truro, taught for a year during the depression and then joined the colours, serving in the RCAF/RAF as a radar technician, installing radar units in aircraft and air-testing them in Southern England, South Wales, the Midlands of England, North Africa and Italy. During this time he encountered some harrowing experiences, almost losing his life several times - as will be described in

more detail in the Faculty of Agriculture alumni e-news in February, along with the many awards he received and the many professional societies to which he belonged.

After an honourable discharge, Vic progressed through NSAC and Macdonald College, collecting degrees and wife Muriel Mc Aaloney along the way. He taught at NSAC and did entomological work for the NS Government while on his academic career path, and then became instrumental in propelling the McGill Lyman Museum to its present status as an internationally known center for insect systematics and biology. Vic served as curator and then in an emeritis capacity before retiring. As a McGill Professor of Entomology, Vic had over 400 scientific publications and eight published books to his credit. He was a world renowned specialist on the taxonomy, morphology and behavior of orthopteroid insects and his entomological interests were wide ranging, extending to beekeeping and pest management.



"I was fortunate to have had many opportunities. Now I can provide those opportunities to others."

— Peter Hamilton, NSAC Class of '44

## A proud Agriculture graduate paying it forward.

Planning a gift for the Agricultural Campus by purchasing a life insurance policy was a great way for Peter Hamilton to give back to the institution that meant so much to him. Peter Hamilton is one of a growing number of our alumni who have a special role in shaping the past, present and future of the Agricultural Campus. Peter feels fortunate to have had the opportunity to learn, to succeed, and now he wants to pass along this opportunity to future generations.

Whatever your passion – be it funding a scholarship for a deserving student, giving to outreach programs, or supporting research in a discipline that's meaningful for you – we can help you realize it.



For information, contact:

Cathrine Yuill 902.893.4413 · cathrine.yuill@dal.ca  
Ian Lewer 902.494.6981 · ian.lewer@dal.ca  
Ann Vessey 902.494.6565 · ann.vessey@dal.ca

 **DALHOUSIE  
UNIVERSITY**  
*Inspiring Minds*  
Faculty of Agriculture

# Events & Reunions

## Blue & Gold Awards 2013

The Blue and Gold Awards program honours alumni who have distinguished themselves through outstanding service to the *alma mater*, their communities, the Province of Nova Scotia and beyond.

The 2013 awards gala recognized three deserving alumni for their exceptional achievements in the areas of volunteerism and contribution to the agricultural industry.

### Audrie – Jo (Vink) McConkey (Class of '03)

#### Young Alumni Achievement Award



Vice-chair, Alumni Association, Jean Lynds (Class of '90) with Audrie-Jo after the awards dinner.

Audrie-Jo McConkey is no stranger to the idiom 'practice what you preach'. She does just that every single day.

Audrie-Jo knows that youth are the future and believes that it is our responsibility to ensure they have the opportunity to reach their full potential. That's why she spends her free time

volunteering for various organizations and initiatives that focus on young children and youth.

Audrie-Jo has been involved in supervising over 15 different high school science fair projects and has been a judge for regional and national science fairs and 4-H fisheries projects. She has also been involved with the Junior Achievement Program, visiting Grade 9 classrooms to educate students on the significance of math programs, as well as a similar program called Females in the Workforce, which introduces science-based careers to young girls.

She strives to expose youth to Dalhousie's Faculty of Agriculture as much as possible, by hosting high school classes in the Aquaculture facility and participating in Ag Zone and Open House. As well, Audrie-Jo provides volunteer opportunities to undergraduate students seeking experience in the field.

Audrie-Jo loves kids. She admits providing educational opportunities for youth is one of the most rewarding experiences she's ever had.

As if all of that weren't enough, Audrie-Jo sits on the board

of the Faculty's Alumni Association and is a member of the Fishermen & Scientists Research Society. She's been a very active member of the Nova Scotia Institute of Agrologists, chairing a number of committees. She is involved with LaLeche League Canada, providing support for nursing mothers and actively fundraises for the IWK, Canadian Cancer Society, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Colchester and the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada.

One of Audrie-Jo's newest commitments is with the Rotary Club of Truro. Joining just this past year, she has already signed-up as deputy chair of the International Service Committee. Audrie-Jo has been described as, "a great asset to the club".

Among all of these volunteer activities, Audrie-Jo maintains a strong dedication to her day job on campus - shellfish technician and lab instructor, in the Plant and Animal Sciences Department.

Despite being involved in such a variety and quantity of activities, Audrie-Jo adamantly gives every task her undivided attention. She contributes to the best of her ability and always follows-through with her responsibilities.

By the end of the day you would think Audrie-Jo would head home and put her feet up. She may deserve it, but that's far from reality. After work Audrie-Jo goes home for her most important and rewarding job, being a mother. Along with husband Mike (Class of '02), Audrie-Jo has three young boys – twins, Theo and Sam, as well as Reid.

### Anna (Clarke) Fitzgerald (Class of '86)

#### Alumni Volunteer of the Year Award



Chair, Alumni Association, Dwane Mellish (Class of '85) and Dean, Faculty of Agriculture, Dr. David Gray presenting the Alumni Volunteer of the Year award to Anna.

Can you imagine how many volunteer hours it takes to justify a full-time paid position? The recipient of the Agricultural Campus' 2013 Alumni Volunteer of the Year Award would know. Although she is much too humble to say, Anna Fitzgerald dedicated so much of her time helping International students over

the years at AC, that eventually a full time position was created.

As a volunteer student advisor for International students, Anna always went the extra mile for the students. She helped

launch the International Student Association and continued to assist the group by taking care of the “behind the scenes” work. Anna spent many weekends chauffeuring groups of students. She took them sightseeing and on outings that would enhance their cultural experiences. Anna organized potluck dinners. She helped the students open bank accounts. She listened.

“There’s a fine line between mothering and helping,” says Debbie Mellish, former colleague and close friend of Anna’s. “Anna was very good at that. She’s a very caring person.”

Anna could always be counted on for campus fundraisers, including International silent auctions. She was never hesitant to help raise funds for students in need by donating pieces of her beautifully hand-crafted jewelry, which she made in her spare time.

Anna took her work and offered her expertise to developing countries during international stints, in Colombia and The Gambia. Her ability to teach and work with international students was perhaps best demonstrated by two six-month work terms in The Gambia where she delivered courses in botany, zoology and plant physiology at Gambia College. She also established and equipped a laboratory for teaching science during her stay at Gambia College.

One may argue that the international experiences were part of Anna’s regular job description. However, such endeavors require a lot of extra commitment – above and beyond your regular duties. Anna was very well received during her international trips. She was always very open to adapting herself personally to new cultures. She recognized she had a lot to offer, but so did the locals.

For her energy, dedication and commitment to excellence in internationalizing the former NSAC, Anna was presented the 2003 Award for Internationalization.

International is not the only department or organization that has benefited from the generosity of Anna and her good sense of humour.

As a well-respected lab instructor for 25 years, Anna became heavily involved with local science fairs, volunteering her professional skills. She drew on her knowledge, gained from years in the Environmental Science department, to provide advice to the general public. Quite frequently, Anna could be found with a member of the local community as they questioned her on their sick plants. Anna never turned anyone away, but advised cautiously.

Finally settling into her new home in St. Andrew’s, NB with her husband, Michael, some lucky organizations in the community are bound to be touched by Anna’s generosity.

Anna is a perfect example of the belief that one person can make a difference.

## *Gabriel Comeau (Class of ’72) Distinguished Alumni Award*



*Gabriel with his family, after receiving his award. L-R: Leslie McNabb (partner), Gabriel, Matthew (son) and Germaine (sister).*

Gabriel Comeau is a well-known name that is highly regarded in the dairy industry, in particular. During challenging times, Gabriel made a significant impact on the industry in this province. His work is still evident today.

In 1989, Gabriel was appointed manager of the Nova Scotia Dairy

Commission, a position he held for over 10 years. From that role, Gabriel became the first general manager of what is now Dairy Farmers of Nova Scotia, until his retirement from that position two years later.

During his time in the dairy industry, Gabriel represented the province on numerous national committees, including the Canadian Milk Supply Management Committee. Gabriel participated in the negotiations leading to the establishment of Interprovincial milk pools in the mid 1990’s. Provincially, he guided several initiatives, including major overhauls in producer pricing, milk transportation, merger of quotas into a single quota system and the eventually transition from a government commission to Dairy Farmers of Nova Scotia, a producer-run marketing board.

Although Gabriel wasn’t always heavily involved in the dairy industry, he’s always had strong ties to agriculture. After graduating from the former NSAC in 1972, Gabriel attended McGill University where he earned a B.Sc. (Agr.). In 1985 he studied at Cornell University, where he obtained a Master’s degree in Agricultural Economics.

Upon his graduation from McGill, Gabriel joined the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture, serving in various positions in the field of agricultural extension. This included work as assistant agricultural representative, agricultural representative, farm management specialist and farm management supervisor.

Since “retiring”, Gabriel has operated a simultaneous interpretation company, Echovoix, which provides interpretation services to a variety of clients, primarily in the field of agriculture, across North America.

Gabriel is a member and a past president of the Nova Scotia Institute of Agrologists. He was the recipient of the inaugural C. A. Douglas Extension Award, and is an honorary member of Dairy Farmers of Nova Scotia.

Work is not the only task that keeps Gabriel busy. He enjoys a wide range of interests including travelling and sports. As a runner, Gabriel has participated in lots of events including the Cabot Trail Relay Race. He’s a hockey fan, enjoying the sport as an athlete with a “gentleman’s” league as well as through a hockey pool. Gabriel also swings a mean golf club and has been

known to ski down many a downhill ski slope.

He is proud of his Acadian heritage and retains a close connection to his home community of Meteghan, Digby County.

Gabriel has two children, Lianne and Matt and last year became a proud grandfather.

Gabriel has truly earned the honour of being named the Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture's Distinguished Alumnus of 2013.



*This year's Blue & Gold dinner was exceptionally intimate. Although gusty winds left guests and award recipients in the dark for nearly the entire event, no one seemed to mind or notice. In true Aggie style, Dr. Gray jumped in to hold a flashlight for Dwane during his remarks.*

2013 Inductees (L-R):

Leonard Ruby – NL

D Gordon Hunter – NB

Pauline Morehouse, accepting on behalf of the late

Ralph Morehouse (Class of '48) – NS

John J MacDonald (Class of '71) – PE

Portraits of the Hall of Fame inductees and their citations are placed on public display in the vestibule of the C.A. Douglas Boardroom, Cumming Hall at the Faculty of Agriculture.

## Dean's Receptions Fall 2013

Dr. David Gray toured the Maritimes this past fall meeting alumni and friends of the Faculty of Agriculture during a series of receptions.

Dr. Gray spoke about his goals and priorities for the Faculty of Agriculture, as well as the Alumni Association.

**First stop:** Port Williams, NS

"Meet the Dean" receptions kicked-off in October with an evening at the Port Pub. Close to 70 alumni and guests gathered to chat and ask Dr. Gray questions.

*David Ward (Class of '56) proudly sporting his "Aggie" gear to visit with Dr. Gray.*



## Atlantic Agricultural Hall of Fame

Induction into the Atlantic Agricultural Hall of Fame is a way of recognizing the contribution of an individual to the development of a specific commodity, a farm organization, the farm community, or to the enhancement of the agricultural industry in Atlantic Canada.

Each year, based on nominations received from farm and rural organizations, one person from each of the four Atlantic Provinces is honoured at an induction ceremony and reception during October.



**Stops two and three:** Fredericton, NB and home turf

In mid-November, Dr. Gray hosted two receptions - one in Fredericton and two nights later, one on the Faculty of Agriculture's campus. Both events saw a keen group of alumni who had lots of questions for the new dean.



*Colette Wyllie (Class of '10), Ashley (Gillies) Baskin (Class of '09) and Emma Hayes (Class of '11) catch-up in Fredericton.*



*Emma Hayes, Doris Seaman (honorary Class of '56 member) and Donald Young (Class of '50) in Fredericton.*

**Last stop:** Charlottetown, PE  
More than 60 alumni and friends attended Dr. Gray's final reception, at the PEI Brewing Company.



Beck Brewster, Megan Crouse (both Class of '11) and Jessica Eisnor (Class of '13) sampling some brews at the PEI Brewing Company.



Helen Smith-MacPhail (Class of '91), Greg Donald (Class of '89) and Christina Stewart (Class of '94).



Many young alumni reunite in Charlottetown.

## Class of '56 Reunion September, 2013

Keeping with tradition, the Class of '56 met for their annual reunion for three days in September. This year the group gathered at Oak Island Inn, NS. There were 20 graduates, plus spouses in attendance.

The agenda, included not only the usual socialization activities for people who have been close friends for almost 60 years, but also time reserved for intellectual discussions concerning university related matters between alumni and Dalhousie University staff members.

Guests who provided insightful presentations included Dr. David Gray, Dr. Richard Donald and Professor Robert France. Class of '56 Rural Watershed Research Scholarship recipients Jillian Eisenor and Wenfeng Zhu presented summaries of their progress and plans.

The Class of '56 looks forward to gathering again in 2014.



Class of '56 Scholarship Committee with student recipients: Dick Huggard, Nelson Ball, Jillian Eisenor, Wenfeng Zhu, Doug Byers and Dave Ward.



Dick Huggard and Danny Stewart discussing Class of '56 reunion matters.



Joan MacNintch, Guy Losier with wife and caregiver, Carmelle Landry, in the Tracadie.

## Does your Class Year end in "4" or "9"?

Congratulations to honour year classes, years ending in "4" and "9"! You are celebrating a milestone reunion year in 2014.

We encourage you to gather your classmates for a reunion. Whether it's your 5th, 25th, 30th or 50th anniversary, we invite you to return to campus for a class gathering, or plan something off-site, to celebrate this special milestone.

Many alumni consider the days spent at NSAC to be some of the best times of their lives. Imagine the fun you would have reminiscing with former classmates at a reunion!

If you are interested in having a class reunion, contact the Alumni office. We would be more than happy to help!

Contact us at: [agalumni@dal.ca](mailto:agalumni@dal.ca) or 902-893-6022

# 2013 Scholarship Banquet

The 2013 Faculty of Agriculture Scholarship Banquet was held in late November and provided an occasion to celebrate the strong and growing support from scholarship sponsors and the achievements of the students who receive those scholarships.

The annual Scholarship Banquet brings together students who are scholarship recipients with the sponsors of their many scholarships. The Faculty of Agriculture is very fortunate to have the commitment from so many businesses, farm organizations and alumni to provide scholarships to both recognize academic achievement and provide motivation to deserving students, while assisting financially with ever-increasing education costs.

## \$1,000 Stuart & Ruth Allaby Graduate Studies Scholarship Awarded to International Student

Faezeh Kharazyan, a M.Sc. student at the Faculty of Agriculture, was selected as the 2013 recipient of the \$1,000 Stuart & Ruth Allaby Graduate Studies Scholarship. Dr. Gray, is shown congratulating Faezeh. The scholarship is awarded to an M.Sc. student at the Faculty of Agriculture concentrating on animal research.



## \$2,000 William D. Swetnam Memorial Scholarship

The Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture was pleased to have Peter Swetnam and son, William Swetnam, attend the Scholarship Banquet to present the \$2,000 William D. Swetnam Memorial Scholarship. The scholarship is named in memory of Bill Swetnam (Class of '56). Peter (Class of '89) is also an alumnus while William is a current student. Bridget Wilson was the 2013 recipient. The scholarship is presented to an Atlantic Canada student in the B.Sc.(Agr.) program who has displayed leadership qualities while maintaining an outstanding academic performance during their program at the Faculty of Agriculture.



## Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture Alumni Family Bursaries

The Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture was pleased to present several \$1,000 bursaries to family members of Faculty of Agriculture alumni. Dwane Mellish, chair, Faculty of Agriculture Alumni Association, is shown with some of this year's recipients.

Front row (L to R): Lauren van Zutphen, Jennifer Bent and Connie van den Heuvel.

Back row, Dwane, James Oostvogels, Alana Bent and representing Alumni Family Bursary donors, Karmala Padmanathan.



# New Beginnings

In 1907, NSAC began registering their purebred Holstein cattle with Holstein Canada, a national organization responsible for the registration and improvement of the Holstein breed. For 105 years, all female Holstein calves born to cows that were bred by NSAC carried the NSAC prefix (herd name) on their official registration certificate. In April 2013, NSAC was presented the Century of Holsteins award at the Holstein Canada National Convention in Niagara Falls, Ontario. The Century of Holstein Award recognizes dairy operations that have 100 years of membership and commitment to the Holstein breed.

In September 2012, NSAC merged with Dalhousie University and became the Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture. The dairy herd was transferred to Dalhousie University and assigned the new prefix "DAL". Cows that were bred after September 1st and gave birth to heifer calves would carry the new DAL name.

On June 16th, 2013 at approximately 6:30p.m., the first DAL heifer calf was born - beginning the start of a new era. The mother, NSAC Sapphire Vala, gave birth to a heifer calf weighing 56KG who was sired by Bigstone. This calf is the first of many future DAL calves and she is the great-granddaughter of the oldest cow in the herd, NSAC Inquirer Amy. NSAC Inquirer Amy is over 10 years old and has given birth to eight calves, three of which are still part of the herd. In total, Amy has 15 ancestors in the herd.

On October 18th, during College Royal activities, entries were submitted to name the first DAL heifer calf, whose name had to begin with the letter "A".

By popular demand, the winning name was DAL Bigstone Aggie. For all those who submitted the name "Aggie", a draw was held and Joann Merritt was the winner of the \$60 Bookstore certificate compliments of the Faculty Alumni Office.



## Alumnus Presented with PEI Federation of Agriculture/FCC Scholarship

### Matthew Lawless (Class of '12)

Matthew Lawless, from Shamrock, PE, was selected as the recipient of the 2013 PE Federation of Agriculture and Farm Credit Canada scholarship.

The scholarship is a \$2,000 non-renewable scholarship and is given to a deserving federation member who is furthering their education.

Matthew is working on his masters of science in plant health at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon. He is an honours graduate of the former NSAC and Kinkora High School. Upon completion of his masters, he plans to continue into a PhD program.

Lawless has worked on a number of farms on PE and continues to work on a dairy farm just outside of Saskatoon. He was recently presented with the PEIFA/FCC scholarship by PE Federation of Agriculture President, Alvin Keenan.



Matthew receiving the annual scholarship from federation president, Alvin Keenan.





Driving with the top down.



A family barbecue on a warm summer night.



Great entertainment.

# Community Open House

*A summer tradition*

**Thursday, July 24, 2014 | 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.**

**Dalhousie's Agricultural Campus**

Re-live your university days with your family and friends. Attend a reunion, catch up on the latest agriculture research or just enjoy some hands-on fun.



**DALHOUSIE  
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*Inspiring Minds*

*Faculty of Agriculture*

**[dal.ca/agopenhouse](http://dal.ca/agopenhouse)**

# Athletics Update

## Eastlink Agri- Golf Classic – July 2014



The annual athletics fundraising event was held at Glasgow Hill Resort & Golf Club, Hunter River, PE. A beautiful course was the back-drop for a great day of golf for the participating teams. All of the teams have a strong connection with the campus, the agricultural industry, the event and include former varsity athletes. Many of the teams have played in the event for over 14 years.



Watts Alums – Alumni Winners (with a score of 62) at 2013 Eastlink Agri-Golf Classic

The 2014 Eastlink Agri-Golf Classic will be held on July 18, 2014 at Ken Wo Golf Club, New Minas, NS.

## Varsity and Club Team Updates for Fall 2013

### Cross Country



Ann Hartlin (Class of '82) finishes the Homecoming 5K in Oct.

Arielle Fitzgerald finished the season with Four first place finishes, was ACAA Women's Champion and a member of the ACAA All-Conference

Team. Arielle finished the championship run at 18:55 over the 5 kms.

Going on to the CCAA Cross Country National Championships hosted by Humber College, Arielle finished 9th in a field of 121 runners from across the CCAA Member Conferences.

DAL AC's Logan Grant finished third in the men's championship race having finished 2nd or 3rd throughout the preliminary races. Logan was also a member of the ACAA All-Conference Team with a championship time of 28:03 over 8 kms.

Both DAL AC teams finished 2nd in team competition.

### Rugby



ACAA 2013 Champions – DAL AC Rams!

The DAL AC Women's Rugby team captured the ACAA championship banner in a hard fought match against MTA. The Rams won 22-17 having split the season contests 1-1 vs MTA.

### Soccer

Both the men's and women's teams finished an improved season in 2013-14 with close contests in every match. The women finished 6th and the men 7th.

Both men's and women's teams are competing in local winter indoor leagues.

### Golf

Jescynda Cain-Hotham and Lindsay Cameron captured the ACAA women's golf title at Crowbush Cove. The ladies played a consistent two rounds in cold and windy conditions to take the ACAA Women's golf title for 2013-14. Jescynda also placed second in the individual competition and was selected as an ACAA All-Conference.

### Equestrian

The Rams have started the AIEL schedule on a positive note capturing first place in team competition in both shows held ( StFX and DAL AC ) .

### Volleyball

The women's team has had a great start to the 2013-14 season winning a mini-tournament at MTA, coming 2nd in pool play at the ACAA tip-off and being currently in 1st place in ACAA league play.

### Woodsmen

The men's and women's teams have had a positive start to 2013-14 with both A teams finishing first at UNB and at SSFC – the Women's A team -2nd, B Team 6th while the Men's A Team was 4th and the B Team 6th The next competitions are in second semester – Macdonald Campus Jan 25, DAL AC Feb 8.

### Badminton

The Rams competed in their first ACAA tournament of the year at USainte Anne in late November. The team finished 2nd. The second competition was Jan 10-11 at U Kings College.

### Basketball



Hayley Wilson (father Peter, Class of '79, played basketball for NSAC) beats MTA defenders on route to a basket in ACAA League Play.

The women's team has started the season a bit small in numbers but big in commitment and determination. The men's team have a great group and are competing well in all contests. They are presently in 8th.

### Festive Craft Market

The annual Market was held in November and with exceptional weather and great vendors, it was very successful. There were 65 vendors with lots of variety and quality throughout. The 2014 date is Nov 15-16. Mark your calendars!

### ACAA Tip-Offs

DAL AC played host to two tip-off tournaments during the fall semester. The women's volleyball – 10 teams and men's and women's basketball – 6 teams. The women's volleyball finished 2nd in their pool play, men's basketball went 3-0 and women's basketball were 2-1.

# Join the tradition!

Order your ring, exclusively for alumni.  
Available today in two different styles of  
14k gold and stainless steel.

Drop by the Faculty of Agriculture's External  
Relations Office, Cumming Hall to view  
samples and place your order.

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orders, visit [dal.ca/agalumni](http://dal.ca/agalumni) or call  
902-893-6022



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# In Touch!

**Submit your life updates to [agalumni@dal.ca](mailto:agalumni@dal.ca) or 902-893-6022 to be included in this section.**

## Class of '81

**Tait, Janice...**Moved to Charlottetown, PE in September. Working as an agricultural account manager for the Island. Would like to hear from alumni in PEI!

## Class of '96

**Jeffrey, Scott...**Along with wife, Angie, welcomed their first child, daughter, Paige in 2012. Visit [nsdj.ca](http://nsdj.ca) for more information on Scott's DJ business.

## Class of '10

**Wyllie, Colette...**graduated from Nova Scotia Community College with a Public Relations diploma in June. Now working as industry coordinator for the Christmas Tree Council of Nova Scotia.

## (Class of '11)

**Murray, Nathan...**After graduating from NSAC with a B.Sc. (Agr.) in Agricultural Business, I started working with Farm Credit Canada (FCC) in Truro, NS, as a relationship manager. In this role I was providing financial lending services to agricultural customers in the Truro area. I enjoyed my job and loved working at FCC, but I was pretty sure that I didn't want to be in that position long term, so I kept my eyes and ears open for opportunities. Much like any other graduate, I had no idea what type of a job I would enjoy or what the next steps would be. One thing I did know is that I wanted to experience something different and I wanted to do it with FCC.

Just over a year after starting with FCC, I found myself moving across the country to Regina, Saskatchewan, to Farm Credit Canada's Corporate Office.

Why did I head that way? Opportunity. The opportunity for new experiences and potential opportunity and growth for the future. I had applied to a few different positions, tweaked my resume more times than I care to remember and after a few applications, I had more than one option to choose from. It was a difficult decision at the time, but I sought the advice, knowledge, and opinions from several different people from within and external to the organization and I'm confident that I chose the right path for me.

The knowledge that I gained working with our customers and learning our business was fundamental in moving forward in my career at FCC. It gave me an understanding of the financial

industry, how we operate and the role we play in the Canadian agriculture industry. I now have a holistic view and approach when faced with a new challenge or problem which needs solving.

When I first saw the posting for my current position, I immediately counted myself out of the running. It was in the information and technology department, so I assumed I wasn't qualified. However, co-workers often referred to me as their "in-house IT department" when I worked in Truro. It wasn't until a colleague suggested the business analyst position to me that I actually read the posting and did some investigation.

I started out in a term position as business analyst but have since become permanent. It is a fast-paced environment with new challenges every day and I love it. It has allowed me to grow and learn quickly.

I work on communications and formal documents, perform presentations, interact with several different stakeholders within the company and most importantly, I work with great people.

I still keep in contact with several Aggies across the country, often making weekend trips to different parts of the Prairies to visit friends I've met at NSAC. Although being 'out West' means I don't have the Atlantic Ocean readily at my disposal, the Prairies have their own beauty which I've come to appreciate. I've also become accustomed to cold winters and long drives.

I've just recently bought a house in Regina, so I guess you could say I'm here to stay. I've been asked before, "Why stay in Regina?" I love my job, the people I work with, my new and old friends, so it seems like a no-brainer decision to me. Until something changes, this is where I'll be!



Nathan (left) with his older brother, Pat Murray (Class of '09) during a visit home, to PE.

# Double Degree in International Food Business



"Wow, I wish there had been a program like that when I was at AC!" Recruiters frequently hear this comment from parents when describing the International Food Business program (IFB). IFB is one of the most unique business programs in the world. The four-year program, which kicks-off in Iceland, includes one year of study in Europe and three month work placements in both North America and Europe. At the end, the program awards two degrees to graduating students.

IFB is the product of a partnership between Dalhousie University Faculty of Agriculture and CAH Vilentum University of Applied Sciences in Dronten, The Netherlands. The vision is to prepare the next generation of international experts for the world's largest industry – food. While it is entrepreneurial in nature, graduates of the program are well-placed for employment in food businesses, both at home and abroad. The first graduates received a Bachelor of Agriculture in International Food Business from Dalhousie and a Bachelor of Business Administration and Agri-Business (Honours) in International Food Business from Vilentum in 2013. Armed with these fully accredited degrees, many have already found full-time employment in the food industry in Canada and the European Union.



"It was truly special to attend both the Dalhousie and Vilentum graduations to watch the first graduates receive their degrees", says Dr. Steven Russell, IFB lead for the Faculty of Agriculture; "It has been eight years since Professor John Stackhouse and I travelled to The Netherlands for the first program development meetings with our new partners."

IFB is designed following the European model of competency-based, higher education. Students are challenged with real-world problems that require them to continuously integrate their academic lessons in the search for solutions. During second year, in The Netherlands, the Canadian students join their European counterparts who began the program at Vilentum. The whole cohort then moves to Canada, in the third year, to study at the Faculty of Agriculture. The final year of the program requires a research project and study in two areas of specialization that will provide either more depth or more breadth to the work of the first three years.

While in Europe, students are housed on the CAH Vilentum campus with other students from across Europe and around the world who are enrolled in various English taught programs of the university. Extracurricular activity during the year in Europe is – in a word – TRAVEL! The Canadian students take full advantage of breaks and holidays to tour throughout Europe – often staying with the families of their international colleagues. The friendships made during these times will be enduring and the value of the international network the Canadian students build, will prove invaluable.

If you know someone looking for an experience of a lifetime and developing an incredible resume visit [dal.ca/ifb](http://dal.ca/ifb), [cahvilentum.eu/ifb](http://cahvilentum.eu/ifb) or contact Monica Sani at [m.sani@dal.ca](mailto:m.sani@dal.ca) or 902-896-2232.

## In Memory

The Faculty of Agriculture and the Alumni Association acknowledge the passing of the following alumni and friends. We extend our deepest sympathy to friends and family.

John A McLean .....	1941
Dr. Hubert S. Bennett .....	1950
Mr. Vernon L. Belyea .....	1962
Mr. James W. Hulbert.....	1960
Mr. Gary R. Noseworthy.....	1982

# Look Who's Talking

Look Who's Talking is a regular section in *Agricola News*. In each issue, an alumnus discusses his or her thoughts on various topics relevant to the Faculty of Agriculture.

## Brian Watts (Class of '83)

### Biography

Brian graduated from the Technical Diploma program at NSAC in 1983. Prior to NSAC, he was enrolled in the Business Administration program at Holland College. Brian furthered his



Brian Watts (left) with Dwane Mellish (Class of '75) and Dr. Gray at the "Meet the Dean" reception in Charlottetown in late Nov.

education at University of Prince Edward Island, earning a BA and a Diploma in Public Administration.

Brian is currently employed with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency in PE as an inspector. Previously, he worked with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. Brian is an active volunteer with Eastlink television, the East Coast Music Awards and the Faculty of Agriculture Alumni Association. He has also donated his time to the Red Cross and local fire brigade. Brian is currently developing a Christmas tree plantation as his retirement project.

***The Agricultural Campus is a pretty unique place, as we hear often. What's your favourite characteristic of the Faculty of Agriculture?***

I'd have to name one particular building – Cumming Hall. It stands out to me as a point of significance for the campus. Cumming Hall has been associated with the Faculty of Agriculture since its inception. The building has housed a gymnasium, labs, classrooms and now a theatre and a variety of offices. Cumming Hall is truly a symbol for campus.

***What needs improving?***

Other campus infrastructure needs improving. Specifically, I would love to see a designated building for students in the future. Students need a place to call their own, a place to socialize and hang out comfortably and safely.

Nearly every other university has a specific building for students. The Faculty of Agriculture needs to align with these universities.

If you talk about "serving your clients", students ARE the clients of the Faculty of Agriculture. We need a place to service their needs.

***If a graduate from the 1980's arrived on campus today, for the first time since graduation, what do you think they would notice as the most significant change?***

Easy – there's no sheep hill! We always snuck food trays out of the cafeteria. Everyone met at "sheep hill" and went tobogganing. If you mention "sheep hill" to a student today, they ask, "where's that?"

***If you had a vision for the Faculty of Agriculture 20 years from now, what would it look like and why?***

The Faculty of Agriculture's reputation will be becoming increasingly recognized, internationally, as THE educational institution for agriculture, food production, food security and aquaculture.

There's already an increasing demand for locally produced food. This will continue to be the needs of Canadians. We'll go full-circle and there will be a return of people to food production and agriculture. People will want to be able to produce their own food and know where it's coming from.

***We are over one-year into the merger with Dalhousie University. How do you feel about it? Have you seen a lot of change on campus?***

Yes, there has been a lot of change. The largest being the introduction of Dr. Gray as the new dean. Dr. Gray brings tremendous knowledge and skill to the faculty. He has a heightened talent for moving the Faculty of Agriculture's agenda forward.

I believe that the outcomes of all changes will be positive. Change will benefit the Faculty of Agriculture and the complete community for the better in the future.

***Dr. Gray has been in his new position for nearly six months now. Is he measuring up to your expectations? What has surprised you most?***

From the beginning, I really had no expectations of Dr. Gray.

Since the summer we have had three brief encounters. During each, he's provided a summary of how he's settling in and what he's been doing to get acquainted with the Faculty of Agriculture and its stakeholders.

Dr. Gray has had an unbelievable timetable! What he's doing,

where he's been and where he's going is remarkable. Dr. Gray is determined to move the Faculty of Agriculture's agenda forward as being recognized as the agricultural educational institution for the Atlantic.

For many years campus was in flux and limbo – it is now the Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture. The future is before us and Dr. Gray is putting the pieces together. Any contribution on his part is going to be for the better. He's very adept at engaging all parties, all stakeholders – students, faculty, alumni and external partners.

I've been most surprised (and pleased) with Dr. Gray's impact with the students. He interacts with them on a regular basis and is keen to participate in all student activities. I'm also impressed with his social media involvement. He's very good on Facebook and Twitter, where he reaches out to students, alumni and staff. It's nice to interact on that level.

**What do you think should be included as Dr. Gray's priorities for the campus?**

Students, faculty, alumni, education and research and ensuring there is a continuous interaction among all the stakeholders.

## KEEP IN TOUCH! Follow us Online

You can reconnect with former classmates, hear about events and find out what's going on campus by following us online.

**Facebook:** facebook.com/dalagriculture

If you haven't already, sign up for our monthly alumni **e-News** by sending a request to [agalumni@dal.ca](mailto:agalumni@dal.ca)

To request your version of **Agricola News** electronically e-mail us at [agalumni@dal.ca](mailto:agalumni@dal.ca)

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# Discovery Day 2013

Choosing a university is partly about programs and partly about fit – how does the campus and community culture fit you. **Discovery Day 2013** helped prospective students uncover information on both.

On **November 15**, close to 100 students and their families spent the day on the Dalhousie Agricultural Campus to learn about our programs and our intimate campus experience.

Students had the opportunity to:

- Have a hands-on experience on a topic of choice
- Sample 'the feel' of our small campus and its welcoming spirit
- Tour the campus that acts as a living lab for our students and researchers
- Talk to students and profs to get a sense of what it's like to live, study and thrive here

Students discovered surprising and engaging programs like pre-vet and environmental sciences. They discovered how starting their engineering studies here can open doors. From plant science to international business and economics, the opportunities are here, all wrapped up in a small campus environment.

Here is some of what our parents had to say:

"This has been a fantastic day so far."

"Forget my daughter, can I enrol?"

"I brought a car full of youngsters here today and they want to apply now...and its only lunchtime!"

Now this is what Aggie pride is all about!



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Due to provincial legislation, our auto insurance program is not offered in British Columbia, Manitoba or Saskatchewan.

\*No purchase is required. There is one (1) prize to be won. The winner may choose between an amount of \$60,000 CAD to build a dream kitchen of his/her choosing or \$60,000 CAD cash. The winner will be responsible for choosing a supplier and for coordinating all of the required work. The contest is organized by Security National Insurance Company and Primemini Insurance Company and is open to members, employees and other eligible persons who reside in Canada and belong to an employee, professional or alumni group which has entered into an agreement with the organizers and is entitled to receive group rates from the organizers. The contest ends on October 31, 2014. The draw will be held on November 21, 2014. A skill-testing question is required. Odds of winning depend on the number of eligible entries received. The complete contest rules are available at [melochemonnex.com/contest](http://melochemonnex.com/contest).

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