

the insider

A newsletter published for everyone in the Athabasca University community

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Joy and elation filled the TELUS Centre in Edmonton on November 15, when the Alberta Women's Memory Project (AWMP) held its inaugural fundraiser, *A Celebration of Women's Voices from the Past to the Future*. The event resulted in generous donations of services, products and cash from individuals, corporations, AU and the University of Alberta, all of which will be used to create an initial AWMP operating fund. See the story on page 2.



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Athabasca University 

The warmth of women's voices by Erin Ottosen

First fundraiser for Alberta Women's Memory Project a success

Joy and elation filled the TELUS Centre in Edmonton on November 15, when the Alberta Women's Memory Project (AWMP) held its inaugural fundraiser, *A Celebration of Women's Voices from the Past to the Future*.

After noshing in the gallery for an hour or so, the audience of almost 200 listened attentively as the Hon. Heather Klimchuk, Alberta minister of culture and community services, brought greetings from Premier Alison Redford and the guest speakers, *Edmonton Journal* columnist Paula Simons and breast cancer surgeon Dr. Kelly Dabbs, shared stories from their lives about working and living in Alberta.

"The energy at the event was wonderful," says Jim McLeod, AU manager of community relations and events. "You could tell people were truly excited about the project and what it's accomplishing in terms of documenting the history of Alberta women. It's an honour for AU to be involved in this work."

The AWMP preserves the voices of Alberta women and makes them accessible to researchers, students and the general public by digitizing items such as memoirs, photos, letters and other artifacts on the [project website](#).

The event resulted in generous donations of services, products and cash from individuals, corporations, AU and the University of Alberta, all of which will be used to create an initial AWMP operating fund, says Jean Crozier, a member of the project committee.

"Regardless of how much money we brought in through the fundraiser, I really think the big plus is that now a lot more people know about us," she continues. "Women's memories — captured through their artifacts — have not always been regarded with much respect. Too often, these materials were destroyed when a woman died. As a result, we've had few sources of materials to study and from which to understand the viewpoints of Alberta women, the contributions they've made to this province and their influence on our society and our history."

"We are very grateful to Athabasca University, the University of Alberta, our corporate and individual donors and our outstanding volunteers for making this fundraiser a success."

AU hosts the AWMP website and provides other support for the project.

The Alberta Women's Memory Project celebrated women's voices, both from the past and the present. Photo credit: Jean Crozier.



“Helen’s stuff” a tribute to women’s influence on Alberta



As part of her M.Sc. in Applied Art, Bentley designed and executed this silkscreen wall hanging based on nine of Hans Christian Andersen’s stories.



Rings made by Bentley. Her work was admired by the silversmith to the Danish royal family, Georg Jensen.



Helen Signe Petersen Bentley.

The past can speak to us when we have artifacts to interpret and learn from. Helen Signe Petersen Bentley felt strongly enough about some of her belongings to keep them throughout her life. Now those items have been donated to the Alberta Women’s Memory Project.

The collection, which spans the eighty-six years of Bentley’s life, consists of hundreds of items including photographs, letters and documents, furniture, textiles, and artistic creations such as pewter candlesticks, silk batik, and sculpture, which were part of her master’s thesis, in addition to weaving, stitchery and jewelry she created later.

“The collection describes who she was,” said her daughter, Ann Manson, who is making the donation. “Wherever she was—at home or on one of many international trips—she was interested in what local people did and how something was used by a family to sustain or maintain the family...there are things here that I always thought were worth preserving. I’m very happy that they will be kept in archival condition. It’s just perfect. It is a wonderful way to honour Mom.”

Bentley died in 1999 in Edmonton, after a distinguished career in which she held various positions at the Universities of Minnesota and Alberta, was an instructor of interior design at the Banff School of Fine Arts, and was later involved in co-op housing and interested in housing design. Manson said some family members saw her mother’s belongings as “just Helen’s stuff” and they were ready to dispose of them. “I decided I would take it. Over the years I have thrown some of it away but I kept a good core of items. A friend knew about the AWMP and it turns out this is just the kind of donation they are looking for.”

Born and educated in the U.S., Helen Petersen met her future husband Charles Frederick Bentley while she was teaching at the University of Minnesota. Fred Bentley became dean

of the Faculty of Agriculture at the University of Alberta and was made an Officer of the Order of Canada in 1994 for his contribution to national and international agriculture and food production. The Bentleys moved to Edmonton in 1946 when he was hired at the University of Alberta to teach soil science. Helen Bentley was hired in the School of Household Economics, at the time one of the only post-secondary schools focusing on women’s interests and teaching women advanced skills for making a comfortable, esthetically pleasing and well-functioning home.

“With her Master’s of science in applied art, teaching experience at the University of Minnesota and her experience with outreach programs in rural communities in the U.S. and Saskatchewan, my guess is Mom would have been highly qualified at the university,” Manson said.

The collection’s historic value lies in a number of areas. It is the record of a young woman’s experience at university, at a time when few women attended university, and documents aspects of her daily life as well as what she was studying, what she was learning and what she was excited about. “It is also an artistic demonstration of the home life Mom grew up in and how she became interested in and pursued those interests,” Manson said.

As well, through the letters and photographs Bentley kept, there is the historic record of immigration from Denmark in the late 1800s, the gold rush in the early 20th century and early settler life which is such a large part of the history of this country.

Other pieces from the collection have been donated to the Glenbow Museum in Calgary, the Goldstein Gallery at the University of Minnesota and to the University of Alberta textile collection.

“I think Mom was under-recognized for the outreach and extension home economics work she did in Saskatchewan and Alberta without a lot of fanfare,” Manson said. “Women in their 60s or 70s might know who she was, might have taken courses from her, but she didn’t receive public recognition for her work.

“She is part of a group of women who were highly influential on life in Alberta but were never highly touted. She was more known as the wife of Fred Bentley but in her own right, she was as influential on a day to day basis.”

The Bentley collection will be maintained by the Thomas A. Edge Archives & Special Collections at AU and will be digitized for public access through the [AWMP](#).

Two awards for 2011 AU ad campaign

by Erin Ottosen



For the fourth year in a row, Athabasca University marketing team has been recognized for excellence in an annual award competition. The MarCom Awards, which sift through about 5,000 entries each year, announced this November that AU received two awards in the 2011 competition.

The first is a gold award for the print ads in this year's national campaign. To see the ads, visit the Intranet collection of [AU ads](#).

The second is a platinum award for an animated 15-second commercial that airs on Global TV and Citytv websites before streaming TV shows (online only). To see the commercial, visit [YouTube](#).

The Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals sponsor the international MarCom Awards, and the competition is one of the largest of its kind in the world. Entrants range from individual freelancers to Fortune 50 companies.

"We're very pleased to be recognized at this calibre," said Heather Newton, manager of marketing and student recruitment in AU's Office of the Vice-President, Advancement. "The MarCom awards are not industry-specific, so it's great that education took centre stage in some of the more competitive categories."

"This year, perhaps more than any other, we've had to be very strategic about our marketing resources. We've used various types of media to reach our prospective student audiences, and the results have been very positive. The awards are a bonus and speak to the consistently high quality of our marketing materials, which are crucial for attracting students to the university."

AU's marketing awards

In addition to the 2011 awards from MarCom, AU has received the following awards for marketing materials in recent years:

- **2010: Bronze Award, Advertising for Student Recruiting**
AU material recognized: 2010 AU National Advertising Campaign
Awarded by: Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE District VIII)
- **2010: Winner, Print Publications**
AU material recognized: AU Viewbook 2010 and the Book of Answers
Awarded by: The Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU), ACU PR, Marketing and Communications Awards 2010
- **2010: Platinum Award, Video/Marketing (service)**
AU material recognized: Where Do You Want to Be?
Awarded by: Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals, 2010 Hermes Creative Awards
- **2009: Gold Award, Print Publications**
AU material recognized: AU Viewbook 2009
Awarded by: University Continuing Education Association, 2009 Marketing & Publication Awards
- **2009: Bronze Award, Interactive Marketing**
AU material recognized: AU Online Ad Campaign
Awarded by: University Continuing Education Association, 2009 Marketing & Publication Awards
- **2008: Gold Award, Student & Prospectus Publications**
AU material recognized: Book of Answers
Awarded by: Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE District VIII)
- **2008: Silver Award, Print Publications**
AU material recognized: Book of Answers
Awarded by: University Continuing Education Association, 2008 Marketing & Publication Awards

News In Brief

Calling all green thumbs and gardening enthusiasts

If you have a green thumb or just a love for gardening, this is the committee for you.

The AU community garden, just west of the new ARC building, provides a unique opportunity for employees. We are looking for staff members to join the AU Garden Committee to help put this garden into operation by developing, managing and providing administrative support for the garden. This will include policy and procedure creation, deciding how the garden will be designed, the splitting of plots and deciding on rental prices. Everyone interested in participating in this committee, please contact [Joelle Jackson](#) by email or by phone at 780-675-6820.

New Writer in Residence

Tololwa Mollé



Tololwa Mollé, a well-known story teller and author of 16 books and plays, is Athabasca University's 2011/2012 Writer in Residence. His work explores the oral traditions of African and North American cultures.

The residency will support his research into oral traditions and allow him to create more stories and performances. He is available as a resource to developing writers, both staff and students. In late January, Mollé will perform at a public reception. Look for an official notice early in the new year.

A Writer in Residence is an invited artist who spends 60 per cent of the one-year residency working on his/her own writing projects and 40 per cent of his/her time as a student and faculty resource. The Writer in Residence advises students, staff and the AU community in all aspects of the writing process, from creating a manuscript to publishing. The Writer in Residence often participates in public readings and other literary events.

For biographical information on Mollé, information on the residency program and to contact him, please check the [WIR website](#).

AU wishes to thank the Canada Council for the Arts, the Alberta Foundation for the Arts, Zoomer Media and the CARP Writer for Health project for their support of AU's Writer in Residence.

Letters from the Lost reviewed

A review of the AU Press publication *Letters from the Lost: A Memoir of Discovery*, by Helen Waldstein Wilkes, appeared in the Montreal Gazette on November 25.

"Part of the richness of *Letters from the Lost* is the way in which (Waldstein Wilkes) describes her own immigrant experience," wrote reporter Susan Schwartz. "Her early years at school, where she was taunted because she spoke no English, knew German, the language of the enemy, and was a Jew 'when that was still a dirty word,' were so traumatic 'that I have almost completely erased them from conscious memory,' she writes."

Read the full article in the [Montreal Gazette](#).



News In Brief

ARC Moving Guide

Staff members are now moving into the new Academic and Research Centre. The ARC is the first building to be constructed at AU Athabasca since the original main campus building was completed in 1984.

This building not only provides much-needed research and work space but also reinforces the university's presence in the greater Athabasca community. With its LEED® Gold rating system and unique amenities such as the community garden, the building is one to be proud of both for its environmental and architectural innovations and its contribution to staff wellness.

The research and collaborations that will take place in the ARC over the years to come will be well supported by the efficient operation of the new facility. A [pamphlet](#) is available to provide a smooth transition to the new workspace.

Rutherford House provides hospitable welcome

It was cold outside but warm and cozy inside as AUFA members and their guests gathered for the 5th Annual AUFA International Potluck Supper on November 19 at Rutherford House in Edmonton. Dishes ranged from an Indonesian vegetarian opor, samosas and bison shepherd's pie to Scottish fruit tarts and Swedish cumin cakes. Music was provided by AU's own Wendell Kisner and *Regeneration*. Staff members at Rutherford House were on hand to provide tours of the historic home. This facility has become a favourite venue for AUFA social events.

Celebrating its centennial in 2011, [Rutherford House](#) was the home of Alexander Cameron Rutherford, the first premier of Alberta as well as founder and chancellor of the University of Alberta. In 1911, Rutherford, his wife Mattie and their family, moved into this beautiful brick mansion near the university campus. The family entertained friends, relatives and influential Edmontonians for more than a generation. Today, this restored and furnished Edwardian-era home maintains the Rutherford tradition of hospitality and offers visitors a glimpse into the past with costumed interpreters, guided tours and special events.



Birds in the bush

These evening grosbeaks will be looking for you on December 27. That's when the 2011 Athabasca Christmas Bird Count takes place, sponsored by the

Crooked Creek Conservancy Society of Athabasca and Science Outreach-Athabasca. Everyone is welcome, from expert birders to amateur enthusiasts, including bird feeder counters. It's a great family outing. People will meet at the Muskeg Creek Chalet at 8:15 a.m. on December 27. For more information please call Janice Pitman at (780) 675-5251 or Harvey Scott at (780) 675-4158.

Make it a giving Christmas

The AU Wellness Committee is collecting donations to Santas Anonymous and to the Food Bank at AU Athabasca. Collection bins are set up inside the front doors in the main lobby at AU Athabasca as well as at the Tim Byrne Centre. Donations will be accepted until December 12.

Needed donations include: new unwrapped toys, non-perishable food items, new or gently used clothing and outerwear.

News In Brief

Student awards for best paper

The Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute is currently accepting applications for the Lal Bahadur Shastri Student Prize for best papers by Canadian students on India in Canada. Entries are invited on any topic with specific relevance to India including economics, environment, history, law, literature, politics, philosophy, social studies, humanities, science or women's studies.

Three prizes will be awarded:

- Best undergraduate paper
- Best graduate paper
- Best French paper

Deadline for submissions is January 16, 2012.

For more information on eligibility, application requirements and application forms, please visit the [Lal Bahadur Shastri Student Prize website](#).



DID YOU KNOW?

Athabasca University's Facebook page has over 1,700 fans.

Check it out at www.facebook.com/Athabasca.University

If you would like something posted onto the AU Facebook page, please contact [Michael Shouldice](#).

A retiring Carole Benner

By Carole Benner

After 35 years as a tutor in Anthropology 362 and Sociology 378, Carole Benner is retiring from AU. She took some time to put pen to paper and reflect on her time here.

In the “olden days” (1976) when I was a grad student, I chanced upon a small nondescript poster on a bulletin board in the Anthropology Department at the University of Calgary. It was a call for applications for the position of tutor, whatever that was, for Athabasca University. My first thought was to dismiss it as I live in Calgary, and who knew what or where Athabasca University was. On second glance, and with some pushing by the then department secretary, I applied for the position.

At the time I was a single parent of five children ages 9-14 and was, as was the usual state for me, hard pressed to support and take care of this large and energetic bunch. I had a scholarship from the University of Calgary but it was not sufficient and I was trying to figure out how I could make ends meet. I applied for the position and the rest is history.

My plan was to work for Athabasca until I graduated and then get a real job. Here I am 35 years later, still an Athabasca tutor. Why did I stay so long? Was it the pay, the working conditions, the convenience, the work itself?

My workstation was my bed, my main tool was the telephone and my writing desk was my lap. Space was short in student housing and there wasn't the luxury of designated office space. This was true for many tutors that I knew. Not only were the space and equipment different, the students seemed to be also. Most of the students were finishing up a degree

elsewhere and picking up an Athabasca University course or two or they wanted to try out a university course. The completion rate seemed to me to be quite low. Although I spent much more time with each student in one to one conversation, the skill level of the students seemed much lower in that many had difficulties writing. While I think I expanded student knowledge of anthropology and university in general, this didn't necessarily result in measurable accomplishments. Nevertheless, there were some outstanding students who did go on to various academic successes. Some of my colleagues are at other universities now.

The tutor role expanded in the ensuing years. Earlier on, course coordinators marked all exams and the secretaries to whom we sent, by regular mail, our marking record, entered grades. The process was slower and much less immediate. The advent of the computer has had an extensive effect on the work of tutors. The work in many ways has remained much the same; assisting students to master a body of knowledge. However, the way in which this is carried out has changed. More of my time is spent on administrative duties such as entering grades and recording comments and less on actual one to one teaching and discussion. Some teaching happens online when students have questions but the content discussion by telephone is greatly reduced as I mentioned earlier. The computer has revolutionized the nature of my work.

Over all I have enjoyed the work I did for Athabasca University and will miss the student contact and the people in anthropology with whom I work. On the other hand, I haven't had a free Wednesday evening for a very long time!

AU in the News

Independent research in MBA

Deborah Hurst, program director for AU's MBA, was quoted about the independent research opportunities offered through MBA programs. “MBA programs do not require students to do a masters' thesis, as is typical for other masters degrees,” wrote reporter Alexandra Lopez-Pacheco. “But for a small percentage, research has a powerful allure, and most of the schools offer some form of option for them to conduct a major research project. In some cases, such as Athabasca University, it's mandatory.”

“We have an applied project at the end of the program, which is a fairly big piece of research that the student works on under the supervision of a faculty member on a very specific problem or issue,” Hurst said. “In fact, research is an important component of the school's MBA program.” The full article is available in the [Financial Post](#).

New MLA with AU MBA

Almost a quarter of the representatives elected to Canadian legislatures and appointed to the Senate are women. Among the 257 women is Victoria Jurgens, who holds an MBA from AU, elected to the Saskatchewan legislature for the constituency of Prince Albert-Northcote in November this year. She describes herself as having “a strong business focus combined with a social conscience and community development experience.”

AU associate professor [Jane Arscott](#) turned up Jurgens' achievement when updating statistics on the number of women elected and appointed across the country. Arscott is co-editor of a collected volume tentatively titled *A Few More Women*, co-edited with Manon Tremblay (Université d'Ottawa) and Linda Trimble (University of Alberta) for University of British Columbia Press. The manuscript will be submitted later this month, with publication to follow in early 2013.

“There might be other AU grads out in the corridors of power,” Arscott said, “I'd be thrilled to find that Victoria has company in having earned an AU degree and having won municipal, provincial or federal office. If anyone knows of other AU alumni who hold or have held leadership positions in their communities, please let me know.”

Occupy Movement

Jay Smith, professor of political economy in State and Legal Studies at AU, recently took part in a panel discussion at the University of Sydney, Australia, about the Occupy movement. This led to his also being interviewed on the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) television and radio.

The Occupy movement, an international protest movement primarily directed against economic and social inequity, is closely related to Smith's research on digital politics and the politics of global social movements. He was in Australia on his way to a conference in New Zealand.

New President with AU MBA

Joe Graci, who holds an Executive MBA from Athabasca University, has been appointed as president and general manager of Interwork Technologies, a value added distributor for new and emerging technologies specializing in data security, IP communications (VoIP) and storage solutions. Read the full story on [PRWeb](#).

DegreeWorks keeps students on track to graduation

Athabasca University DegreeWorks

Student View AA414961 as of 17/10/2011 at 11:22

Student	[Redacted]	Program	BA4
ID	[Redacted]	Major/Concentration/Designation	Humanities
Stage	5 - Evaluation Complete - Admission Status	Minor	Political Science
Program GPA	0		

Legend

- Complete
- Not Complete
- Complete except for classes in-progress
- Nearly complete
- (TR)** Transfer Class
- *** Course has Pr
- @** Any Course/Any Level
- IP** In Progress

Preparatory Courses are 100 level; Junior Courses are 200 level; Senior Courses are 300/400 level.
Arts includes Humanities and Social Science

Bachelor of Arts - 4 years Academic Term: 201103

- 120 credits are required. You currently have 78, you still need 42 more credits.
- A minimum of 30 credits must be obtained through Athabasca University. You currently have 78 more credits.

The Office of the Registrar at AU is implementing a new web-based tool that will help AU students and AU advisers successfully navigate our institution's curriculum requirements with greater simplicity, speed, and efficiency.

DegreeWorks is a comprehensive academic advising and degree audit solution that works with Banner, AU's student information system. DegreeWorks automatically retrieves the student's academic record from Banner and organizes it into an educational plan on the web, easily identifying program requirements, which courses have been completed and which courses the student still needs in order to complete their degree.

"DegreeWorks provides a great academic planning tool and counselling capabilities that create new efficiencies and foster more personal interactions between adviser and students," said Project Manager Richard MacLeod, assistant registrar, Admissions and Transfer Credit Services in the Office of the Registrar. "Students receive the academic advice they need to succeed and advisers gain new capacity to help them counsel students more successfully. All of this can lead to graduating faster."

The new tool was recently launched internally to give program and academic advisers, and evaluators the opportunity to work with it. When DegreeWorks is launched to students early in 2012, it will be

available to program students who have registered since September 2010.

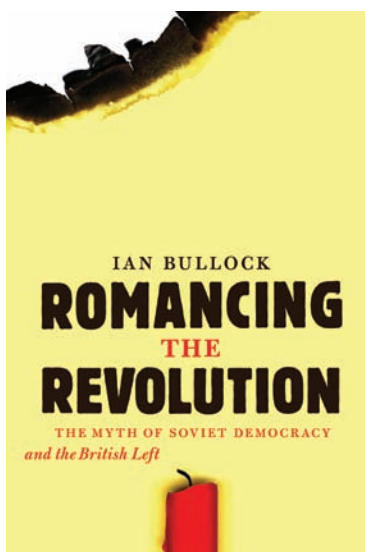
Once DegreeWorks is live, program students and their advisers will be able to:

- Track progress towards degree completion
- Create detailed educational plans
- Explore "What if" scenarios to see the impact of changing programs and adding majors and minors
- Calculate GPAs based on current and future courses and grades

MacLeod hopes that with the new tool, students will have a shorter time to graduation because program requirements will be clearly laid out so students are less likely to choose unnecessary or incorrect courses. "Students are balancing many different responsibilities while going to college. DegreeWorks will help them get all the information they need about their program of study and the time to completion. It will help them map out their university program and take a direct route to degree completion. And it will give advisers valuable tools to guide students in their decision-making. Students can graduate as quickly as possible and move forward to establish and advance their careers."

For more information on DegreeWorks, visit the [project website](#).

New from AU Press



Romancing the Revolution

In the years immediately following the First World War and the 1917 Russian Revolution, many of those on the British Left were tempted, to a greater or lesser degree, by what author Ian Bullock calls the “myth” of soviet democracy: the belief that Russia had embarked on a brave experiment in a form of popular government more advanced even than British parliamentarism.

In *Romancing the Revolution: The Myth of Soviet Democracy and the British Left*, Bullock examines the reaction of a broad spectrum of the British left to this idealized concept of soviet democracy.

At conferences and congresses, and above all in the contemporary left-wing press, debates raged over how best to lay the groundwork for a soviet system in Britain, over how soviets should be organized, over the virtues (if any) of the parliamentary system, over the true meaning of the “dictatorship of the proletariat,” over whether British communists should affiliate to the Third International, and over a host of other issues—including the puzzling question of what was actually going on in Russia.

As Bullock demonstrates, even in the face of mounting evidence that the Bolshevik revolution had produced something closer to genuine dictatorship than genuine democracy, many of those on the left were slow to abandon the hope that revolutionary transformations were indeed in store for Britain—that the soviet system would at long last allow the country to achieve real social equality and economic justice.

“An important contribution to our understanding of how socialist activists and intellectuals came to be deceived, and how they came to deceive themselves, regarding the authoritarian regime that emerged in Russia during the early 1920s.” —Alan Campbell, *University of Liverpool*

Bullock’s interests have long centred on the often-ambivalent relationship between socialism and democracy. He is the co-author, with Logie Barrow, of *Democratic Ideas and the British Labour Movement, 1880–1914* and is currently a visiting research fellow in the history department at the University of Sussex

Musing and The Kindness Colder Than the Elements

The book launch for *Musing and The Kindness Colder Than the Elements*. AU Press would like to express their gratitude to everyone who attended and supported the event. A great time was had by all.



AU Press book launch.

Want more?
Visit AU Press or:





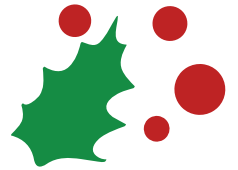
Season's Greetings

To AU staff, to your families
and your friends,

Season's Greetings

Hoping you are surrounded
by love and warmth
this holiday season.

Best Wishes for a happy
and healthy new year.



The Insider is published for AU faculty and staff members and other members of the AU community by the Advancement Office.

Please send any information or photographs for inclusion to the [co-ordinator](#). If a photo opportunity presents itself, please contact [Blaise MacMullin](#). Due to FOIP regulations, a release form must accompany all photos. Please contact *The Insider* co-ordinator for a copy of the release form.

The first edition of *The Insider* for 2012 will be published on January 23. The deadline for submissions is January 13.



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Athabasca University 