

The Troweller

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ABORIGINAL STUDENT CENTRE

Aboriginals needed a home and a safe place within the University of Manitoba, according to Kali Storm, director of the new Aboriginal Student Centre, which was opened on campus in 2008.



(The Aboriginal Student Centre faces in a southeast direction)

The need for such a centre was first voiced by Ovide Mercredi in 1971 when he was a student at the university and an organizer of the Aboriginal Students Association. Mr. Mercredi graduated from law and then went on to be national president of the Assembly of First Nations and is currently chief of the Grand Rapids First Nation. The journey from initial concept to completion reflects the growing pains of the Aboriginal community at the university. The Aboriginal student association was given a small office a number of years ago. The Native

Studies Program was initiated in the mid-1990s. About the same time a part-time student advisor was appointed and the Aboriginal Student office was given space in the University Centre in the hub of the Fort Garry campus

However, the Aboriginal community desired its own stand-alone facility to implement personal, cultural and academic services for Aboriginal students.

The Graduation Pow Wow celebrated about 60 students in 1960 and has grown to between 100-150 since then.

There are currently 1600 self-declared Aboriginal students at the university, about seven per cent of the overall population. In the late 1990s a capital campaign was launched to have a stand-alone Aboriginal Student Centre. The initial goal, begun in the late 1990s was to raise \$5 million for a centre, ultimately ended up costing \$6.7 million for 13,000 square feet and contents. In the end this was less space than initially conceived, but adjustments had to be made to accommodate a green commitment to LEED, the first building on campus to meet LEED standards. So space had

to be sacrificed to include a heating and cooling system complying with those LEED standards.

It was Prairie Architects who were hired to design the Aboriginal Student Centre and part of their contract was to hire Aboriginals, some of them students at the time, but now full fledged professionals with the firm.

Dennis Kwan of Prairie Architects Inc. was the lead architect on this project and he remarked in an interview about the uniquely collaborative process in bringing the project to completion . Con't 2



The Roundhouse, representing the circle integral to Aboriginal culture is on the west side of the building

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Aboriginal Studenty Centre, con't

Mr. Kwan who graduated from Carlton University's faculty of architecture and arrived in Winnipeg in 2000 was attracted to this community because of its "amazing resources and the tremendous potential in the turn of the century heritage of the city." He states unequivocally for the centre it was "the team effort" that separates this centre from the majority of building projects.

The main goal was to create a facility which would bring together all of the separate departments connecting to Aboriginal activities on campus. "We needed to create a "home within a home" says Mr. Kwan. This was accomplished by continuing consultations throughout the whole project with the integrated design team of architects, engineers and interior designers meeting

with staff, faculty, students elders and members of the university The process worked, Mr. Kwan believes because everyone's opinion was treated equally

One of the requirements for the centre was to provide space to allow time to be together and time to be alone.

The director's office he points out has circular windows and seen from the outside the windows are encased in smooth and rough textured brick and stone articulating a feather motif.



Kali Storm, director of the Aboriginal Student Centre sits in her office with the circular window partially visible behind her

Four coloured brick and tyndal stone were used.

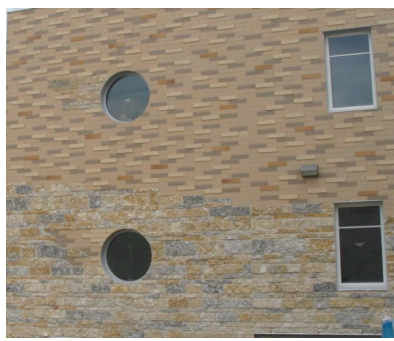
Mr. Kwan also adds the suppliers and contractors went beyond what is normally expected because this project was 'just that kind of project'. It was a good cause and people really became involved.

He cites, as an example, the consultations he had with Murray Alston of I-XL Masonry Limited in selecting just the right kind of brick for the exterior.

There is always the challenge in the relationship of the spaces provided in a building. Another example of the creative consultation process is the circular hallways with blue linoleum depicting 'water' linking the students with the staff Kali Storm, the director, says after completion there are always things which one might change, but she emphatically declares "I love this building."



Prairie Architects team: Eladia Smoke, MMA intern; Destiny Seymour, ID student; Dennis Kwan, architect, Crystal Bornais, sustainable building co-ordinator; Teresa deCosta-Neubauer, business manager; and Peter Petkau, architect (missing: David Thomas, MAA intern)



Circular windows of the northwest corner within "feathered" brick and stone.



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The President's Report

"May we live in interesting times" is an apt proverb for the unprecedented changes and events that have been happening not only in the Canadian and North American economies, but also the world economy.

In Manitoba, we have had the good fortune of our traditional consistent and steady growth and have not, so far at least, experienced the wild swings of the ups and downs that some of the other provinces have experienced with regard to construction cost, house prices and the boom and bust economy.

The members of the Manitoba Masonry Institute have also weathered the storm quite well for the most part. Most of the masonry contractors, manufacturers and suppliers report they are having a good year, although there has been some slow down in some of the areas related to single and multi-family construction.

One bright spot in the local masonry industry is at the bricklayer apprenticeship program at Red River College. Course instructor Brian Gebhardt reports they were at maximum student capacity in their first and second year level classes with 16 and 15 students respectively in each class. They also have a large third class made up of 11 students. Four students from this year's third



level bricklaying class have just competed in the 2009 Manitoba Provincial Skills competition and by all accounts all the competition was very close this year. All of the students in the competition demonstrated very strong masonry skills and workmanship in each of their finished projects they were required to build in a timed format. I also had the pleasure of representing the Manitoba Masonry Institute at this year's competition and presented a gift of a Stabilia level set to each of the contestants.

Congratulations to this year's winner, Shaun Sawatsky, who placed first in this year's event. Good luck to Mr. Sawatsky as he will be representing Manitoba as he competes at the Canadian Skills Competition being held in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island May 21-22, 2009.

Also on the Skills front, our own Brian Gebhardt is involved as the Workshop Supervisor at the World Skills Competition being held in Calgary, Alberta, September 1-7,

2009 The World Skills event is held every two years in various countries around the world and this marks only the second time the competition has been held in Canada.

I had the pleasure of representing the MMI at the Saskatchewan Masonry Design Awards held in Saskatoon, February 5, 2009. That province is the leader in the country with their Masonry Design Awards and this year was no exception. It was a first class evening and was well attended by architects, engineers, masonry contractors, masonry manufacturers, suppliers and local builders. The MMI is looking forward to planning our own Masonry Design Awards in 2011.

The MMI in conjunction with the Canadian Concrete Manufacturers Producers Association is working with the Faculty of Engineering and the University of Manitoba in creating a masonry program at the Engineering Faculty. We look forward to working with Fariborz Hashemian and his associates and staff at the faculty.

In closing I will leave you with the following Quote of the Day: "Architecture starts when you carefully put two bricks together. There it begins" *Ludwig Mies van der Rohe*

Murray Alston, CTR

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Red River College



Joey Brooks won silver at the 2008 Skills Canada competition in bricklaying held in Calgary, Alberta following up his gold medal at the 2008 Manitoba Skills. He also received an Excellence in the Skilled Trades recognition as being the top bricklayer apprentice at the 17th annual Apprenticeship Highest Achievement Awards hosted by Manitoba's Competitiveness, Training and Trade of the provincial government. Joey started his apprenticeship with Stiles Masonry of Brandon and finished his last year with Don Cullen Masonry, also of Brandon. When was the last time Manitoba failed to take away a medal from the Skills Canada competition? Shaun Sawatzky will represent Manitoba at the 2009 Skills Canada.

Red River Enrollment Hits Record Numbers
Masonry instructor at Red River, Brian Gebhardt, reports there were 16 level one students in the first year of the masonry program at Red River, the highest numbers in 25 years. There were also 15 people enrolled in 2nd level and 11 in the 3rd level of the program.



Flanked by Frank Krauthaker of the Bricklayers Union on the left and Murray Alston, MMI president and representing I-XL Masonry Supplies Ltd. these four final year apprentices competed in Skills Manitoba from left to right Valerian Stripling (Euro-Can Enterprises Ltd-bronze); Heinrich Mirau (Real Stone Masonry-silver); Keith Bohn (Alpha Masonry Ltd. 4th); and Shaun Sawatzky (Lens Masonry-gold). They vied for the honour of representing Manitoba at the Skills Canada 2009 competition



Brian Gebhardt, bricklaying instructor at Red River College will be a Workshop supervisor bricklayer at the World Skills in Calgary, Alberta from August 24 to September 10., 2009

Medal Haul

Competitors from Manitoba face what can sometimes be a daunting tradition at Skills Canada. In the last ten years, this province has six gold, three silver and one bronze.

Just prior to releasing this publication, The Troweller learned Shaun Sawatzky took gold in Calgary. Congratulations!!!



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In Memorium

Kathleen Alston, mother of MMI president Murray Alston, who passed away in May, 2009 at the age of 84

Mato (Mike) Andjeic at the age of 85 passed away March 29, 2009. Born in Croatia, Mike, in addition to being a brick maker, was qualified electrician, carpenter, mill worker, butcher, musician and heavy equipment operation emigrated to Canada with his wife, Manda, in 1958. In 1963 after taking the brick laying course at Red River Community College, he started his own business Andjelic Masonry, which two years later became ARM Masonry when his son, Bob, joined the business. Eventually after working in northern and rural Manitoba the business became ARM Properties Ltd. Which focused on the design, building and leasing of industrial warehouse and office space in Winnipeg. Mike officially retired in 1991.

John Anthony Craig, 59, died April 16, 2009. Born in Northern Ireland, John emigrated to Canada in 1977 and was very much involved in the masonry business for most of his working life.

Ronald James Ruhr, 65, died April 21, 2009. Ron and his wife, Ann, owned and operated Kildonan Concrete until retirement in 1996.

Masonry Research at University of Manitoba

The Canadian Concrete Manufacturers Producers Association has committed \$50,000 for each of the next five years to assist in funding a chair at the University of Manitoba's department of civil engineering to create a strong research plan by developing a new program in masonry education and research.

The program will focus on both new masonry design and construction and research in heritage structures.

The funding was announced at an event March 20, 2009 and included presentations by Dr. Donald Anderson on *Masonry and Earthquake Engineering*, Dr. Leslie Jaeger on *NBC95 Code and Heritage Structures*, Nayeem Uddin on *Durability Studies of Anchor Systems for Heritage Structures* and Taohida Akhi on *Brick Wall Tests to Establish E and G*.

Prof. Fariborz Hashemian will head up the new initiative in the engineering faculty.