

AOCUTE

ASSOCIATION OF CANADIAN COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

FALL NEWSLETTER 2012

PRESIDENT: Stephen Slemon

VICE PRESIDENT: Nat Hurley

COORDINATOR: Laura Schechter

GRADUATE ASSISTANTS: Zoran Vuckovac and Samantha Christensen

Table of Contents

- President's Message
- Vice-President's Message
- Update on Congress 2013
- Sessional Rep's Message
- *ESC*: Update from the Editor
- Library and Archives Canada:
La Lucha Continua
- Cancellation of SSHRC's Aid
and Attendance Grants to
Scholarly Associations Program
- Our New Website
- News about Members
- Remembering James Gray



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Stephen Slemon

I came to this one through Facebook. A couple of years ago my partner, Jo-Ann Wallace, a former *ESC* Editor, put up a link to a blog entry from 2004, by someone named Glen Whitman: its title was "The Story of the Two Things." Whitman's blog told of meeting up in a bar with a talkative stranger who threw down this challenge to him: "For every subject, there are really only two things you really need to know. Everything else is the application of those two things, or just not important." Whitman snapped back this answer, about his discipline: Economics. "One:

Incentives matter. Two: There's no such thing as a free lunch." Jo-Ann's Facebook posting wanted to know: what are the Two Things for English Studies?

Characteristically – and this is a temperamental flaw I've carried with me throughout my career – I can only now remember my own comment posted in answer to the puzzle. It got a couple of "likes." "One: Representation is a form of symbolic social management. Two: Which can also be beautiful."

Around this time, ACCUTE President Nicola Nixon phoned to ask whether I'd be interested in taking on her job for 2012-14. I knew at once that I wanted to say "yes." OK, OK: maybe I was just so flattered to be asked that I couldn't say no: whatever else it might be, ACCUTE is also an associational powerhouse. But why, beyond vanity, I knew that I wanted to do this work is pretty much grounded to those Two Things. As scholars of representations we may not have the methodological tools some scholarly disciplines provide for approaching those *other* forms of representation that organize the social Real – like money, law, or politics. But the first principle of any kind of scholarly engagement within English Studies is that representations are themselves profoundly material forces in shaping us and the world we live in. They are dominant culture's best weapon in the war against independent thinking. That they can *also* work through beauty, pleasure, and intellectual gob-smackery to change hearts as well as minds means that they are also our primary social instrument for refiguration, for resistance, for effecting social change. This is why a national, generalist scholarly association for teachers and scholars of English Studies really *matters* politically and socially, and especially matters *now*.

The word "acute" comes from the Latin *acūtus*, meaning a range of things: "sharpened," "keen," "discriminating," "shrewd," "nimble," "pungent," and my current favourite: "shrill" (OED). Our clever acronym, ACCUTE, acquired a second "C" for itself when the former Association of Canadian University Teachers of English woke up to the overwhelming fact that most teachers of English Studies in Canada don't actually enjoy the privileges that attend tenure-track university employment, which recognizes all three registers of engagement – teaching, research and professional service – as necessary components of professional life. Instead, most teachers of post-secondary English work in colleges, where research often goes unrecognized, though it's necessary to good teaching. They teach as poorly-compensated T.A's – graduate students who prevail against diminishing hopes of tenure-track employment in the profession. Or they work as sessional lecturers, where they struggle within a vast pool of exploited labourers to keep their research current, and persist despite the absence of anything like an adequate salary, or benefits, or meaningful institutional recognition. Dorothy Hadfield's column in this Newsletter speaks eloquently of the profound injustice that attends this

division within our ranks. Teachers of English Studies at the post-secondary level are divided now, as never quite before, in terms of contract, social and professional recognition, and working conditions, and one of the primary functions of an association like ours, which seeks to be foundationally "acute," is to be *more* shrewd, more nimble, more pungent and – yes – more shrill about this, as we proceed.

But because representation *is* a powerful form of social management, and resistance, everyone who works anywhere, in any position, as a teacher of post-secondary "English," or "literature," or whatever it is we engage with at the level of representations, necessarily participates in a politics of social citizenship. Everyone who teaches, studies, or researches the general matter of English Studies – however you understand it – participates in the development of an analytical power that seeks to understand the work of cultural representation, and to redepoly that work towards a better, and sustainable, global future. Every one of us stands for socially vital principles, like self-knowledge, collective solidarity, the emancipatory capacity of critical assessment, the radical ubiquity of the human imagination. We *are* a political collective, whether or not we understand ourselves individually to be doing political work.

So from the moment of asking, I knew I wanted to say "yes" to Nicola. ACCUTE matters for the fellowship, for the great conference sessions, for the profile, for ESC, for hosting what is always the best party at Congress. But ACCUTE also matters, and especially now, because the work we are doing is desperately needed within an increasingly corporatized post-secondary system, and against an increasingly callous national government that places training into the profit-taking motive over student learning in critical citizenship. No scholarly association seems to me better positioned than does ACCUTE – committed as it is to no one sub-discipline, no one methodological or theoretical framework – to do the necessary work of advocacy for "English Studies" as a foundational contributor to social improvement.

Getting to that "yes" to Nicola, however, took more than just individual will. I wouldn't have dreamed of doing this if Nat Hurley hadn't signed on as co-pilot. We couldn't have done this if the University of Alberta, through its Vice-President (Research), and the Arts Dean's Office, hadn't seen institutional value

in taking on ACCUTE as an organ for advocacy. We would have foundered had our Department Chair, Susan Hamilton, and her fabulous administrative team, not provided necessary material support, including our two gifted R.A. members of the Alberta ACCUTE team: Samantha Christensen, on conference management and planning, and Zoran Vuckovac, on the new ACCUTE website.

And finally, we'd be sunk had we not found our way to an astonishingly capable – and ridiculously cheerful – ACCUTE Co-ordinator: Laura Schechter. She's the whiz that inhabits the Info.accute@gmail.com email address, and you should feel free to ask her about anything ACCUTE-related. She knows all the answers.

Stephen Slemon
University of Alberta



VICE-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Nat Hurley

When Stephen and I agreed to take over the running of ACCUTE, I don't think either of us imagined how centrally snow would figure in the task—both literally and figuratively. We have had snow in Edmonton since October—in fact, each of our executive conference calls this fall has begun with a preamble about the white stuff falling outside the ACCUTE office window.

But the fact that we were snowed under long before October made us realize just how much work goes into the running of an organization like this. We're very thankful to Nicola Nixon and John Miller for doing that work over the past two years. Indeed the entire organization owes a debt of gratitude to them not only for their efficiency in conference planning and their keen eye for swanky dance spaces, but especially for making the transition to an online membership renewal system and for leaving us with a healthy bank balance. Inheriting the membership database and money in the bank made a huge difference to us. A big thank-you to Nicola and John! Despite these advantages, ACCUTE nonetheless faces some real challenges. As we explain later in this newsletter (and many of you likely have already heard), SSHRC has eliminated its Aid and Attendance Grant to Scholarly Associations (AAGSA). The money we received from this program has, historically, enabled ACCUTE to defray the cost of many members' travel to Congress. We simply will not be able to do that anymore. Further, our membership renewals, which dipped while members waited so they could renew online

rather than with cheques and paper forms, have not bounced back to earlier levels. There are now more than 300 fewer ACCUTE members than we had about four years ago.

If you're receiving this newsletter, you are obviously a member in good standing. But we need your help. In the coming months, we will be making a concerted effort to solicit new ACCUTE members and to bring old members back into the fold. Stephen points out in his message above that ACCUTE is an “associational powerhouse.” That is a credit to you, our members. But in order to remain a force, we need to strengthen our ranks.

Everyone no doubt has a story about why they belong to ACCUTE. The story I like to tell is that I have a job today, in no small part, because I belonged to ACCUTE. As a graduate student, I did not receive money from my university to pay for conference travel. But because of the Aid and Attendance Grant to Scholarly Associations (AAGSA), I could rely on having some of my expenses covered if I went to ACCUTE. The result is that I came to know many scholars across Canada within and beyond my field. When I was being considered for the job I have now, I was already a known quantity to many of my current colleagues. And I know that one of the reasons Stephen Slemon asked me to work with him on ACCUTE was because I already knew a lot about the organization.

At a time when academic solidarities seem more important than ever to resisting the

instrumentalization of academic labour, it seems to me that we in English departments across the country should be intensifying our points of connection. As a generalist organization, ACCUTE calls upon its members to speak their specialized vocabularies of academic work to each other—both within and beyond the temporal, locational, and political boundaries of those vocabularies. It means holding on to one's own field while developing the capacity to speak intelligently to those in other fields. ACCUTE creates a space for its members to find each other, mostly through their academic attachments—though sometimes through their shared

UPDATE ON CONGRESS

ACCUTE 2013 Keynote Speaker: ACCUTE is thrilled to announce that **Dr. Felicity Nussbaum** will be joining us as our Conference Keynote Speaker. Dr. Nussbaum will speak 1 June at 1:30. Her talk, "Lifewriting @ the Edge: Going Public in the Eighteenth Century," approaches a marginalized genre of eighteenth-century writing – "lifewriting" – and locates it in relation to the rise of print culture and onrush of mercantilism. The paper deploys a critical methodology that cuts across literature studies, history, historiography, feminism, political science, and social theory.

A Professor in the Department of English at UCLA, Professor Nussbaum has been awarded numerous academic honours, including a Guggenheim Fellowship, an Andrew Mellon Fellowship at the Huntington Library, and an NEH Fellowship. She has also held a Marta Sutton Weeks Fellowship at the Stanford Humanities Center, and a Rockefeller Humanist-in-Residence Fellow at the Institute for Research on Women, Rutgers University. She was

attachments to disco. We want the organization to continue this tradition.

It's not just Edmonton that is caught in untimely snowstorms these days. The humanities more generally find their constituencies digging out from under piles of work and sometimes seeing bleak winter skies. How we weather these storms will be determined by the forms of relationality we develop in the face of them.

Nat Hurley
University of Alberta



co-recipient of the Gottschalk Prize for the best book in its field for 1989. She is president of the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies.



ACCUTE 2013 Dance Party: Get ready to put on your dancing shoes! ACCUTE will be hosting its annual, much-loved dance party on 3 June at 8:00pm. The Victoria Events Centre, at 1415 Broad St., will be the site of this year's festivities. We can't wait to celebrate with you!

ESC Bash: Come one, come all to the annual ESC bash, scheduled for 1 June! This year's party will be at the Sticky Wicket, at 919 Douglas St., beginning at 5:30pm. Look for us on the second floor.

Laura Schechter
University of Alberta

SESSIONAL REP'S MESSAGE

Dorothy Hadfield

This column needs to begin, for several reasons, with Veronica Austen. For starters, to thank her for her exemplary service as ACCUTE's sessional representative for the last two years: Veronica showed a relentless and energetic commitment to bringing together sessionals from across the discipline, co-ordinating our concerns, and being our voice within the organization. She is a tough act to follow. In an uncanny hermeneutic gesture, Veronica's term came to an end within days of her hiring as the newest tenure-track English faculty member at St. Jerome's University. I'm sure everyone joins me in congratulating Veronica and wishing her well in her "new" position—essentially the same position that she's already held for the last several years as contract faculty.

Perhaps the one thing that would make Veronica's story better is if it weren't so rare. But it is rare because there were precious few tenure-track hirings this past year, and rarer still because, in hiring Veronica, St. Jerome's University acknowledged that the sessional who had already proved herself in the job just might very well be the best candidate for the permanent position.

I don't think it's necessary to rehearse the history or the statistics here: we're all familiar enough with the story of how increased enrolments and decreased funding has compelled departments to stuff underpaid sessional faculty into the gaping holes left by unreplaced faculty retirements and other attrition factors. How these highly qualified academics might look “just like faculty” to students, but not their institutions. The situation is neither ethical nor sustainable, and, indeed, the problematic place of sessionals within faculties is increasingly on the agendas of departments and administrators across the country.

Ironically, as an essentially marginalized, dispersed, and unprotected workforce, it's virtually impossible for sessionals to have any effective voice in these discussions that will ultimately define their professional futures. This is definitely one place where ACCUTE can help.

If the current untenable state is going to change for the better, it is necessary that we be able to mount a strong and co-ordinated campaign. Ultimately, sessional concerns can't be separated from larger faculty concerns. At one end of the spectrum, decreasing or eliminating sessional presence without guaranteeing appropriate increases in regular faculty positions will put the additional burden on regular faculty, one way or another. At the other end, increasing reliance on sessionals, and similar initiatives to accept a two-tiered professoriate, will likely erode the arguments for investing in properly supported, permanent faculty positions: if institutions decide they can function adequately with cheaper contingent labour that teaches effectively with minimal institutional support and no protections, what is the incentive for them to support research infrastructures or guarantee the academic freedoms that we see as crucial to inquiry and teaching in the humanities?

On the last day of Congress 2012, Veronica Austen and I attended a special meeting for sessionals, co-sponsored by CAUT. The organizers commended ACCUTE as the only organization they were aware of that included a sessional representative on the executive. This executive is keenly aware that we are possibly facing a watershed moment in the reconfiguration of labour in our profession. As sessionals, we should advantage of ACCUTE's willingness to mobilize and lobby on our behalf. To do that, we need to make ourselves and our concerns known. Previous sessional reps had access to sessional emailing lists, but the new membership system, unfortunately, makes such a list impossible to generate. Time for some DIY sessional resourcefulness: please send me a quick note at accute.sessional@gmail.com or dhadfield@uwaterloo.ca, let me know who and where you are, and what your main concern(s) are about the current and future state of sessional labour that you would like to see ACCUTE address. You don't have to sign up for a committee or task force, just let us know who you are and what matters to your future.

Dorothy Hadfield
University of Waterloo

ESC: UPDATE FROM THE EDITOR

Mike O'Driscoll



English Studies in Canada is in high gear at the moment. We've just mailed out 37.3-4, a double issue that offers an exciting Readers' Forum on "Academic Rites of Passage," eight fabulous articles on "Histories of Trauma" and "Canadian Politics," three review articles and a handful of book reviews. We're really proud of this one; if you haven't seen it yet, take a look. Just around the corner, the first of four guest-edited special issues we've been working on: "Rethinking the Humanities" with Len Findlay; "Childhood and its Discontents" with Nat Hurley and Andrew Buzny; "The Global Animal" with Karyn Ball and Melissa Haynes; and "Hysteria Manifest: Cultural Lives of Great Disorder" with Derritt Mason and Ela Przybylo.

And, of course, in the midst of all this we'll be assembling our regular issues for which we need lots of top-grade articles... send your best work our way.

And book reviews! We want book reviews! Contact Reviews Editor Eddy Kent with your ideas and offers.

The ESC team is looking forward to the ACCUTE Conference in Victoria this June. Don't forget: the first day of Congress features the ESC Bash! On June 1st we'll be hosting our annual gathering at the Sticky Wicket in downtown Victoria. Join us at 5:30pm to meet up with friends and colleagues before you head out on the town! And the annual ESC Roundtable this year is being organized by Associate Editor Cecily Devereux. This year's topic: "Imperfection." Get ready for what will no doubt be the seamless presentation of remarkably flawless polemic!

Mike O'Driscoll
University of Alberta



LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA: LA LUCHA CONTINUA

Harper government cuts to Library and Archives Canada have resulted in the layoff of more than 400 LAC employees in April 2012, a project layoff of a further 700 employees over the next three years. They've enforced a "modernization" policy that translates into limited access to their holding for both scholars and the public. They've produced the elimination of specialist positions and interlibrary loan services, a contracting-out of other services to regional and private institutions, and a freeze on purchasing acquisitions.

At its May 2012 AGM, ACCUTE members voted unanimously to endorse the Save Library and Archives Canada campaign initiated by CAUT/ACPPU, and on June 7th ACCUTE President Nicola Nixon wrote to The Honourable James Moore, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, to inform him of this endorsement. Nicola added: "Ongoing and accessible research is crucial to our members and every scholar.... We

cannot allow our history to be 'modernized,' as you express it, to the point that there isn't a single qualified librarian or archivist in the upper-level management.... You will ... ruin Canadian studies...."

You can read Nicola Nixon's letter in the Summer 2012 ACCUTE Newsletter – follow the links on the ACCUTE website.

A number of scholarly associations made their objections known, not only to the government but also to the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences. Lyle Dick, President of the Canadian Historical Association, and as a Parks Canada historian a frequent user of LAC, joined me during the September 2012 CFHSS Board meetings in urging the Federation to become participants in this campaign, and expressed our collective disappointment, and that of many scholarly

associations within the Federation umbrella, when the Federation did not.

But the campaign remains active. In late August, ACCUTE member Eli MacLaren (McGill) wrote to the ACCUTE offices to inform us that the Bibliographical Society of Canada had sent a letter to every member of Parliament, explaining *why* the BSC saw the LAC as vital to the preservation of “Canada’s documentary past” and detailing the practical implications of the staff cuts and new access protocols on research scholars. Janet Friskney’s letter is here:

<http://www.bsc-sbc.ca/en/letter.pdf>

The Canadian Historical Association has followed up on its letter to James Moore with a letter to Stephen Harper. Lyle Dick’s letter is here:

http://www.cha-shc.ca/en/Advocacy_51/items/37.html

The CAUT’s Save Library and Archives Canada campaign continues to express the collective will of Canadian scholars across the humanities and social sciences – you can participate here:

<http://www.savelibraryarchives.ca/>

Of special interest to those who are following this is a letter Canadian historian and literary scholar Ian MacLaren wrote to the *Edmonton Journal*. MacLaren tells this story as an example of why a healthy LAC is vital to all Canadians:



CANCELLATION OF SSHRC’S AID AND ATTENDANCE GRANTS TO SCHOLARLY ASSOCIATIONS PROGRAM

Another casualty of the Harper government’s austerity budget of late May 2012 was the SSHRC funding program that helped ACCUTE bring graduate students to Congress.

The finesse was this: SSHRC’s overall budget was not cut, but the budget bill required that \$7 million of this year’s SSHRC budget, and \$7 million of next

I was involved in locating two books of watercolour sketches made by George Back, a midshipman who served under Franklin during the first of his overland expeditions to the Arctic. These sketchbooks, which I found in a house in Gloucestershire, England, contain the first known pictures of any part of Alberta.... Although private collectors wished to obtain the two sketchbooks, I discussed with their owner the possibility of opening negotiations with Library and Archives Canada so it could bid to obtain them in advance of a public auction. Working with staff, we succeeded in effecting the sale. These priceless documents and works of art now reside in Ottawa, where they belong. But will anyone ever see them again?

Intentionally or unintentionally, Harper’s government is conducting what amounts to a search-and-destroy campaign against Library and Archives Canada and thus against the cultural memory of Canadians.

You can read the entire letter here:

<http://www.edmontonjournal.com/touch/entertainment/story.html?id=7239114>

We can’t know at this moment just where this campaign will be by May 2013. But it may well be the case that ACCUTE will want to re-articulate its concerns at its next AGM. If you have thoughts about how we can be effective on this issue, do let us know.

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year’s, be repurposed to SSHRC’s industry-partnership program. SSHRC decided to protect its core Insight and Talent programs (research and students) by taking all \$7 million from its just-begun "Connection" envelope. The result: a *lot* of disappointed applicants for conference and outreach funding these past few months. *And* an end to the

\$460,000 “Aid and Attendance Grant to Scholarly Associations” (AAGSA) program.

Up till now, the AAGSA has enabled the ACCUTE conference at Congress to be genuinely inclusive of graduate students. In 2012, for example, we received about \$13,000 from this program, and so provided partial funding assistance – up to half your transportation costs – to about 50 ACCUTE members, the formal reason being so that they could attend the AGM. There was no rule saying this money had to go to graduate students, but almost all of it did. This support was never in itself sufficient, but it certainly did help. And it sent out a powerful message of inclusion.

We’ve protested this sudden and shocking cut – to the Federation, which does not want to make this a point of protest, and to SSHRC officers directly. There was substantial discussion of this at the September board meetings of the CFHSS. ACCUTE Graduate Student Rep Heather Jessup has been active in email-writing on this issue, as have I. Our email notification of this cancellation, sent to ACCUTE members, found its way to Matthew Scribner, President of the Queen’s University Society of Graduate and Professional Students, who understood just how much this cut hurts scholarship’s most vulnerable citizens – graduate students – and so wrote to say that he would be bringing a motion to the November meeting of the Canadian Federation of Students, calling for a restoration of these funds. That motion passed unanimously. It is likely that these protests will find new voice when the effect of these cuts begins to tell on Congress attendance, but for now this source of support is gone, and this has serious implications for ACCUTE.

SSHRC’s management suggestions to us have been twofold. First, we’ve been directed to fund graduate students to Congress through their professors’ SSHRC Insight Grants. Such a suggestion seems incommensurate with the Insight Grants’ 30% success rate, with the basic structure of an Insight Grant research plan more easily funding students to discipline-specific conferences than to a generalist one like ours, and with the basic principle that funding to Congress should be structured to ensure a graduate student’s academic success in having a proposal accepted rather than his or her luckiness in having a well-funded supervisor.

Second, we’ve been directed back to the general application portal for the SSHRC Connection grants. A quick look at the program guidelines shows that Connection grants are *not* geared towards the kinds of conference activity that normally take place within Congress, and certainly not towards conference meetings like ours. As far as I know, no scholarly association at Congress now organizes its annual conference around an urgent, topical theme. No Congress meeting is designed specifically to change disciplinary paradigms or to result in publication. Association conference meetings at Congress are *general* meetings. They aim to put different parts of a larger disciplinary collective into conversation with one another, to allow scholarly associations to connect with each other through shared programming, to create community within the larger Canadian scholarly collective, and to assist in building international relations within and across the disciplines by providing a shared social ambience that makes cross-disciplinary, cross-cultural communication not just possible but deeply enjoyable. Congress association conferences are *profoundly* incommensurate with the Connection guidelines that require funded conference meetings to be theme-based, occasional, and designed to produce “a timely and concrete deliverable such as conference proceedings or other knowledge products.” That such meetings work *together*, and work *outside* the boundaries of the Connection program’s idea of the “deliverables,” is precisely what makes them so compelling. It’s what makes the annual, generalist meetings of ACCUTE’s large, and gloriously diverse, English Studies collective so vitally important to the national health of our larger discipline.

It goes without saying that graduate students are more than just a vital and irreplaceable source of energy at the ACCUTE Congress. They are the constituency from which most forms of progressive change happen in scholarship, in field designation, in methodology, and in the ways we write. They *are* the future of our discipline. SSHRC’s termination of the AAGSA program structurally leaves them *out*.

To date, we have not found a viable alternative source of funding. We are working on this, and we welcome your suggestions.



OUR NEW WEBSITE

Thanks to our summer R.A., Breanna Mroczek, and since September, our R.A. Zoran Vuckovac, ACCUTE has a new website, though it's still at the old address:

<http://accute.ca/>

We're still ironing it out, but the goal, here, is to make the ACCUTE website a go-to locus for information about the profession in Canada. *And* a place for advocacy work.

We're trying to keep up with our jobs posting – our primary source for this is the listserv maintained by the Canadian Association of Chairs of English (CACE). We're maintaining a "News" page, which besides listing various CFPs, etc., will function, we hope, as a showcase for some of the really exciting things that ACCUTE members are up to. If you have a book coming out, if you just bagged a teaching award, if you hear of things you'd like your fellow ACCUTE members to know about, **please let us know, and we'll post it.**

And we've begun a blog, entitled "**English Matters.**" There's not a lot on it yet. The first entry is a link to Albert Braz's November 2012 essay in *University Affairs*, entitled "In Praise of Literature," where we ask: "do you have to 'believe in literature' in order to do English Studies?" The second is a comment on the targeting of research into areas of "priority." It asks: "How should we react? Suggest areas of our own for priority SSHRC targeting? Reinvent ourselves? Protest? Duck and cover?"

There are all kinds of great websites where issues that matter most to the discipline get talked about, but our hope is that the ACCUTE website will provide us with a place for ACCUTE members to shape those issues around *our* specific concerns. **Please think about posting to "English Matters."** Or make a comment – by clicking the balloon on the right, going to the "Leave a Reply" box, and then following the instructions.

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NEWS ABOUT MEMBERS

Herb Wyile (Acadia) has been awarded the 2011 Gabrielle Roy prize for best book-length study of Canadian Literature (English) for his book *Anne of Tim Hortons: Globalization and the Reshaping of Atlantic-Canadian Literature*. He has also taken on the position of co-editor of the journal *Studies in Canadian Literature/Études en littérature canadienne*.

REMEMBERING JAMES GRAY

James Gray, long-time member of the Department of English at Dalhousie University and former President of the Association of Canadian University Teachers of English, passed away in late November at the age of 89.

A native of Scotland, he saw active service in India

and Burma with the British Army during World War II, ultimately rising to the rank of Major. After the war, he pursued undergraduate and graduate degrees at the Universities of Aberdeen and Oxford before receiving his PhD from the Université de Montreal. From 1948 to 1972, he was a member of the Faculty of Bishop's University, becoming Professor and Head

of the Department of English there in 1958, and Chair of the Humanities Division in 1971. In 1972, he accepted a position as Chair of the Department of English at Dalhousie University, and three years later he became Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science. In 1980 he was appointed Thomas McCulloch Professor of English. He was elected a Fellow both of the Royal Society of Arts and the Royal Society of Canada. He served as President of the Association of Canadian University Teachers of English, President of the Humanities Association of Canada, and Director of the Canadian Federation for the Humanities.

Though he wrote and taught on a wide variety of subjects, Jim was best known as a leading authority on the work of the eighteenth-century critic and sage, Samuel Johnson. Jim was a member of the Editorial Board of the authoritative Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson, and in 1978 he co-edited the volume of the Yale edition devoted to Johnson's sermons. An earlier book, *Johnson's Sermons: A Study*, was published by the Clarendon Press in 1972. Much like Johnson, Jim was a gifted speaker and conversationalist, and he was in high demand to present talks and addresses on Johnson's life and writings, and on many other topics besides, though Jim was characteristically self-deprecating about his performances, which, he once said, were "no doubt far too long."

Colleagues fondly remember Jim as a gentleman and a scholar, as a man of formidable intellect and great learning, and a deeply decent human being. John

Baxter (Dalhousie) served as Secretary Treasurer when Jim was President of ACUTE (as it was then known). John remembers the draft program for the ACUTE conference, which existed for several months only as an outline on a blackboard in the long, narrow, second-floor room at the back of the building that housed the English department. Jim would come in each morning and scrutinize the blackboard before pronouncing on the promise (and potential folly) of the program shaping up under his quizzical eye. John recalls Jim as an acute ACUTE President, because he was interested in all aspects of literature, because it all mattered to him and, therefore, mattered all the more to those working under his leadership. Jim is survived by his wife of 65 years, Pamela, and their daughter Caroline.

No memorial to Jim should be without a quotation from his beloved Johnson. In 1989, as a condition of his appointment as McCulloch Professor Emeritus, Jim was asked to report on his research activities during his first year following retirement. Jim dutifully complied, submitting a lengthy list of publications and addresses he had produced over the previous twelve months. He then ended his report with this quotation from Boswell's *Life of Johnson*: "BOSWELL. 'Is not modesty natural?' JOHNSON. 'I cannot say, Sir, as we find no people quite in the state of nature; but I think the more they are taught, the more modest they are.'"

from Jason Haslam,
by Members of the Department of English, Dalhousie
University

