

UPEI's NEW PRESIDENT

Dr. Epperly

by Amy Gallan

As most know, the University has a new president, Dr. Elizabeth Epperly. Although a rookie in this new position, Dr. Epperly is no stranger to Prince Edward Island or to the university.

Just after finishing high school in 1968, Epperly made the pilgrimage from Virginia with her mother to visit the Island. "I came here because of Anne of Green Gables, really," says the president. "I had heard Anne of Green Gables read to me when I was five years old. . . I just thought [PEI] sounded like a marvellous place."

It snowed upon her arrival in late June of 1968, which Dr. Epperly thought was a normal occurrence for PEI. She vowed to come back when the tourists were gone, so she applied to the Prince of Whales College and was accepted. It was the only school she applied to. Later that summer Epperly received a letter informing her that the Prince of Whales College no longer existed, but she could apply to the newly created University of Prince Edward Island if she liked. "I was the first student to register," she said, "so I'd actually just gambled on a dream."

Dr. Epperly merely wanted to see what PEI and the university were like, planning to stay for one year only, and then move on to a university in Pennsylvania. She planned to study geology, and to specialize in the study of gems, something she had been interested in since childhood. "I had no intention of going into English, I had no intention of staying in Canada, I had no intention of staying at this university, and I did all those things."

After four years at UPEI, Dr. Epperly moved on and achieved Masters degree (in one year, rather than the usual two) at Dalhousie University. Almost immediately after doing so she flew to the University of London, where she started her Ph.D.

Dr. Epperly came back to PEI after two years of writing in England, and substituted for an ill English professor -- she continued to do so for eight years. When there were no more positions in the English department the students took up a petition and lobbied to create a full time job for their professor. A full-time administrative job was created for her, but after two years, Dr. Epperly says, "I realized that teaching was what I loved and the administration was interesting, but I felt like I was out of touch for what I'd prepared for, and what I really wanted to do."

When an opening came up at Memorial University in Newfoundland, Epperly applied for it, not anticipating to be hired there. She was hired and reluctantly moved on to Memorial.

During her eight years at Memorial University, Dr. Epperly became the head of the English Department, a department much larger than UPEI's. At Memorial there were 100 English faculty members (80 full time, 20 part-time), 4500 English students, and an incredible 1250 English majors. While holding the position as department head, Dr. Epperly had an administrative assistant, three secretaries, and a travel allowance. Still, after a job came up at UPEI's small English Department, which would mean a big cut in pay, and no travel allowance, Dr. Epperly applied. "This is where I wanted to be."

"I thought that I was giving up administration forever," she said. Later, she was nominated for the presidency. She stayed in the race only to see what would happen, thinking, "It'll be good for my character, to go through this process."

Dr. Epperly contributed her success in the election to her love for the university. "I love the Island more than I can say, and I love the university. . . I mean this is my home, it's my university, and I really believe in it." Being back at the University of Prince Edward Island is a dream come true. No matter where she went, or what exciting thing she was doing, "This was the only place I wanted to be."

President Epperly considers herself living proof that one can go to another country and be successful. Dr. Epperly felt that becoming a Canadian citizen was very important. "Although my accent hasn't changed enough to make me truly Canadian, I changed my citizenship in 1978," she says, "I wanted to make the commitment to the country."

Although all of Epperly's family resides in the United States, she claims that she is not lonely living here in Prince Edward Island -- the Island is more homey to her. This, she claims, is in contrast to her experiences in other areas, Newfoundland in particular. "I felt very much that I was in an alien landscape in Newfoundland," she says. "I love the people and I love the university. . . it was very hard to leave both of those things. . . but I couldn't feel at home with the climate. PEI, too, is certainly a long, long way climatically from Virginia, but I love it here. . . it looks like home."

Calgary Quintet Opens
Recital Series

by Steve Ellis

Doctor Steel would have been proud. The highly polished Foothills Brass from Calgary, Alberta did a splendid job of launching the 1995 Fall Recital Series at UPEI's Department of Music, Tuesday October 17.

It was an evening of entertainment and education. The quintet of Chris Morrison, Brian Sand (trumpets), Rosalee Morrison (french horn), Michael Thompson (trombone) and Paul Beauchesne (tuba), not only played very musically, but injected little pieces of trivia about each work as they prepared to play.

The five befriended the youthful audience, which consisted mostly of students from junior and senior high schools in the Eastern School District. Using the strategy "flattery will get you everywhere", the group commented on how sophisticated an audience the assemblage at the Dr. Steel Recital Hall was compared to others they had played for during their tour of the Maritimes.

One highlight of the performance was an arrangement of "Canzon Battaglia" by Samuel Scheidt (1587-1654). Their version of the canzon gave an example of stereophonic sound, where one of the members of the quintet, in this case Chris Morrison on trumpet, actually comes into the audience to play while the others are on stage, producing a unique acoustic effect.

The quintet's arrangement of the Polka from Dimitri Shostakovich's ballet, "The Age of Gold" had many members of the audience laughing. Mike Thompson explained that Shostakovich "got a bit of frustration out" with the tune and, having been written during the Stalinist era, that it was meant "to poke fun at democracy." The audience was forewarned, "We will be playing the right notes. . . really."

The group also had a great jazz repertoire to complement their grasp of the classics. An inspired arrangement of "Amazing Grace" ended the first half of the concert, and the performance closed, officially, with a real toe-tapper, "That's a Plenty", by Lew Pollack.

This performance was just the beginning of a great set of recitals organized by the faculty and students of the Department of Music. Tomorrow, Wednesday October 25, Band Showcase '95, will grace the mainstage at Confederation Centre. On October 28, the Memorial University of Newfoundland Chamber Choir, Chamber Orchestra, and Brass Quintet will play at the Dr. Steel Recital Hall. On November 1, Noon Hour Recitals will begin for another year.

Keep an eye out for the timings and further details concerning these and other activities sponsored by the UPEI Department of Music.

UPEI INSTALLS FOURTH
PRESIDENT

by Lorne Caborn

Saturday October 14th truly belonged to UPEI's newest president and vice-chancellor, Elizabeth Epperly. The fourth person to hold the position, Epperly officially assumed the role on July first of this year and many had eagerly anticipated her official installation. This anticipation was evident on Saturday as hundreds gathered at the Sports Centre to witness the event.

Those in attendance were treated to some stirring music presented by UPEI's Music Society and the splendor continued when Epperly assumed the podium. Her popularity was evident from the start as her heart-felt installation speech brought rounds of applause from the appreciative crowd. She spoke of UPEI's unique qualities and pointed out that we were "an island within an island." She also said she realizes there are tough times ahead but is eager to face the challenge and many are ready to help her.

A Virginia native, but an Islander at heart, many feel she had a special place in the university long before the event as she was the first student to register here in 1969. She also belonged to the first graduating class -- 1973 and is proud of this distinction. She later moved on to complete a masters at Dalhousie University and later her Ph.D at the University of London. Her return to the university is both welcome and appreciated by the students and faculty on campus and her tenure as president promises to be a good one.