

# GREBEL NOW

Conrad Grebel University College Magazine

## MENNONITE STUDIES AND HISTORY

### **Rubbing Shoulders with Anabaptists**

Taking a close look at Mennonite history makes room for unexpected encounters

### **Alumni Careers Rooted in History**

Alumni reflect on where a degree in History has taken them

FALL 2023



Vol. 40 No. 1

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## Celebrating the Past

With roots in the Mennonite-Anabaptist tradition, Grebel has always ensured that part of the College's programming has included Mennonite Studies and History. This issue of *Grebel Now* introduces readers to the intriguing research of one of Grebel's newest faculty members, David Y. Neufeld, Assistant Professor of History. We also trace the long line of Grebel's influential Mennonite Studies and History professors, as well as the

related offerings of the College, including the Mennonite Archives of Ontario. We also caught up with almost a dozen History and Mennonite Studies alumni to see where their degree and career paths have taken them.

This issue of *Grebel Now* marks the 40th Anniversary of the newsletter turned magazine and the 60th Anniversary of Conrad Grebel University College! We've spent the last few months celebrating the anniversary,

with a few more events to go. Another way we are celebrating this milestone is with our 60 Stories of Interesting Alumni project. We release a new story that highlights a noteworthy alumnus each Tuesday, so be sure to check out our website regularly.

Happy Anniversary! Thank you for being a part of Grebel's story!

Jennifer Konkle, Marketing and  
Communications Manager

Fred W. Martin, Director of Advancement



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Send all comments, submissions, and ideas  
to: [grebel@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:grebel@uwaterloo.ca)

### MANAGING EDITOR

Jennifer Konkle

### DESIGNER

Jennifer Konkle

### ADVISOR

Fred W. Martin

### CONTRIBUTORS

Jennifer Konkle, Fred W. Martin,  
Margaret Gissing, Marcus Shantz,  
David Y. Neufeld, Troy Osborne,  
Laura Enns, Laureen Harder-Gissing,  
Farhan Saeed, Tim Saari, Sophia Pettit,  
Maisie Sum, Alison Enns

### PHOTOGRAPHY

Margaret Gissing, Jennifer Konkle,  
Fred W. Martin, alumni contributors,  
Mennonite Archives of Ontario

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Moving? Send your new address  
to Alison Enns

Conrad Grebel University College  
Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6  
519-885-0220 x24217  
[aenns@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:aenns@uwaterloo.ca)

*Front cover:*  
Visitors from the  
Russlaender 100  
train trip viewed  
an exhibit called  
"Things They  
Carried" in the  
Mennonite Archives  
of Ontario.

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

# Remembering Werner Packull

BY MARCUS SHANTZ, PRESIDENT

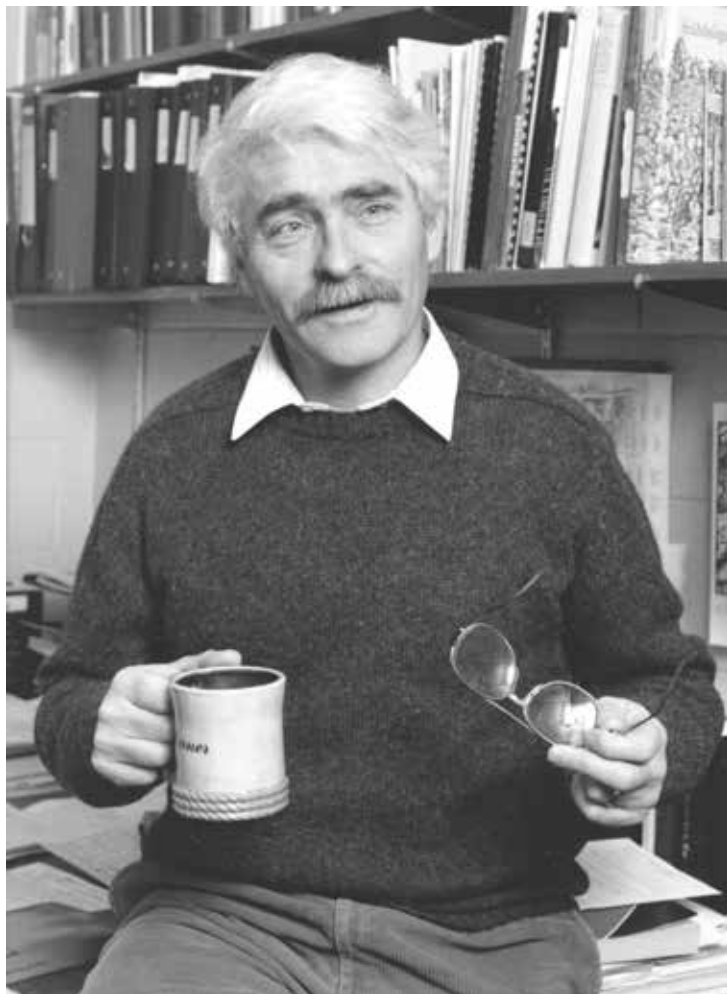
*"I'm trying to broaden your mind."*

Sometime in 1993, in pursuit of a good mark in Reformation History, I went to my professor's office to discuss an essay topic. Hoping to appear studious, I took copious notes during the meeting—until Professor Werner Packull told me to stop, in words I'll never forget:

"Put your pen down," he said. "I'm not here to give you the answers; I'm trying to broaden your mind."

Werner Packull began as a professor of History at University of Waterloo in 1972, first at Renison College and, from 1983 to 2003, at Conrad Grebel. He died in 2018.

Specializing in the Radical Reformation, he was a co-author on the 1975 "polygenesis paper," which completely transformed how historians think about Anabaptist-Mennonite origins.



As a History major at Grebel in the early 1990s, I took every single course that Packull taught. Along with many other former students, I remember him as a man who was very generous with his time and patient with his students. Originally trained as a tradesman, he approached history as a craft. Being in Werner's class was like being apprenticed by a highly skilled craftsman—a master who believed that you could do it too, with hard work and practice.

Packull offered his students a somewhat tragic understanding of history, in which humanity's best-laid plans frequently went wrong. A key insight from his popular course on Modern Revolutions was that all political and social revolutions have their excesses, missteps, and innocent casualties—no matter how righteous the cause. He taught us to beware of ideological approaches to history (whether from the 'left' or the 'right') that prioritize theories over facts. His former student Edmund Pries put it this way, in an essay written to honour Packull's retirement: "As an historian, he wants the story to be told the way it should be told, wrinkles and all. He has little patience for those who would colour history in order to manipulate it for other purposes."

In the unsettled times we are now living through, I greatly miss Werner's voice. But his teaching still informs my thinking, and it provides a framework for understanding the world today. Among other things, learning about the worst moments in history with Werner has provided helpful perspective: humanity has faced crisis before, and has endured.

Despite the tragic lens through which he viewed the past, Packull's classes were inspiring. Former student Josie Winterfeld told me, "I had never been a fan of history, but one class with Werner Packull changed that.... I left many of his classes with something new to think about, a bit of fire burning in my belly, and considering the kind of world I wanted to live in, and my role in helping to shape it."

That's one reason we're committed to teaching history at Grebel—to provide students with mind-broadening perspectives on the past in order that they might understand the present and help shape a better future. And our faculty continue Werner's craft—teaching students with patience, kindness, and a generous spirit.



# Rubbing Shoulders with Anabaptists

BY DAVID Y. NEUFELD, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF HISTORY

Lienhard Wäber died in the early winter of 1631 in the village of Brütten just outside of Zurich. His death was self-inflicted. Anna Richi, his wife, found him hanging from a tree in an oak grove near their small home, having followed his footsteps through freshly fallen snow. Wäber's passing shocked his community, not least the newly arrived Reformed minister Hans Rudolf Fischer, who was charged by the authorities with investigating how such a thing could have happened in his parish. The pastor had known Wäber only as a dedicated school teacher. But as he set out to canvas those in the area who had spent time with the deceased man, the pastor discovered that, despite outward appearances, Wäber had long been mired in deep turmoil.

Earlier in life, Wäber had laboured as a mercenary, relatively well-paying work that young men in the impoverished Swiss countryside had taken up for generations. Many brought the violence of the battlefield back to their streets and families. Wäber appears to have returned home to Brütten with despair. He spent his remaining years struggling with spiritual unrest. One witness remembered Wäber's persistent but unfulfilled desire to share with another person an unnameable horror he had perpetrated. "Could a man like him be saved?" Wäber had asked another confidant. Fellow day-labouring peasants recalled that, at mealtimes in the field, Wäber

would distance himself from the group, going off on his own to kneel and pray aloud, his voice becoming so agitated that it disturbed them. Wäber was harassed by the devil, he claimed, who in one instance appeared in the form of a large black rat. His daughter testified that, with her own eyes, she had seen the demonic rodent stretch out its neck and threaten to snare her father in the same trap he had laid for it. No matter what he did, Wäber lamented, his heart continued to cause him intense distress.

During this period of searching, Wäber frequented meetings of Anabaptists in a nearby forest at night. His visits were sporadic, but they appear to have left a significant impression on him. After these encounters, Wäber began to question the legitimacy of the baptism of children. He acquired and read an "Anabaptist book" which he hid from those around him. Richi complained that, when the couple attended the local Reformed church, she was subjected to running commentary on the content of the sermon. If the minister preached about the consolation that came from knowing that God had forgiven the sins of the congregation's members, Lienhard would lean over to her to complain that the pastor was proclaiming the lie of cheap grace. "They should preach that the immoral are punished," he had told his wife, a view that reflected his sense that his own heavy burden of guilt required a reckoning with God.



A bailiff in Zurich's rural territory surprises a nocturnal gathering of Anabaptists in the forest, resulting in the capture of fifteen dissenters in 1527. Excerpt from Heinrich Thoman's 1605 illustrated copy of Heinrich Bullinger's chronicle of the Reformation. Zentralbibliothek Zürich, Ms B 316, fol. 245v.

David Y. Neufeld is a historian of religion, culture, and everyday life in early modern Europe. His research and writing examine post-Reformation dynamics of conflict and coexistence, processes of minority formation, and archival cultures and practices through investigation of the experience of Anabaptists.



For the time period and subject—the social experience of early modern common people—the source from which this account is derived, the product of some local minister’s unusually diligent notetaking, is exceptional in both its detail and dramatic framing. It provides a rare window into the inner life of a troubled man and how a parish, faced with his suicide, understood their collective culpability. From my vantage point, that of a historian who examines the long-term survival of Anabaptists in and around the edges of parishes like Brütten, the source provides privileged insight into the nature of relationships across the boundaries of belief. It prompts an imaginative exercise: what might Anabaptist women and men have made of this unfamiliar man with whom they were rubbing shoulders, gathered close together in the woods around the candlelight?

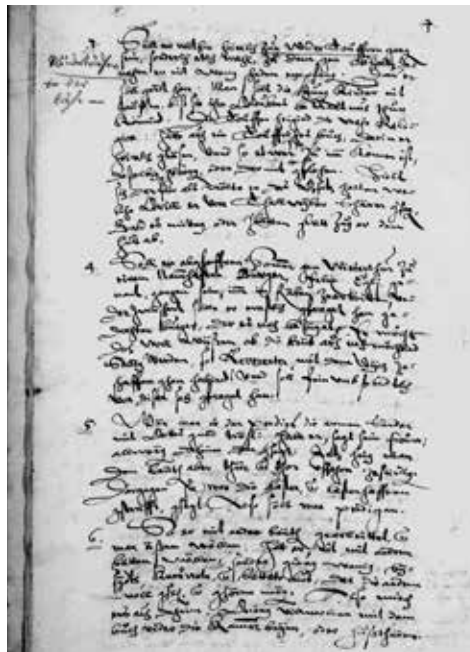
It’s likely that the strong emphasis that Anabaptist dissenters placed on the ethical demands of a life of faith, their call to repentance and a change of life, appealed to searchers and the dissatisfied. It was what drew Wäber, at the risk of harassment and punishment, to their illegal gatherings. It’s also true that, in some instances, this focus could harden into callousness toward those deemed to have fallen short of high standards. Maybe dissenters placed Wäber in this camp, given his previous willingness to maim and kill for pay, and turned their backs to him.

Wäber’s presence may have been frightening. His reported penchant for crude language and unpredictable outbursts of aggression may have communicated hidden trauma in his past. It was men like Wäber, war veterans paid and deputized by local governments, who raided and sacked Anabaptist homes, threatened their lives, and chased them down with arms. At the very least, dissenters would have been concerned about unwanted attention Wäber’s presence might attract. When news about Anabaptist activities reached the wrong sets of ears, trouble for them often ensued. Association with a volatile character like Wäber represented a risk, one which needed to be weighed against a call to lead him towards wholeness.

Or, more likely, Anabaptists didn’t push Wäber away. While it’s possible that dissenter estimation of Lienhard was distorted by fear or by reflexive moralism, this case suggests, in line with other evidence, that their circles remained open to outsiders. Anabaptism in that time and place was not an insular, family matter. The composition of these minority congregations was dynamic. As one contemporary Anabaptist leader remarked to an official, “people come to us more than we would like.” If separation from a corrupt society was an aspiration for many Anabaptists, it remained an unrealized one. Family ties, relationships of interdependence, and participation in a shared economic and social life that demanded regular encounters with members of dominant religious majorities made this so. Even though Wäber’s story intersects only briefly with that of local dissenters, it expands our appreciation of the possible impacts these encounters may have had on the lives of people who did not seek full membership in Anabaptist communities.

As I jump between early modern Europe and the present, between research and opportunities for teaching and community education, I’m struck by the ways that our work in Mennonite studies makes room for unexpected encounters. We certainly don’t seek separation, but we do elevate and explore particularity. For this reason, our work is sustained by and serves a community with deep-rooted commitments to learning

more fully about the Mennonite past and present. At the same time, our circles—in the classroom, lecture hall, or library—remain open, extended and reshaped as much by those who come to check us out as by ourselves. In a course that provides a deep look at the Radical Reformation, students find opportunities to draw broader insights about religious conflict and minority experience. Undergraduate researchers use the Mennonite Archives of Ontario both as a resource for producing knowledge about the Mennonite past and as a tool for understanding changing media environments. A conference on Indigenous-Mennonite Encounters, while encouraging Mennonite historical self-examination, brings new partners into conversation and relationship. These connections, while often brief, enrich our work and sense of purpose, even if their impacts on those we rub shoulders with aren’t always visible to us.



An excerpt from the protocols of the morals court of the village of Brütten for the year 1631, containing a report of Lienhard Wäber’s interactions with local Anabaptists. Staatsarchiv Zürich TAI 1.562, ERKGA Brütten, IV A 1 a, part 1, p. 4.



# The Legacy of Mennonite Studies and History at Grebel

JENNIFER KONKLE, MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

*Conrad Grebel College faculty 1980.  
Mennonite Archives of Ontario photo*

Because Grebel's mission and programs are rooted in and inspired by its Anabaptist/Mennonite heritage, the College puts a significant emphasis on teaching Mennonite studies and History. While Mennonite Studies wasn't an official program from the outset, Grebel's founders wanted to ensure that Mennonite students pursuing post-secondary education at a secular university still had some grounding in Mennonite education. So from Grebel's inception, the College taught courses that related to Mennonite history, beginning with Winfield Fretz's "The Left Wing of the Reformation." As a result of this early focus, Grebel soon established itself as a major centre for the study of sixteenth century Anabaptism and Mennonite history. This reputation among church leaders and scholars is based on the distinguished scholarship of Grebel's History professors over the last 60 years, augmented by faculty contributions from other Grebel programs.

Today, undergraduate course offerings in History at Grebel are an integral part of University of Waterloo's History Department. Grebel specializes in courses on the history of Christianity, the Reformation and Radical Reformation, and Mennonites, in addition to larger surveys on the history of peace movements, immigration, food, and the west in the broader world.

With Grebel courses in History, Religious Studies, Church Music and Worship, Peace and Conflict Studies, and Sociology making up courses in the Mennonites Studies minor, teaching in this interdisciplinary program is a College-wide effort. Upon graduation, students have a better understanding of Anabaptist-Mennonite history, culture, thought, and practice from the early sixteenth century to the present and they have explored how Anabaptism has interacted with the surrounding society and expanded into a global, multicultural movement. In addition to History classes, Grebel has offered Mennonite Sociology and Literature courses by scholars and professors who made significant contributions to Mennonite studies.

Grebel's founding president, **Winfield Fretz** (1963-1979), studied Mennonites from a sociological viewpoint, focusing on mutual aid, Mennonite colonization in Paraguay, Waterloo Mennonites, and Waterloo Mennonite agriculture. As a scholar on the forefront of Mennonite studies as a field, he also recognized the importance of preserving history and was the founding president of Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario and the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada. Looking beyond academia, he translated his research

interest in mutual aid into the act of helping found the Mennonite Savings and Credit Union.

The College's first faculty hire was **Walter Klaassen** (1964-1987) as Chaplain and Professor of Religious Studies and History. His research interests included church history, particularly radical movements such as Anabaptism. In addition to theology, Klaassen has translated the writings of early Anabaptists, most notably Pilgram Marpeck and Menno Simons.

The second President of Grebel, **Frank H. Epp** (1971-1986), was also Professor of History at the College. He was a prolific writer, focusing on topics like the Mennonite exodus from Russia, Mennonite peoplehood, draft-dodgers, peace, refugees, and the Palestine-Israel conflict in the Middle East. A major contribution to the study of Mennonite history came in the form of his three-volume series on *Mennonites in Canada*.

As someone who furthered the field of Mennonite studies, **Calvin Redekop** (1979-1990) was a Professor of Sociology at Grebel, as well as a writer, teacher, and activist for environmental change. As a prolific writer, his research topics included creation and the environment, Mennonite faith and economics, Mennonite and Indigenous relations, Mennonite identity and society, and entrepreneurship. He put his research into practice in his work with Mennonite Economic Development Associates and in establishing companies that promoted sustainable environmental practices.

History professor **Werner O. Packull**'s (1983-2003) research interests focused on 16th-century Anabaptism, Anabaptists in Moravia, and Hutterite beginnings. He co-authored an especially groundbreaking article called "From Monogenesis to Polygenesis: the historical discussion of Anabaptist origins," and engaged with and encouraged other Anabaptist scholars. According to the Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online (GAMEO), "he placed great emphasis on scholarly integrity; he aimed for accuracy that told the story complete with blemishes."\*

A champion of Mennonite literature, **Hildi Froese Tiessen** (1984-2021) nurtured a field of study and community of Mennonite writers and scholars both inside and outside the classroom. As Professor of English and PACS, not only did she teach courses in Mennonite Literature and Quest for Meaning, but she enriched



the College's academic atmosphere by bringing many Mennonite writers to the Grebel campus in numerous lecture series and by organizing Mennonites/s Writing conferences.

With the addition of **C. Arnold Snyder** (1985-2011) as Professor of History at Grebel, the College established itself as a hub of early Anabaptist research. Snyder studied church history, the Radical Reformation, and the life and thought of Michael Sattler. He has worked to connect 16th-century Anabaptist history with topics of theology, spirituality, and peace. A key contribution to the field is his book, *Anabaptist History and Theology: An Introduction*.

While a History professor at Grebel, **Leonard Friesen** (1988-1995) focused his research on Russian and Soviet history as well as the history of Russian Mennonites. He went on to teach at Wilfrid Laurier University where he is now Chair of the Global Studies program.

In addition to his role as Chaplain, **Ed Janzen** (1999-2021) introduced students across the UWaterloo campus to the unique aspects of Mennonite society, teaching the course, Mennonites as a Sociological Community, which included the most famous of midterm assignments: a potluck. Later, he co-taught Who are the Mennonites with other members of the Institute for Anabaptist-Mennonite Studies (IAMS).

With wide-ranging research and teaching interests, **Marlene Epp** (2000-2022) was Professor of History and Peace and Conflict Studies at Grebel. Her work spans topics of Mennonite studies, migrations and refugees, women and gender, the history of peace and nonviolence, and the history of food and culture. As one of the first scholars to use oral histories in studying Mennonite history, Epp's early work on women's oral history was considered methodologically groundbreaking.

History professor **Troy Osborne's** (2011-present) research and teaching interests centre generally on Mennonite history and the Reformation, and particularly on the development of the Dutch Anabaptist tradition. His research uses discipline records and political appeals to trace the development of Mennonite identity across Europe. His soon-to-be-released textbook called *Radicals and Reformers: A Survey of Global Anabaptist History* will inform the next generation of Mennonite history students.

**David Y. Neufeld** (2019-present) is a historian of religion, culture, and everyday life in early modern Europe. His research and writing examine post-Reformation dynamics of conflict and coexistence, processes of minority formation, and archival cultures and practices through investigation of the experience of Anabaptists. He teaches the history of premodern Europe and the world, the history of Christianity, colonial Latin American history, and historiographical methods.

Established in 1973 by Walter Klaassen, IAMS began with seminars and the sponsorship of oral history projects. GAMEO noted that "When Calvin Redekop became director in 1982, IAMS shifted more to large academic conferences and formal publication of collected papers from the conferences. [Librarian-Archivist] Sam Steiner became Director after Redekop's retirement in 1990, and the focus shifted to support of specialized publication projects related to Anabaptist-Mennonite themes. Marlene Epp became Director in 2006,"\* followed by Laureen Harder-Gissing in 2016, and David Y. Neufeld in 2022.

Mennonite History has never been taught or researched in a vacuum at Grebel. Grebel professors have consistently worked to situate Mennonite narratives within wider historical contexts, such as the history of settlement in Waterloo Region, Indigenous-settler relations, refugees and migrations, as well as Canadian history, church history, and food history.

A recent example of Grebel academics collaborating with others to reexamine Mennonite narratives took place at the 2022 Indigenous-Mennonite Encounters conference. The intent was to advance understanding on the part of Mennonites and other interested participants of their colonial histories, and to advance reconciliation and bring justice to Indigenous-settler relations.

Grebel faculty often engage with local, national, and global Mennonite communities, collaboratively working to expand Mennonite studies and history. Today, IAMS offers the Bechtel Lectures in Anabaptist-Mennonite Studies series to make the academic world of research and study accessible to a broader constituency and to build bridges of understanding between the academy and the church. Through the Grebel-to-Go program, faculty members at the College share in community and church settings and provide expertise on a variety of topics, including Mennonites and history.

Working with the newly-formed Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario, Winfield Fretz developed "a Mennonite archives at Grebel with a mandate to gather and collect documents and other historical material of Anabaptist and Mennonite value."\*\* The Mennonite Archives of Ontario at Grebel continues to collect, preserve, and provide access to archival materials that reflect the religious, cultural, and organizational life of Mennonite, Amish, and other related groups in Ontario. The archives provides unique, hands-on resources for the study of Mennonites in Waterloo classes, local communities, and around the world through digital outreach. The Archives also houses the Mennonite Historical Library which is the largest Canadian collection of Anabaptist and Mennonite published materials, dating from the 16th century to the present. Both of Grebel's Archivists, **Sam Steiner** and **Laureen Harder-Gissing**, have contributed to Mennonite scholarship as well. Among other works, Steiner wrote *In Search of Promised Lands: A Religious History of Mennonites in Ontario* and Harder-Gissing is currently co-writing a history of Mennonites in Canada since 1970.

Mennonite Studies students at Grebel are supported with awards like the Dyck Award for Russian Mennonite Studies, the Karin Packull Anabaptist Studies Award, and the Felstead Research Award. Likewise, thanks to generous donors, the J. Winfield Fretz Endowment for Mennonite Studies funds academic programs in this area.

Grebel professors have expanded the field of Mennonite studies with creative research, thorough study, and by connecting findings to a broader range of historical narratives. Grebel's programs, student support, and faculty composition are evidence of the College's commitment to advancing Mennonite Studies and History at the University of Waterloo and in the wider academic community.

\*Samuel J. Steiner (October, 2018). "Conrad Grebel University College," *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online* (GAMEO), with source material from Marlene Epp, *Bridging Mind and Spirit: Conrad Grebel University College, 1963-2013*.



*Alumnus Len Friesen enjoys visiting sites of historical significance, pictured here in Whitby, England*

# ALUMNI CAREERS ROOTED IN HISTORY

Over the past 60 years, thousands of Grebel alumni have taken individual Grebel courses in History and Mennonite Studies, while hundreds of Grebel alumni have received University of Waterloo Arts degrees with majors and minors in History, along with some who have pursued specializations and minors in Mennonite Studies. The following profiles highlight a few of these alumni—some who went into history professions and some who used history as a jumping point for their career. We asked alumni to reflect on these questions: Where has your background in History or Mennonite Studies taken you? How did your studies prepare you for your profession, hobby, research, or volunteer role? How has your education or profession enriched your life, taken your life in an unexpected direction, or led to an accomplishment you're proud of? How did Grebel inspire this path?

## LEN FRIESEN (BA 1980, MA 1981, PHD 1989)

Professor, Department of History, Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, ON

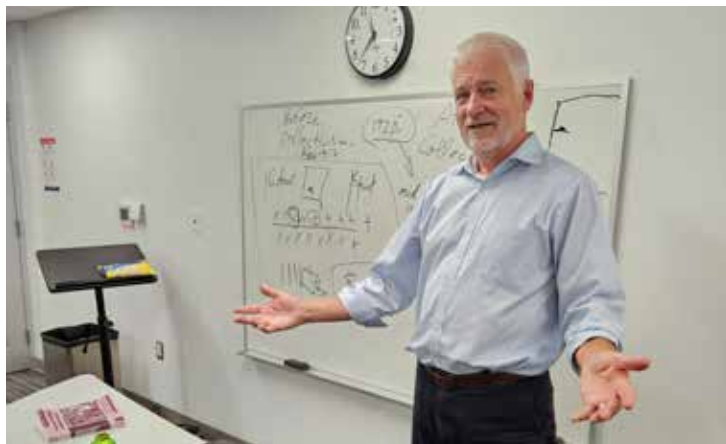
My studies took me to many places, though nothing more dramatic than the opportunity to live with Mary (Burkholder, also a Grebel alumnus, married in '77) and our young children in Gorbachev's Soviet Union (1987-88). Since then, I've returned to Russia and Ukraine some twenty or more times. I've been a faculty member in the Department of History at Wilfrid Laurier University since 1994, though I'm now heading for the finish line.

I only started to take History courses in my second year, but the subject, and my profs, immediately had me captivated. After my undergrad at Waterloo, I took a remarkable year off as Mary and I lived and worked within an Old Order Mennonite community. After that, it was on to graduate studies at the University of Toronto with stops in Helsinki, Finland, and the former USSR (Leningrad and Odessa especially). I was so fortunate to build a career teaching Imperial Russian and Soviet history, and the history of International Relations, at WLU.

It amazes me that I was able to research and write several books, each one a great pleasure and enormous challenge. I have been no less fortunate to spend decades engaged with students on topics that I always thought (and still do) mattered. For almost two decades

Mary and I jointly served as University Mentors for five small cohorts of students in what was Laurier's most elite scholarship. We travelled internationally with these students and often had them in our home. All of it has been immensely rewarding.

I still remember the excitement of my very first days in the fall of '75 as an undergrad at Waterloo, and Grebel was the perfect base to get that experience rolling. I made lifelong friends in residence (though Mary stands out!), but I treasure equally the mentorship from that first generation of Grebel faculty, all of whom were still there in the mid '70s. I have tried to bring that same inspiration to my own students and have often thanked God for the opportunity given.





## MARIANNE (HARDER) ENNS (BA 1967)

Retired Librarian, Waterloo, ON

I am a '60s student who arrived in September 1964, one of the 100+ Grebelites who were the first to live in the new Grebel residence on campus. When we moved in, some of the carpets and curtains had not yet been installed, the bedspreads that matched the newly hung curtains were still being sewn, and the smell of fresh paint was still in the air. I was in the three-year Bachelor of Arts program with a major in History. For me, History was a stepping stone to being accepted into the Bachelor of Library Science program at the University of Toronto in 1968.



After graduating in 1969, I began my thirty-year library career. Most of these years were spent as a reference and information services librarian at the Burlington Public Library. I have now been retired for almost twenty years, and I have been fortunate to travel and to enjoy my interests in reading, attending concerts and theatre, quilting, movies, and gardening.

The history I studied came alive when I toured the Vatican, St. Peter's Basilica, the Sistine Chapel in Rome, when I walked up the stairs of Buckingham Palace in London, or when I saw the opulence of Versailles near Paris France, the Winter Palace, Peterhof, and the Catherine Palace in St. Petersburg, Russia. It came alive on a dreary day when in 1984, I saw the barbed wire and concrete fence that separated East and West Germany, and when I visited Mennonite landmarks in Amsterdam and Friesland, the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, the underground war rooms of Churchill in London, the underground hospital in Jersey in the Channel Island, and the Monument of the Discoveries in Lisbon, Portugal, to mention a few.

History can be boring: facts, dates, wars, kings, dictators, presidents, leaders. But it is more than that. It is about story. The story of very ordinary people with ordinary lives impacted by historic events. Ordinary people like my maternal grandmother. In 2012, I discovered a few letters my widowed grandmother had written in the spring of 1926 from the Mennonite Colony of Molotschna to her brother who was already in Canada. As I read and translated these letters, I had a dream that I would tell my grandmother's immigration story, a story set against the background of historic events. It became a cooperative endeavor with other family members, and in 2022, *Lieber Bruder Hans; the Immigration story of Maria Fransen and her family* was published.

A few of my memorable Grebel moments include Sunday evening Chapel services with Dr. Walter Klaassen delivering sermons that challenged us to ask questions, first-year courses in Old and New Testament where we looked at old stories in new ways, and weekly suppers where we had to dress up. I also remember the first day of my first year, moving into residence, meeting other students, and making friends—some who have become lifelong friends for over 59 years. Our long friendship is rekindled every year when we meet for our annual spring lunch together.

## REBECCA JANZEN (BA 2007, MA 2009, PHD 2013)

McCausland Professor of Spanish and Comparative Literature, University of South Carolina, Columbia SC

My preparation in Mennonite history at Grebel has led me to a career in that area, although in a circuitous way. I am a McCausland Professor of Spanish and comparative literature at the University of South Carolina in Columbia, and one of my research interests is Mennonites in Mexico. My studies at Grebel absolutely prepared me for this. I have an MA and PhD from the University of Toronto, in Spanish with a focus on Latin American Literature, and while there I took two classes at the Toronto School of Theology (but they had nothing to do with Mennonites). I then was employed at Bluffton University, a Mennonite institution in Ohio, from 2013-2017, where I combined my preparation and training in Latin American literature and culture with my previous interest and study in Mennonite history.

The preparation I had in general Mennonite history, together with connections I made at Grebel, gave me background knowledge and were really helpful for starting my research projects. I remember in my Mennonite history class with Marlene Epp, we visited sites like an Old Order Mennonite school and Brubacher House Museum. This let me think creatively about how to do research, and how to put Low German speaking Mennonites in Mexico, who are mostly Old Colony, in a larger context, in terms of similarities to and differences from Old Order Mennonites and Amish. This area of research let me take my dissertation/grad school/first book areas of expertise in Mexican history, familiarity with Mexican archives, libraries, and academic systems, to a new and really exciting project! It culminated with research (thanks to the Plett Foundation) in the summers of 2015 and 2016, a semester fellowship at Elizabethtown College in Pennsylvania in spring 2018, and the publication of my book on Mennonites (and Mormons) in Mexico in the fall of 2018.



## GORDON DURNIN (BA 1985, 1987)

Journalist, Various Locations

My history background has played a critical role in my work as a journalist. In fact, it was in part due to studying the role journalists played in finally informing the world about the true nature of the war in Vietnam that led me to seriously want to work in the field. Later, already reporting on aspects of the conflicts in Central America for the student newspaper *Imprint*, I took what would prove to be a decisive course in Latin American history from Arnold Snyder who had recently returned from Nicaragua. That, more than anything, sent me straight to Costa Rica upon graduation where, within four months, I began working as a sound recordist and assistant on a TV crew that did field work for US, Canadian, and European networks, covering the entire region and parts of South America.



Without a sense of the history, from pre-Columbian to conquest and colonization to the modern revolutionary and post-revolutionary “globalized” eras, it is impossible to interpret current events in Latin America. History is, of course, the study of context, and without context it is impossible to truly comprehend the human drama of the present. The core of my understanding of Latin American history and the history and dynamics of “Cold War” revolutionary movements was formed at the University of Waterloo and Grebel.

Had I not been exposed to the history, politics, philosophy, and theology of non-violence at Grebel, something that remains central to my principles and motivation, I don’t think I would have had the extraordinarily rich life of travel, cultural encounters, and the opportunity to witness first-hand a great many historical events that I have had. I do feel I have sometimes helped bring nuance and insight to stories and given voice to the often-voiceless over the years. But the essence of what I do is record, organize, and broadcast images and sound. These things, more than words, inform the world’s understanding of the present. It’s difficult to single out any one accomplishment about which I am proud, but among my Top Ten moments would be the images, shot from the nosebleed sections of a mile high stadium in Denver, of Barack Obama accepting the Democratic nomination for President in 2008, breaking the story of the Islamic State’s horrible enslavement of Yazidi women for sex in northern Iraq and, just now, in August, covering a most extraordinary national referendum in Ecuador that voted to keep oil in the ground and withdraw all the infrastructure that was built to extract it in the country’s Amazon region. Stay tuned—a documentary, now nine years in the making, is on its way to the edit room!

Thanks to the multi-disciplinary approach of the PACS program, the extraordinary people there and in the Peace Society, and the powerful, radical idea/hope of non-violence that was everywhere in the air at Grebel—despite my, shall we say, less-than-enthusiastic approach to academia—I did somehow manage to fulfill my study requirements, earn a degree, and come away with a few valuable things that most definitely inspired, influenced, and characterized my work.

## HENRY PAETKAU (BA 1976, MA 1977, PHD)

Happily Retired! Waterloo, ON

My curiosity about Anabaptist and Mennonite history, awakened at Bible College, was further nurtured at Grebel. Several history courses and a summer job in 1976 interviewing Mennonite

immigrants to Ontario from the Soviet Union in the 1920s, popularly referred to as Russlaender, under the direction of Walter Klaassen, served as inspiration for my further studies. Graduate studies in Canadian immigration history under the supervision of Frank Epp culminated in my thesis that focused specifically on the resettlement of the Russlaender in Ontario from 1924-1945.

My hopes that these studies would eventually lead to an academic career were soon set aside, however, given the reality that there were few teaching positions available in the field at that time. However, opportunities for pastoral ministry serving that same Mennonite community were more readily available. Rod Sawatsky introduced me to a small, rural congregation in Essex County that was looking for a part-time minister. This role was a good fit, allowing me to complete my dissertation while serving this congregation. That was the beginning of over 20 years of ministry in Harrow, Windsor and then in St. Catharines, ON.



Grebel professors were not only teachers but also mentors, encouraging my studies and connecting me with Mennonite academic institutions and church leaders across Canada. Those connections and relationships

grew into and through involvement in conference committees and boards, leading eventually to leadership roles in the denomination (Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church Eastern Canada) and at Conrad Grebel as President.

Rather surprisingly, 45 years after completing those oral history interviews, they opened a unique opportunity to be involved in planning and leading in the commemoration of the centenary of the arrival of the first group of Russlaender in Canada in 1923. This three-week train and bus tour from Quebec City to Abbotsford, BC in July 2023 was a most unexpected and rewarding culmination of my interest in and engagement with Mennonite studies nurtured at Grebel many years earlier.

## BARB DRAPER (BA 1977, MTS 1997)

Editorial assistant, Canadian Mennonite magazine,  
Editor, Ontario Mennonite History, Elmira, ON

My passion for Mennonite history, and for the church, first took root during a course at Conrad Grebel College. In 1974-75, a Mennonite history course with Frank Epp began my journey of researching church history. I remember touring the Mennonite Archives of Ontario which was then located underneath the Grebel Chapel. Twenty years later, while studying Theology at Grebel, more research into the Mennonites of Waterloo Region in the 19th



century led to the publication of my book, *The Mennonites of St. Jacobs and Elmira: Understanding the Variety*, published by Pandora Press in 2010.

After graduating from teachers' college in 1978, my studies at Grebel gave me the background to teach Mennonite history at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate. Knowledge of Mennonite history has been invaluable in subsequent years for understanding something about other Mennonite groups. During my years at *Canadian Mennonite* magazine, the staff looked to me to make sure stories involving Mennonite history were accurate.

One of my earliest experiences with Grebel was a Sociology course taught by Winfield Fretz where he encouraged us to research our family trees. Tracing my roots from Waterloo Region to Pennsylvania to the Palatinate to Switzerland has been a long and fascinating journey. When my father's physical health was failing, we worked together to publish two family genealogies.



Perhaps the richest reward of my studies was the day I received a call from a bishop in the local Old Order Mennonite Church who asked for permission to make copies of my 1997 research paper which explores the reasons for the Old

Order split in late 19th century. It warmed my heart to think that their church leadership valued my perspective.

All my work in Mennonite history can be traced back to Grebel.

*Photo: Sam Steiner and Barb Draper discuss Mennonite history at a book launch on Oct. 23, 2010. Canadian Mennonite photo.*

## MARTA (LONGACRE) VAN ZANTEN (BA 1990, MED 1995, PHD 2012)

Senior Associate, Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research (FAIMER), A Member of Intealth, Philadelphia, PA

I graduated with an Honours BA in History in 1990 but I have never worked in this field. Following graduation, I moved to the Netherlands



and did a variety of odd jobs for three years before returning back to the US. After a few years of teaching English as a Second Language, I took a position with Intealth, an organization located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania that certifies physicians who obtained their medical degree outside of the US and want to do post graduate medical training in the US. I've worked at Intealth for the past 26 years in a variety of roles, and I'm currently a Senior Associate. I conduct research on medical education quality assurance processes for 180+ countries around the world.

My studies in history prepared me to continue my education. I've completed a Master's in Education and a PhD in Public Health. My education in history provided me with a strong foundation for taking a meandering continuing education and career path! At my time at Grebel, I never envisioned a career in medical education policy or that I would go on to obtain a doctorate degree. I've had the opportunity to travel all over the world to learn about physician education and health workforce issues. Grebel inspired me to think globally and cultivate curiosity.

## DAVID A. MARTIN (BA 2003, MA 2004)

Math Teacher, Waterloo, ON

I came to Grebel and the University of Waterloo to study Mechanical Engineering, but I was miserable in the program. Finally, in my 2A term, I was able to take my first elective—Marlene Epp's Mennonite History class. This course was deeply influential. At that time in my life, I was uncomfortable with my identity as a Christian. But through that course, I became interested in my Swiss Mennonite ethnic roots, even though I had never set foot in a Mennonite Church.



I soon switched programs into History. For the first time, I was interested in what I was learning and excited to go to class. I believe I took every Grebel History course on offer at the time. Werner Packull's 20th-Century German History is one that really stands out. I'll never forget his lecture on East Prussia, where he recounted his experience as a young refugee.

My BA and MA in History didn't lead directly into my career. There were a few twists and turns before I came into my eventual job as a high school mathematics teacher. But Grebel certainly helped me discover myself and led me into the Mennonite Church. All these years later, I still haven't figured out who I am or what I believe, but Grebel gave me the space to wrestle with the big questions in a safe space. I am forever grateful for this.



## DEBORAH NEILL (BA 1995, MA 1996, PHD 2005)

Associate Professor, Department of History, York University, Toronto, ON

I was introduced to Mennonite history while I was living at Conrad Grebel College and completing my undergraduate degree at the University of Waterloo. I went on to do an MA in History at the University of Toronto in the fields of Mennonite and Eastern European/Russian History. My MA project looked at the relationship of the Mennonite leader Johann Cornies to the Imperial Russian Government and the development of the major Mennonite agricultural settlements in Ukraine in the 19th century. For my PhD work, I moved away from Mennonite history and into the fields of German and French colonial medical history. My current work explores imperial expansion and colonial capitalism in western Africa in the late 19th century.

While many academic mentors have inspired my path, there were two professors at Grebel whose influence was particularly important for my decision to pursue a career as a professional historian: Professors Werner Packull and Len Friesen. Their mentorship, guidance, academic expertise, and enthusiasm for their students not only helped me gain the foundations for researching and writing history, but gave me a model of how to be a kind mentor to students. Further, the tools I learned from Mennonite studies, including approaches that explore inter-imperial interactions, transnational history, and “history from below,” have greatly informed my research.

Studying Mennonite history has an influence on how I teach history to undergraduates. Mennonite studies gave me a fresh perspective for understanding the history of Canada, and it introduced me to many other fields including European migration, colonial studies, and peace and conflict studies. I am proud that I still use the rich and complicated history of the Mennonites in Russia as a means to tell bigger stories to my students: of settlement, survival, the World Wars, European, and North American history.

Living at Grebel introduced me to student-centred professors who provided new research perspectives and methods. In one course, taught by Professor Friesen, we had the opportunity to conduct oral interviews with Mennonites from the surrounding community and document their stories of survival, emigration, and settlement in Canada. This was history that was very real, raw, and important, and I am grateful for that project and to Grebel for approaches that integrate academic research with

connections to the larger community. I am also grateful for the unique holdings in the Grebel library and archives. On a personal level, I met my husband, Andrew Dueck (BSC 1995) at Grebel and we’ve been married for 25 years.



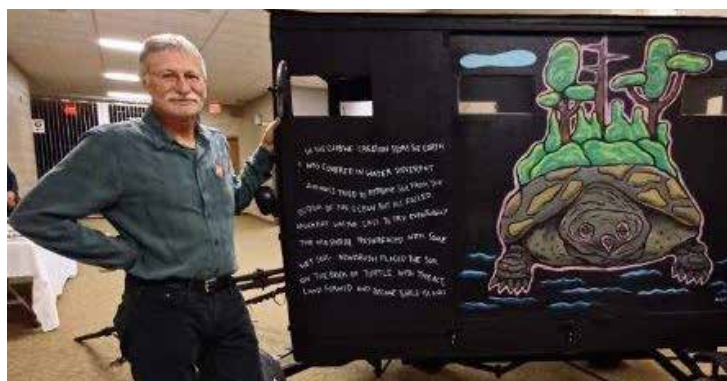
## EDMUND PRIES (BTH, BA, MDIV, MA 1988, PHD 1995)

Associate Professor, Wilfrid Laurier University, Kitchener, ON

History and Mennonite Studies have broad applicability, including in the fields of Peace and Conflict Studies, Religious and Church History, History of Law (at least in my sub-field on Oath-Swearing), Disarmament Treaties, International Humanitarian Law, Global Justice, and several other fields. I have taught all of these—and more. I am an Associate Professor at Wilfrid Laurier University in the Department of Global Studies with a cross-appointment to the Department of Religion and Culture. I also coordinate the MA program in Religion, Culture and Global Justice and the Laurier side of the Joint PhD program (with the University of Waterloo) in Religious Diversity in North America. So, broadly defined, I am working in my field. After a hiatus from the university, I returned to teaching part-time in 2006 but have been employed full-time in a professorial role at Laurier since 2012.

In addition to my research and scholarship in Anabaptist history, I focused my career on classroom teaching and innovative experiential learning pedagogy. My work was well-received and, as a result, I was the recipient of four teaching awards and, most recently (September 2023), the Howard Zinn Lifetime Achievement Award.

I came to Grebel as a grad student, but I was never formally enrolled at Grebel. Dr. Walter Klaassen flew to Saskatoon, where I was working as a pastor, to invite me to come and do graduate studies at Grebel/University of Waterloo. After one year, he retired, and I completed both an MA and PhD in Anabaptist-Mennonite History with Dr. Werner O. Packull as my supervisor. These scholars, both based at Grebel, were a gift to me. At the time of my studies, Grebel did not have grad programs, but Grebel was an academic and social home for me. I had a study carrel, keys to all buildings, including the library, and I was always welcome to hang out in the Faculty Lounge with the Faculty.



## DAVID G. NEUFELD (BA 1982)

Retired, Museum Programmer, Waterloo Region Museum,  
Volunteer on various Historical committees, New Hamburg, ON

I was very fortunate in that I was able to have a career in history, which was my field of study. I worked as a museum professional for over 30 years, doing public programming and designing education programs for exhibits. I worked five years with Parks Canada and then 30 years at the Waterloo Region Museum.

It was very much an extension of an interest I had in history, that I pursued in my education, and then continued to pursue in my work and volunteer life. I am currently retired but I continue to be involved on a volunteer basis on boards and committees related to history, like the Mennonite Historical Society. Taking Mennonite History and History of Christianity courses at Grebel added to my overall understanding of history.

I had always assumed that I would teach history at the high school level, but there were very few teaching positions available back in the 1980s. I just seemed to keep getting drawn into the museum world and it seemed that I was well-suited to the museum profession. That was a surprise that I did not expect. While at the Waterloo Region Museum (formerly Doon Pioneer Village), I worked with a fantastic group of colleagues. During our time there, we transformed a fairly tired old museum into an award-winning institution with cutting edge programs and exhibits. I am quite proud of that.

*Photo: from the Amish Bicentennial Celebrations in 2022. David gave a presentation together with Rebecca Seiling on the Indigenous History of Wilmot Township entitled "What stories have we not been telling?"*

In the face of conflict,  
be an agent of change.



## MASTER OF PEACE AND CONFLICT STUDIES

The Master of Peace and Conflict Studies at Grebel is a vibrant, interdisciplinary academic program that empowers students with knowledge and skills to contribute to nonviolent peacebuilding.

[uwaterloo.ca/mpacs](http://uwaterloo.ca/mpacs)

## WHERE FOLK MUSIC AND MENNONITE HERITAGE MEET

BY LAURA ENNS, BRUBACHER HOUSE HOST

From martyr ballads and shape-note singing to contemporary folk hymns, operas, musicals, and festivals like Menfolk, folk music and Mennonites just seem to go together. A GAMEO article on "Folk Music" suggests that, historically, "In contrast to the art music of the established church, this music of the common people was accessible to all and thus symbolic of the Anabaptist emphasis on the priesthood of all believers."

Brubacher House had carried this tradition forward with a new house concert series in partnership with Winnipeg-based non-profit called Home Routes / Chemin Chez Nous.

Brubacher House, a restored 1850s Pennsylvania German Mennonite farmhouse at the University of Waterloo, has grown into an arts, culture, and heritage hub on North Campus, engaging the University and the wider community in educational museum tours and creative cultural programming. This concert series, supported by the Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario, is a natural extension of its seasonal Artist-in-Residence program, started in 2017, which inspires learning and conversation about the past, and promotes dialogue and respect among people with diverse stories and cultures through artistic creation.

Upcoming concerts include Peterborough singer-songwriter Taylor Abrahamse (January), blues guitar virtuoso Watermelon Slim (March), social justice songwriter Crys Matthews (April), and Vancouver folk and blues duo Beau Wheeler and Jesse Waldman (May).

The vitality and resilience of Mennonite culture depends not just on preserving collections of objects, but also on enlivening our intangible heritage—sharing traditions across time and space, creating a sense of identity, continuity, and belonging. Home Routes will bring people and communities together in a celebration of living heritage at Brubacher House.





# Reconciliation in the Archives: What was lost, what remains, what is possible

BY LAUREEN HARDER-GISSING, ARCHIVIST-LIBRARIAN

Poet Jean Janzen offers a definition of “everything” as “what was lost, what remains, what is possible.” As an archivist I find this a useful definition. I once answered a phone call from an older British man with a common “Mennonite name.” He began quizzing me about local Mennonite genealogy. When I told him how common his name was in southwestern Ontario, he exclaimed incredulously, his voice crackling over the long-distance line, “but I thought I was the only one!” Here was a man, after decades of loss, reaching out for what remains and discovering new possibilities for understanding his personal past.

Nowhere in archives are the three companions of loss, remainder, and possibility more present than when communities seek to understand historical

wrongs. Following the Truth and Reconciliation calls to action, archives in Canada are being urged to communicate to Indigenous communities what has been collected by and about them. In response, I have created a guide to Indigenous-related content in the Mennonite Archives of Ontario.

This guide has assisted Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers in uncovering stories of the past. But it is not just the role of archives to dispense knowledge, but to learn. For example, our archives preserves photographs of the Clearwater Lake Sanatorium in The Pas, Manitoba in the 1950s. We have these images because voluntary service workers were posted there. Until I received an inquiry from researchers with the Manitoba Indigenous Tuberculosis History Project, I was unaware that Clearwater Lake had been one of several “Indian hospitals,” a racially segregated hospital system. As I have learned, the 26 Clearwater photos in our collection can play a small but vital role in understanding lived experiences in these institutions.

Mennonite volunteers went to Clearwater Lake and other places to serve and live out our peacemaking principles. What do we make, now, of these good intentions? In engaging with what remains and encountering what has been lost, what

possibilities might emerge for Mennonite and Indigenous understandings of this past?

Another example is closer to Grebel’s own history. In 1976, a “symposium on Native Peoples” took place on the Waterloo campus, with several Grebel students as organizers. The Archives holds a photo from that event of an Indigenous speaker, whom I was recently able to identify as prominent Cree leader Harold Cardinal. I also learned that his audience that day, visible in the photo, included Dene, Haudenosaunee, and other Indigenous participants who had travelled some distance to hear Cardinal speak.

What might it mean to add such detail to this photo’s description? Will it elicit memories of those who were there that day? Will it raise awareness for current students of a longer history of Indigenous presence on this campus? These are emerging connections that truth and reconciliation work in archives can make possible.

“Solo” by Jean Janzen is published in *Three Mennonite Poets*. A link to the Research Guide to Indigenous Content in the Mennonite Archives of Ontario is on the archives website: [grebel.ca/mao](http://grebel.ca/mao). All photographs mentioned here are searchable in the Mennonite Archival Information Database: [archives.mhsc.ca](http://archives.mhsc.ca)



## ENDOWMENTS STRENGTHEN ARCHIVES

There are two program endowments that provide ongoing budgetary support for the Mennonite Archives of Ontario.

The Bowman Archives Endowment, which funds Archives operations, is at 45 percent of its \$500,000 goal. Last year the Robert J. Tiessen Archival Community Education Endowment Fund was established by Bob’s wife Anita Tiessen (BA 1981). Earnings from this endowment will support the archivist’s efforts at community presentations and digitization projects related to Mennonite history.

## THE CONRAD GREBEL REVIEW

The Conrad Grebel Review is a multi-disciplinary peer-reviewed journal of Christian inquiry devoted to advancing thoughtful, sustained discussions of theology, ethics, peace, society, history, and culture from broadly-based Anabaptist/Mennonite perspectives. The most recent issue was just released and focuses on “Hope, Despair, Lament.”

[uwaterloo.ca/grebel/cgr](http://uwaterloo.ca/grebel/cgr)





Each day on the way to and from class, students cross the bridge that connects the University of Waterloo with the Affiliated and Federated Institutions of Waterloo.

# CONRAD GREBEL UNIVERSITY COLLEGE 2022-23 ANNUAL REPORT

## BRIDGES UNDER CONSTRUCTION

*"Always it is by bridges that we live." –Philip Larkin*

The physical bridges that connect Grebel to the main campus of the University of Waterloo have long been considered a symbol of the College's aspiration to connect—a vision that was part of Grebel from the beginning.

Our first president, Winfield Fretz, rejected the idea of "a separate school, a non-socializing, non-interacting school, an isolated academic community...." Although Grebel was founded and operated by Mennonites, Fretz and the other founders imagined a college that would:

"not...admit only Christians, but...people who were interested in learning something about Christianity, about religion, about the whole nature and meaning of faith in the context of studying to be engineers, mathematicians, scientists, philosophers, or historians."

One of the joys of 2022-23 was the return to pre-pandemic norms of classroom teaching and social connection. Every day, dozens of Grebel residents crossed the bridge for classes on main campus, and hundreds of Waterloo students came the other direction to attend classes at Grebel.

Bridges symbolize our interest in relationships with the university and the community at large—relationships characterized by mutual respect, mutual curiosity, and mutual benefit. In her written history of Grebel, Professor Emeritus Marlene Epp commented that these bridges are "continuously under construction or repair," because they are essential to the "vitality and creativity" of the College.

A key project at Grebel this past year was to begin metaphorical bridge maintenance with two important partners—Mennonite Church Eastern Canada (MCEC) and the University of Waterloo. Close engagement with MCEC, which elects the majority of Grebel's Board of Governors, resulted in a new Memo of Understanding that expressed the partners' mutual appreciation and a shared vision for their relationship going forward.

Meanwhile, Grebel—along with the whole university community—began a conversation about a long-term vision for the University of Waterloo when it turns 100 years old in 2057. We're encouraged that the promotion of peace and social harmony has emerged as a strong theme in these discussions because they are long-standing Grebel priorities.

Grebel thrives because of its bridges—its formal and informal connection to organizations, communities, and individuals, including stakeholders like you. We hope this report will provide evidence of the many bridges, connections, and ties that bind Grebel and its people to the many communities we serve.



Grebel and Mennonite Church Eastern Canada renewed a key partnership agreement, detailing the principles and values that guide this relationship. Marcus Shantz and Ann L. Schultz pictured above.



University of Waterloo President Vivek Goel spoke at a Community Supper and shared a vision for "Waterloo at 100." Grebel students wore their school spirit!

Marcus Shantz  
President

Andrew Roth  
Chair, Board of Governors

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

With a full return to in-person classes, Grebel professors were pleased to connect with students face-to-face in 2022-23. The College taught four new courses, and many parts of the academic program continued conversations on ways to implement inclusive teaching practices and decolonize curriculum. Eric Lepp joined the faculty as Assistant Professor of Peace and Conflict Studies (PACS).

In May 2022, the College hosted “Indigenous-Mennonite Encounters,” a combined academic and community education event that brought together Indigenous and Mennonite presenters and participants for a meaningful and memorable weekend. Jane Kuepfer, Schlegel Specialist in Spirituality and Aging, hosted an international virtual conference in June 2022, in partnership with the Research Institute for Aging and Schlegel Villages. The College hosted three well-attended public lectures, including the annual Benjamin Eby Lecture presented by Kate Kennedy Steiner, exploring her research on the role of liturgical music in shaping Scottish identity in the 13th century.

The PACS program proposed a new specialization and diploma in Restorative Justice, which has subsequently been approved by the University of Waterloo. This new offering will launch in 2024. The sound of live music returned to Grebel in 2022. The Music Department held 22 in-person concerts during the year. To meet increased demand from Co-op students, the Department began offering more courses during the spring term.

Theological Studies partnered with Canadian Mennonite University to share enrollment in two online courses. Beyond the classroom, MTS students participated in Supervised Experiences in Ministry, research seminars, and community-building events. Following extensive consultations, the College decided to wind up the Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre in order to focus resources on programs offered on the Waterloo campus. As the pandemic subsided, the Milton Good Library bustled with students and researchers.

## UNDERGRADUATE TEACHING

Grebel’s undergraduate courses saw more than 4000 enrolments from 3273 individual students from all faculties at UWaterloo. 44 percent of undergraduate students came from Math or Engineering.

## GRADUATE STUDIES

In 2022-23, Peace and Conflict Studies and Theological Studies welcomed 17 and 10 new master’s students, respectively. The total cohort of graduate students was lower than in the past five years, with 30 students enrolled in MTS and 46 in MPACS. The MPACS program celebrated its 10th year anniversary with a moving celebration at which alumnus Issa Ebombolo was presented with Grebel’s Distinguished Alumni Award.

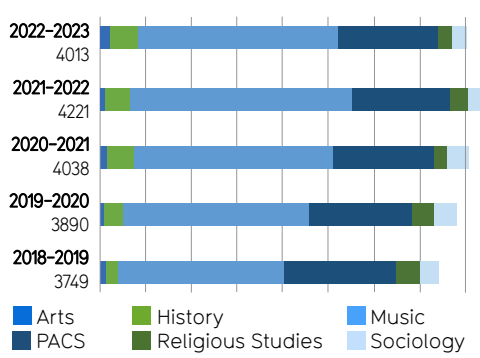
## CONFLICT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATE

Participant demands shifted unpredictably between in-person and virtual workshops for this continuing education program. 38 participants graduated with a full certificate, the program ran a surplus of \$25,000, and participant evaluations were strong.

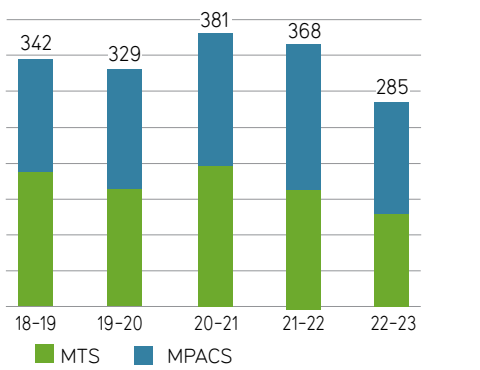
## KINDRED CREDIT UNION CENTRE FOR PEACE ADVANCEMENT (CPA)

CPA participants included 31 new individuals and 45 continuing peace practitioners, entrepreneurs, and researchers. Four organizations continued to affiliate with the CPA, three new start-ups joined the Grebel Peace Incubator as one moved on, and 18 students connected with the CPA for practical learning opportunities. \$100,597 in external funding was leveraged for participants. The Grebel Gallery hosted three exhibits and the CPA led the PeaceTech Living-Learning Community, the Map the System Challenge, MEDA students, and the Peace Innovators program, plus a variety of community engagement events.

## UNDERGRADUATE COURSE ENROLMENTS



## GRADUATE COURSE ENROLMENTS



In 2023, four students competed in the C. Henry Smith Oratorical Contest: (l-r) Zoe Bielby, Faraja Sadi, Rachel Tagliabracchi, and Stefan Dass.

## SCHOLARSHIP, SERVICE, AND OUTREACH

Numerous virtual public lectures, concerts, panels, book launches, faculty forums, and conferences showcased the variety of scholarly expertise of Grebel faculty this year. Faculty activity highlights can be found in each issue of *Grebel Now* under Sampling of Scholarship, and include published books, chapters, articles, musical pieces, as well as workshops and presentations.



# RESIDENCE AND ASSOCIATE STUDENTS

2022-23 brought a significant transition in Student Services, as Mary Brubaker-Zehr retired as Director following 26 years of service in the role. The department is now led by Jessica Reesor Rempel, an ordained Mennonite minister and a Grebel alumna.

As the pandemic waned, normal in-person activities returned, including open houses, Orientation Week, the All-Grebel Retreat, Taste of Grebel, big banquets, and talent shows. Although the College's three Living-Learning programs struggled with consistent attendance, many other activities, clubs, and sports were organized by Student Council and were well-attended by students. The biannual student musical returned with an impressive production of "Something Rotten."

Throughout the year, 88 residents and associates were involved in formal leadership roles. These student leaders are essential for teaching traditions, mentoring students in academics, and for building the overall Grebel culture. During the Opening Celebration, students, faculty, and staff prepared school supply bags for Mennonite Central Committee as the Act of Community. Community Suppers continued to be a weekly highlight, bringing a wide variety of speakers in from the UWaterloo and local communities, as well as from Grebel's alumni network.

Our Chapel program involved many students and staff in informal conversations about faith and scripture during Chapel, worked to bring students together across theological divides through Bible study, and planned a forum on Queerness and Christianity together with the MTS department. The year also had some exceptionally tough moments. Reflecting a trend in universities across Canada, Grebel students required a higher level of mental health supports than in pre-pandemic years.

Grebel was home to 292 residents and associates, as occupancy levels returned to pre-pandemic norms. 26 percent of Grebel students identified as Mennonite and 82 percent as Christian. International student numbers continued to climb, with 16 students coming from outside North America, including a refugee sponsored by Grebel students.



A peak experience for many Grebelites was the production of "Something Rotten!"—an all-student run musical that involved almost 100 students as actors, backstage technicians, choreographers, directors, and musicians in the live orchestra.



Students look forward to Community Supper each week as a time to connect with each other and think about issues affecting the broader world.

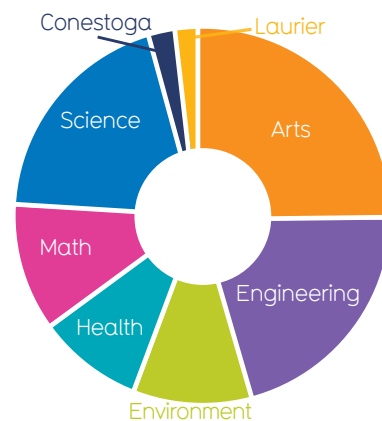


## REGIONS

### LOCATIONS STUDENTS

British Columbia	7
Alberta	6
Saskatchewan	5
Manitoba	3
Ontario	248
Quebec	2
USA	5
International	16

## AREAS OF STUDY



Chapel Committee members are essential in planning and leading Chapel services (l-r): Jordan Li, Asa Suderman-Gladwell, Jessica Reesor Rempel, Savannah Edwards, Tim Khoo.





PHYSICAL PLANT

The final elements of the kitchen and dining room project were completed on budget in 2022-23, the dining room fireplace lounge was installed, and the residence and atrium roofs were replaced. For a finishing touch, with the support of Grebel administration and the UWaterloo Student Life Endowment Fund, Student Council acquired new patio furniture and bike racks.

Looking ahead, plans for the installation of a new HVAC system for the academic wing were solicited and confirmed. And based on the University of Waterloo's goals, Grebel's Green Team recommended an absolute carbon emissions reduction target of 35% by 2030.



The College used \$340k of reserve funds to replace the leaking residence roof. Grebel also completed an inventory of upcoming maintenance, repair, and replacement projects, requiring an investment of \$5.2M by 2033.

FINANCE

Revenues improved in 2022-23 by almost \$1,000,000, compared to the prior year, as more students filled the Grebel residence and external rental groups returned to campus. In addition, the endowment portfolio had a profitable year and contributed above-normal income to programs and scholarships. Donations, including \$146,000 from Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, represented around 9% of revenues.

Grebel's two largest sources of income are government-regulated undergraduate tuition and an operating grant from the provincial government. Tuition remained frozen at 2018 levels, and the grant has not increased for many years. Financial sustainability has become a major challenge for universities and colleges across the province, and Grebel is no exception. The College will experience significant financial challenges in coming years unless provincial policies are adjusted to increase funding.

Strong endowment earnings combined with generous support from annual donors enabled the College to increase financial assistance to students in 2022-23. \$528,000 in scholarships and bursaries was awarded to 209 students, compared to \$496,000 in the prior year. The cost of living for students continues to rise, and this financial support makes a post-secondary education more affordable.

209

\$528,000

\$264,441

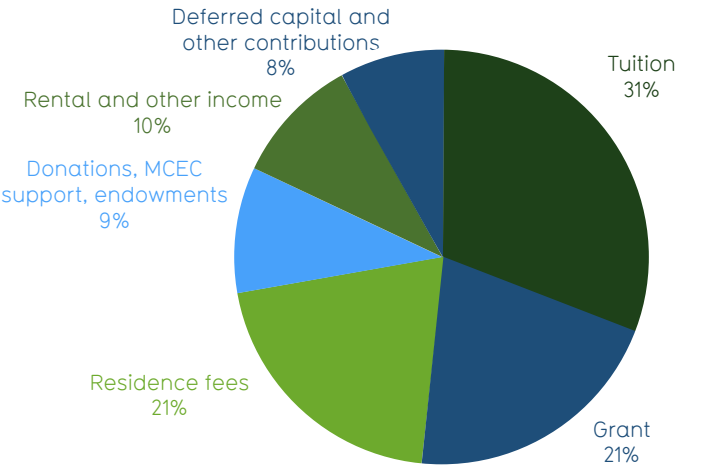
\$263,665

Grebel students received a total of in awards and bursaries in 2022-23.

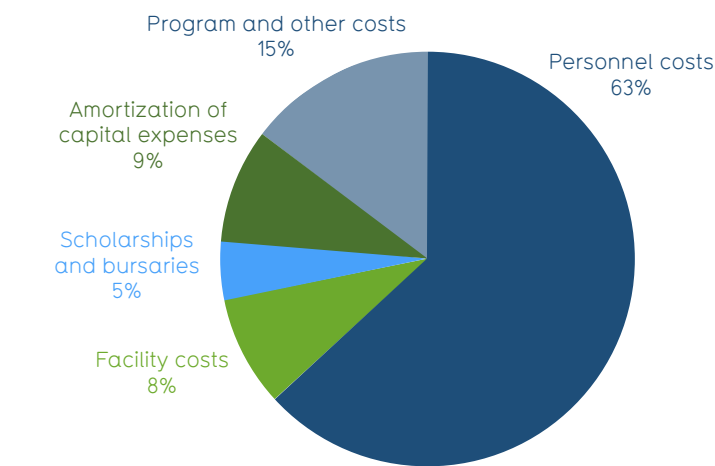
(50%) was allocated from operations and Grebel Fund.

(50%) came from annual donor gifts and endowment earnings.

2022-23 TOTAL REVENUE



2022-23 TOTAL EXPENSES



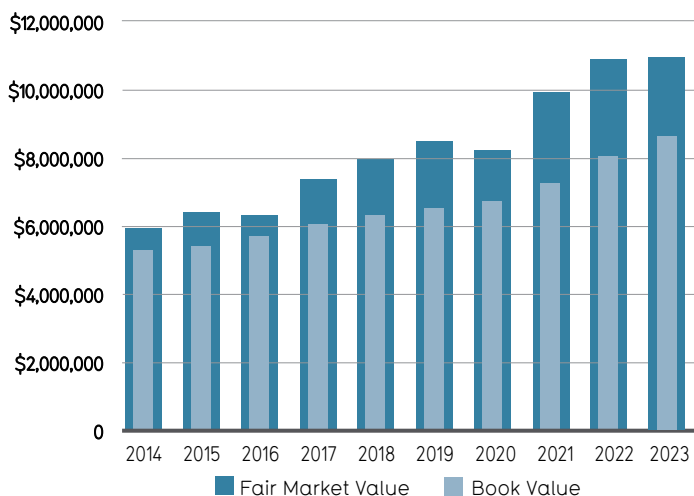
# ADVANCEMENT

The major functions of Advancement, including fundraising, alumni relations, church relations, and communications, are outward facing. Building these relationships requires reaching beyond Grebel's walls to strengthen connections, provide resources, and share news and stories with a broader constituency. Once again in 2022-23, Grebel's loyal extended community showed steadfast support for the College's programs. With Grebel Fund donations coming in at \$378,773 (94.6% of the annual goal), overall donations reached a total of \$2,102,425, surpassing the \$2 million per year goal set in the current strategic plan.

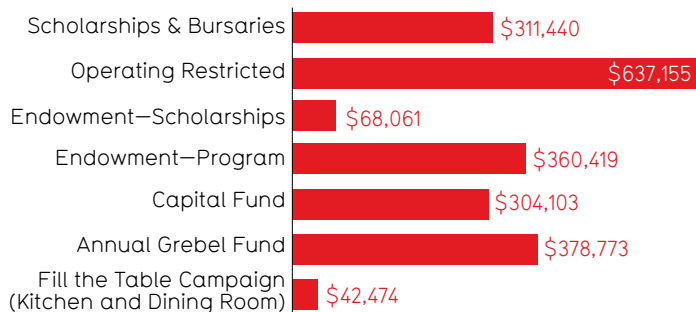
With environmental and financial sustainability in mind, Grebel's fundraising efforts are pivoting to anticipate future challenges. Initial consultations with donor stakeholders this year helped form plans for future capital upgrades that will replace aging infrastructure and greatly reduce the College's greenhouse gas emissions. We have also pursued support for endowments to support programs that are vital to Grebel's mission but do not attract much government or university funding—such as the Mennonite Archives of Ontario.

Prudent management and generous donations have doubled the size of the College's endowment in the past ten years, strengthening the long-term stability of niche programs. Several notable donations added to a total of \$428,480 in 2022-23, including the establishment of the Robert J. Tiessen Archival Community Education Endowment Fund, and additions to the Grebel Gallery Endowment and the Fretz Fund. The new Lichti Vocal Scholarship was established and scholarship and bursary contributions drastically increased, showing significant support for students, totaling \$311,440 in donations.

## ENDOWMENTS: GROWTH OVER 10 YEARS



## DONATIONS RECEIVED: \$2,102,425



Grebel alumni are loyal to the College, comprising 46.67% of donors. Thanks to the strong support from 608 donors, Grebel has been able maintain core programs despite the ongoing funding freeze by the Ontario government. Your generosity is essential and invaluable. Thank you!



Capital Fund giving, which includes green initiatives, increased significantly, driven by the Redekop family support for an HVAC upgrade and a successful Giving Tuesday campaign to purchase four new electric vehicle charging stations.

Established by Anita Tiessen, the Robert J. Tiessen Archival Community Education Endowment Fund will reliably contribute more than \$10,000 each year to help run the Archives, a vital part of Grebel's service to the Mennonite community.



The Operating Restricted Fund received considerable support for the Peace Incubator Fund and renewed support for the Barry Bauman Mentorship Fund in the CPA. Annual support from Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, Schlegel-UW Research Institute for Aging, and the Kindred Credit Union are critical in funding Grebel's unique programs.



Jane Kuepfer, Schlegel Specialist in Spirituality and Aging, planned an international conference on Aging and Spirituality for June 2023.



# THANK YOU TO GREBEL'S GENEROUS DONORS

608 DONORS SUPPORTED OUR STUDENTS AND MISSION THIS YEAR!

Abundance Canada  
**Carolyn and Andrew Alberti**  
 Angelica and Blair Allen  
**Gordon and Valerie Alton**  
**Nolan and Margaret Andres**  
 Rudy and Helen Baergen  
 Susan and Phil Baker  
**Brice and Karen Balmer**  
**Geraldine Balzer**  
**and Gordon Peters**  
**Kerstin Balzer-Peters**  
**Alina and Dan Balzerson**  
**Francis Bardet**  
 Pauline Bast  
 Alicia Batten and Terry Rothwell  
**Lisa Bauman**  
 Joanne C. Bauman\*  
**Megan Bauman and**  
**Mike Ratcliffe**  
 Roy and Lorraine Bauman  
**Dale and Miriam Bauman**  
 Richard and Norma Bauman  
 Phares Bauman  
 Lester Bechtel Family Fund  
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**Becker**  
 Sheryl Noreen Beckford  
**Scott Beech and**  
**Cindy Lebold**

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 Bethel College  
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 Deborah Black  
 Lorna Blair  
**Rita Boldt**  
**Jason Booy and**  
**Daniel Engel**  
 Ray and Nelda Brenneman  
 Michael Brightling  
**Chris and Rachel Brnjas**  
 Wendy Brooks and  
 Mike Walkington  
**David E. Brown and**  
**Hannah Sauer**  
**Mimi and Sean Browne**  
 Mark and Cynthia Brubacher  
**David and Lynda Brubacher**  
**John Brubacher and**  
**Rhonda Wideman**  
**Grace and Earl Brubacher**  
**Lewis and Lois Brubacher**  
 Laverne and Ella Brubacher  
 Glenn and Ann Mary Brubacher  
**Dale and Cheryl**  
**Brubacher-Cressman**  
**Mary and Scott**  
**Brubaker-Zehr**  
 Jake and Louise Buhler

**Mark D. B. Coffey**  
 Community Mennonite Church  
 of Lancaster  
**Garth Compton and Maria**  
**Lourdes Compton**  
 Mario Coniglio  
 Barbara Cook  
**Dwight Cooney**  
 Jon and Allison Cooperman  
**Paul and Judy Cornies**  
 Helen Cornies  
**Larry Cornies and**  
**Jacquelyn Brown**  
**Katie Cowie Redekopp and**  
**Jake Redekopp**  
**Jonathan B. Cressman**  
**James Cressman and**  
**Rachel Schmidt**  
**Andrew and Melissa**  
**Cressman**  
 Bruce and Esther Cressman  
**Wendy Cressman Zehr and**  
**Don Zehr**  
 Kenneth Cullar and Dawn  
 Weber Cullar  
**Kristine Culp and**  
**Bruce Steinman**  
 Carl Dahmer  
 David Hook Medicine  
 Professional Corporation  
 Tammy and Douglas De Gelder  
**Rebekah DeJong and**  
**Brendon Martin**  
 Rodney DeKoter and  
 Marietta Drost  
**Tim Del Grande**  
**Sheralyn Derksen**  
**Leonard and**  
**Donatta-Cheree Dick**  
 Helene Dick  
**E. Peter Dick and**  
**Virginia Reimer**  
**Jenny-Lee and Jeff Dippel**  
**Victor and Holly Dirksen**  
**Mike and Diane Drake**  
**Barbara and Roy Draper**  
**Norbert and Judy Driedger**  
**Nick and Janice Driedger**  
 Andrea and Rodney D'Silva  
**Dennis and Lenore Dueck**  
 Shirley Dueck  
 Louisa Dyck  
**Richard and Betty Dyck**  
**Sonya Dyck**  
 John and Irene Dyck

**Nancy Dykstra**  
**Sarah K. Eby**  
 Gordon Eby  
 Monty Eby  
 Tawn Eby  
 Donn Eby  
 Robin Eby  
 Rene Eby  
 Kim Eby  
 Todd Eby  
**Diane and Jonathan Ehling**  
**Ann Elliott**  
 Enbridge Gas Inc.  
 Helen Engelhardt  
 Shelley and Steve Enns  
**Marianne and Edward Enns**  
 Len and Susan Enns  
 Walter and Hilda Enns

**Paul Fieguth and**  
**Betty Pries**  
**Anita Fieguth and**  
**David Willms**  
 First Mennonite Church  
 Elsie Flaming  
**Allen Flaming and**  
**Eve-Lynn Stein**  
**Jim and Janice Founk**  
 Danyelle Fowler  
**Douglas and Randi Fox**  
**Paul Fransen**  
**Clara Frascchetti and**  
**Tim Greenwood**  
**James French**  
 Beverley Fretz  
 Aden and Sheryl Frey  
 Walter and Margaret Friesen



The annual Scholarship and Bursary Reception is an opportunity to celebrate with and connect donors and recipients. Pictured: Sharon Wohlgenut, Ron and Gudrun Mathies, Faraja Sadi, Jennifer Smith, Thaissa Kubo De Arruda, and Horst Wohlgenut

**Karen and Peter Enns**  
 Elizabeth and Jake Ens  
 Susan and James Ens Funk  
 Helen Epp  
**Marlene Epp and Paul Born**  
 Jeanne Epp  
**Betti Erb and**  
**Greg Van Horn**  
 Roy D. Erb  
 Estate of Mary Frances Drudge\*  
**Esther Etchells**  
**Dana Evans Laity**  
 Lowell and Jeanette Ewert  
**Catherine Falconer**  
 John and Esther Fast  
**Paul Fast and Marnie**  
**Gerster**  
 Juanita Fergusson  
**Werner and Margot Fieguth**

**John Friesen**  
**Maia Fujimoto**  
 Randy and Kaethe Funk  
 Lu Gao  
 Esther Gascho  
 Maryann Gavin  
**Caroline Giesbrecht and**  
**John Young**  
**Jean Gillespie**  
 Estate of Dorene H. Gingerich\*  
 Sharon Gingerich  
 Paul Gingrich and Alison  
 Hayford  
**John and Mary**  
**Goerzen-Sheard**  
 John R. Good  
 Kathryn Good  
 Mervin Good  
 Brenda Good Weber  
 Google Gift Matching Program  
 Robert Gosselink  
**Morgan Grainger**  
 Laura Gray and Daniel Kramer  
**Jason and Sharon Green**  
**Shirley Greenwood**  
 Mary Groh  
 Arlene and John Groh  
**Eleanor and Mike Groh**  
**Joshua and Victoria Grohn**  
**Kenneth Grove**  
**Shirley Grove and**  
**Wesley Dyck**  
 Peter and Joan Guch  
**Lawrence and Annette**  
**Guenther**  
 H. L. Staebler Co. Ltd.



The Green Team recommend a greenhouse emissions reduction target of 35% from 2019 levels by 2030, and the Board approved this target. Shown here, students made cards to raise money for Grebel's Green Fund.

**Chris Beer and Kim Bassett**  
**Deanne Bell**  
 Bell Canada Matching Gift  
 Program  
**Suzanne Bender**  
**Robert and Gladys Bender**  
**John and Joanne Bender**  
**Jennifer Bender**  
**Anthony and Connie Bender**  
 Lora Berg  
**Paul Berg-Dick and**  
**Jane Hilliard**  
**Ilene and Karl Bergen**  
 Norman D. Bergen  
**David Bergen and**  
**Deborah Kehler**  
 Arnold\* and Linda Bergen  
**Jeremy Bergen and**  
**Rebecca Steinmann**  
 Abe Bergen and Harriet Hamer

**Shelley Bull and**  
**Wayne Carrick**  
**Bruce and Emily Burgetz**  
**Marie Burkholder**  
**Richard and Amy**  
**Burkholder**  
 Arthur Byer  
**Mathieu and Sarah Cain**  
**Corwin and Grace-Ann**  
**Cambray**  
**Susan and Delbert**  
**Campbell**  
 Lexie Chamberlain  
**Karen Cheah**  
**Donny Cheung and**  
**Marika Pauls Laucht**  
 Donna Chow and Philip Toy  
**Vaughn Climenhaga**  
**Rick and Louise**  
**Cober Bauman**



The tenth anniversary of the MPACS program was celebrated on March 4, 2023, and brought together more than 40 alumni. At that time, Issa Ebombolo was given the 2022 Distinguished Alumni Service Award. Rose Ongech and Amin Khan visit with other grads.





Students enjoyed the opportunity to leave their mark on a graffiti wall in the Grebel Gallery at an exhibit curated by Professor Eric Lepp, "Your Wall Can (Not) Divide Us."

#### **Randel Hamel**

Frieda and Waldo Harder

#### **V. Peter Harder and Patricia Seon**

#### **John D. Harder**

Lucy Harder

#### **Lydia and Gary Harder**

Dona Harvey

#### **Jonathan Hede**

Nancy Heide

#### **Paul Heidebrecht and Carmen Brubacher**

Vic Heinrichs

Marg Heinrichs

#### **Jane and Doug**

#### **Heintz-Grove**

Jacob and Katherine Hildebrand

#### **Kristen and Jonathan Hines**

Nadia Hohn

#### **Richard and Pareppia**

#### **Howard-Willms**

#### **Kenneth Hull and Marianne Mellinger**

Fred Hunsberger

#### **Dorothy Isaac and Greg Cressman**

Erika Isaac

#### **David and Emily Jaarsma**

Silke and Marcus Jablonka

Ken and Ruth Jantzi

#### **Brian D. Jantzi**

Ruth Jongejan

#### **Kendall and Charleen**

#### **Jongejan Harder**

Collin and Marjorie Jutzi

#### **Terry Jutzi**

Rebecca Kalbfleisch

#### **Ernest Kalwa and**

#### **Elysia DeLaurentis**

Ian Kasper

Michelle Kazmer

#### **Roger and Heather Kehl**

#### **Teresa and Chester Keller**

#### **Brian Kelton**

Katherine Kennedy Steiner

and Joel Steiner

#### **Richard Kennel**

Susan Kennel Harrison

#### **Ronald and Ingrid Kielstra**

#### **KyongJung Kim**

Kindred Credit Union

#### **Fred and Nancy Kinsie**

Corney and Joy Klassen

Maria Klassen and Alf Redekop

#### **Stephen and Dawn Knechtel**

#### **Angie Koch**

#### **Rosabeth Koehn**

#### **Jennifer and Scott Konkle**

Robert and Lois Konrad

Helen Koop

Alfred and Elizabeth Koop

Helen H. Koop

#### **Joseph and Connie Lam**

#### **Timothy Langeman**

Eileen Lebold

#### **Rosella Leis**

#### **Gary and Brenda Leis**

#### **Randy and Frieda Lepp**

#### **R. William Lewis**

#### **Derrick Lichti**

Daniel Lichti

David and Mary Ann Lichti

#### **Gregory Lichti and**

#### **Garth Norbraten**

Carol Lichti

Jennifer Ling and Yu-hon Li

John Lingertat and

Jennifer VanLeewen

Raegan Little

#### **David and Leanne Lobe**

Bert and Martha Lobe

Anita Loepp

Jim and Ingrid Loepp Thiessen

#### **Wendy Long and**

#### **Rod Barlow**

#### **Rebecca and Rob**

#### **Lovering Spencer**

#### **Perry and Ilka Luyt**

Lyle S. Hallman Charitable

Foundation

#### **Marina MacAdam**

#### **Richard\* & Dorothy**

#### **MacBride**

#### **Sara Martin**

#### **Kevin Martin and**

#### **Kim Bowman**

Laverne Martin

#### **Nathan and Julia Martin**

Lloyd Martin

#### **Maurice and Phyllis Martin**

Murray and Yvonne Martin

#### **Stuart and Merlyn Martin**

#### **Fred Martin and Wanda**

#### **Wagler Martin**

#### **David and Doris Martin**

#### **Ernie and Edith Martin**

#### **David Martindale and**

#### **Chris Hitchcock**

#### **Phyllis Martin-Neufeld and**

#### **Keith Neufeld**

#### **MerSynergy Charitable**

#### **Foundation**

Earl and Clara Meyers

Michael T. Wiens Professional

Corporation

#### **Tim and Myrna Miller Dyck**

#### **Lorne Milnes**

Majid Mirza (ESGTree)

Elizabeth Moore and Bob Kirke

Margaret Motz

Monica Murray

Murray Leis Construction Inc.

#### **Susan Murrell-Pritchard**

Robert and Deborah Musselman

Audrey Musselman

Vic Neufeld

#### **Donald and Gayle Neufeld**



Chris Derksen and Professor Karen Sunabacka were key players in the "kâ-nîmihitocik: They Who Are Dancing" concert during the Indigenous-Mennonite Encounters Conference in May 2022.

#### **Ronald and Gudrun Mathies**

#### **Anali Mathies**

Shannon and Greg Matsuo

David and Nancy Matthews

#### **Jo-Anne Matthies**

Louise Mauffette-Leenders and

Michiel Leenders

Miriam Maust

Caroline and Ken McAllister

#### **Stephen and Jeannie**

#### **McDowell**

#### **Lisa McIsaac**

Bill and Rosemarie McMechan

#### **Sharon and David Neufeld**

#### **John Neufeld and**

#### **Andrea Shantz Neufeld**

#### **Philip D. Neufeld**

#### **Robert Neufeld and**

#### **Marlene Dick Neufeld**

#### **Aaron Neufeld and**

#### **Alyson Baergen**

Reina Neufeldt and Naren

Kumarakulasingam

Aldred and Erna Neufeldt

#### **Kevin and Noreen Neufeldt**

Marcella and Akiie Ninomiya

#### **Kris and Stanley Nissley**

Nutana Park Mennonite Church

Suzanne Nuttall

Dr. Dorothy Nyambi

#### **Brian Orr and**

#### **Stephanie DeWitte-Orr**

#### **Kara Osborne**

Troy and Emma Osborne

Ottawa Mennonite Church

Cheri Otterbein

#### **Henry and Leonora Paetkau**

#### **Peter and Kathryn Paetkau**

#### **Isaac Painting**

#### **J. Daniel and Kenda Palmer**

#### **Julie Palmer**

Jim and Goldine Pankratz

#### **Edward and Elaine Papazian**

#### **James and Lynn Paterson**

Nancy Pauls

Carolyn Pawelko

PeaceWorks Technology

Solutions

#### **Dean Peachey and**

#### **Melissa Miller**

Carol and Eugene Penner

#### **Christine Penner**

#### **E. Paul Penner and**

#### **Dolores Harms Penner**

Marie Penner

Brian and Joanne Penner

#### **Alecia and Ryan Petryschuk**



The Alumni Committee hosted 12 alumni reunions and gatherings across Canada, and spanning different programs and eras. Pictured: the Don Reunion for Mary Brubaker-Zehr's farewell in June 2022.

#### **Al and Doris Jantzi**

Edward and Kathryn Janzen

#### **Erin Janzen**

#### **Brenda and Len Jewitt**

Jim and Lorna Blair Charitable

Foundation

David and Susan Johnson

#### **Sharon Johnson Lamont**

#### **and Stuart Lamont**

Stephen Jones and

Wendy Stocker

#### **J. Randy and Judy Koop**

#### **Tamara Kottenko**

#### **Shelbey Krahn and**

#### **Hoi Cheu**

Travis Kroeker and Grace Kehler

#### **Ryan Kroeker and**

#### **Aleda Klassen**

Victor\* and Rita Krueger

#### **Charles and Linda Kruger**

#### **Jane and**

#### **John David Kuepfer**

#### **Megan MacDonald and**

#### **Russell Schumm**

Leanne MacKay-Bain and

Jeffrey Bain

Wendy Macpherson

Madison Mennonite Church

#### **Sebastian Malton**

Steve and Pat Manske

#### **John Marshall and**

#### **Wendy Derrick**

Orvie Martin

MEDA Waterloo Chapter

Mennonite Central Committee

Canada

Mennonite Central Committee

Ontario

Mennonite Church Canada

Mennonite Church Eastern

Canada

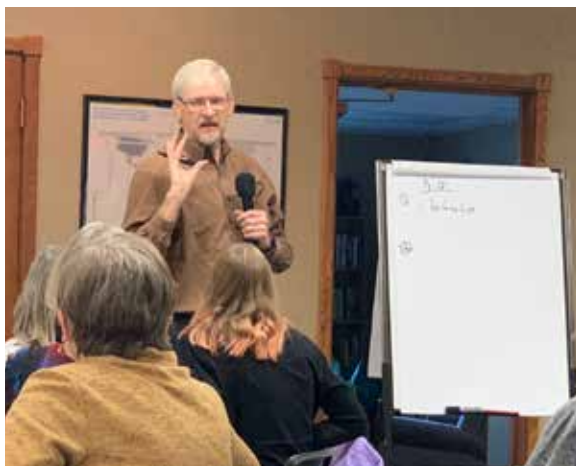
Mennonite Church

Saskatchewan

Mennonite Faith and Learning

Society





In 2022, the College launched the “Grebel-to-Go” program to connect faculty expertise with MCEC congregations. Photo: Professor Derek Suderman

**Darlene Pidzamecky**  
PlayStation Cares Employee  
Matching Program

**Diedrich and Maryanne Plett**  
Viola Poletes Montgomery  
**Wendy and Murray Priebe**  
**Gideon and Brenda Prins**  
RBJ Schlegel Family Foundation

Calvin Redekop\*  
Fred and Shirley Redekop  
**Thomas Redekopp and Catherine Wong**

**Anne Reesor**  
**Barry Reesor and Lori Guenther Reesor**  
**Steven and Jessica Reesor Rempel**

**Luke and Leah Reesor-Keller**  
**Andrew and Joanna Reesor-McDowell**  
**Ernie and Nancy Regehr**  
**Dawn and Ron Regier**  
**Carol and David Ringer**  
Riverside Brass & Aluminum Foundry Ltd.

**Katy Robinson**  
Rockway Mennonite Church  
**Victoria Roeder Martin**  
Marion Roes

**Timothy Rudy and Andrea Bizzotto**  
John and Catherine Rudy  
**Tushar and Manju Sarkar**  
**Lee and Mary Sauer**

**Lorna Sawatsky**  
Peter and Hilde Sawatzky  
George Scerbovic and Annette Cattle  
Nelson and Joy Scheifele  
**Michael and Vivian Schellenberg**

Mary A. Schiedel  
John and Sandra Schiedel  
Shirley Schiedel  
Schiedel Construction Inc.  
**Harold Schilk and Ruth Preston Schilk**  
James Schlegel  
Estate of Florence Schlegel\*  
Clare and Catherine Schlegel  
Ronald Schlegel  
Schlegel - UW Research Institute for Aging Foundation (RIA)

**Katharina Schmidt**  
**Kirk and Robyn Schmidt**  
**Alan Schroeder**  
George and Louise\* Schroeder  
**Ann Schultz and Steve Pfisterer**  
**Susan Schultz**

**Jo-Ann Scott**  
David and Susan Seyler  
Larry and Marcia Shantz  
Ross and Erma Shantz  
Ralph Shantz  
Carol and Leroy Shantz  
**Rick and Ruth Ann Shantz**  
**Stanley R. Shantz**  
Sandy and Brian Shantz  
Ken Shultz  
**Michael Shum**  
Dorothy Sittler  
**Merri Kraemer Slagell and Eugene Slagell**

**Kevin Smith**  
Earl Smith  
**Carolyn and Glenn Snider**  
**Janice Snider**  
**Dr. Jean M. Snook**  
**Arnold Snyder**  
**Ms. M. E. Snyder**  
**Eleanor Snyder**  
**Marjorie E. Snyder**  
Christian Snyder  
Ludmila Sokolova  
St. Jacobs Printery Ltd.  
**Samuel Steiner**  
Ray\* and Anna Steinmann  
Ted and Anita Stephen  
Irwin and Susan Streight  
**Kathryn Stuart**  
**Derek Suderman and Rebecca Seiling**  
**Geoff and Bev Suderman-Gladwell**  
**Iman Sultana**  
Maisie Sum and I Dewa Suparta  
**Enoch Y. Sun**  
Karen Sunabacka and Preston Parsons  
Suncor Energy Foundation  
**Raymond Switzer**  
**Kelley Teahen**  
The Bill and Margaret Fast Family Foundation Inc.  
The Doug and June Barber Family Foundation  
The Simons Foundation Canada  
**Harold Thiessen and Tobi Neufeldt Thiessen**  
Phil and Margaret Thomas  
**Laura Thomas**  
**Jim Thornton**  
**Robert\* and Anita Tiessen**  
**Erwin and Ruth Tiessen**

Walter Unrau  
**Jeff and Shana VanderSlagt**  
Vineland United Mennonite Church  
Mark and Natasha Vuorinen  
Douglas and Ruth Wagner  
**Sara Wahl and Stu Schellenberger**  
**Johanna Wall and Tim Bergen**  
Wallenstein Feed Charitable Foundation  
Waterloo North Mennonite Church

Lena Williams\*  
Deborah Wills  
Pauline and Jeffrey Wilts  
**Victor and Marilyn Winter**  
**Henry and Karen Winter**  
**Josie and Will Winterfeld**  
**Savio Wong**  
Glen and Margaret Woolner  
S. Wright  
Roxanne Wright  
Lo Wu  
Maynard and Connie Yantzi  
Yantzi Home Building Centre  
Garth Yarde



Dr. Darla Schumm was the 2023 Sawatsky Visiting Scholar. She addressed themes of inclusion and disability in classes and in her public lecture on the topic of “The Power of Misfitting: Disrupting Sinner, Saint, and Super Crip Controlling Images.” Pictured with her service dog Toby and her husband Jonathan Harris who described images and text on the screen.



Grebel faculty gathered at the All-College Retreat at Camp Trillium in September 2022. This was the last year for a two-day retreat, as student schedules and budgets get tighter.

Edgar Rogalski  
David and AnneMarie Rogalsky  
Douglas and Barbara Root  
**Scott Roper**  
Rotary Club of Kitchener  
**Carol Roth**  
**Linda and Phil Ruby**

Schurch Family Association  
**Charlotte A. Schwartzentruber and John Holmes**  
**Sharon Schwartzentruber**  
**Murray Schwartzentruber and Mary Wright**  
**Lorna Schwartzentruber**

Hildi Froese Tiessen and Paul Tiessen  
**James Tiessen and Karen Thiessen**  
John E. Toews  
Toronto United Mennonite Church  
**Amanda and John Unrau**

Waterloo Region Community Foundation  
**Carol Ann Weaver and Lyle Friesen**  
Paul Webb  
**Rodney and Julie Weber**  
**Mark Weber and Sheri Wideman**  
John and Elaine Weber  
**Curwin and Jill Weber Friesen**  
**Peter Wei**  
Elizabeth and Donald Wharton  
Beatrice Wideman  
**Louise Wideman**  
**Gregory Wideman and Megan Lennox**  
**Kim Wideman**  
**Jennie and Colin Wiebe**  
**Dennis and Laurie Wiebe**  
**John D. and Betty Wiebe**  
**Emily Wiebenga**  
**Anna and Rudolph Wiens**  
Ross Willard

Thomas and Rebecca Yoder Neufeld  
Philip and Janet Yordy  
Melvin\* and Delphine Zehr  
**Dawn and Greg Zehr**  
Joshua Zentner-Barrett  
Mohammad Zubairi and Sarah Khan

47 Anonymous Donors

\* We are saddened by the loss of these friends.

Bold = Alumni Households

 **Conrad Grebel University College**



# 60 Stories of Inspiring Alumni

**BY FARHAN SAEED,  
COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT WRITER**

Disney animator. CEOs. Lawyers. Musicians. Peacemakers centred in war zones. These are just a few of the fascinating folks who have graduated from Grebel over the last 60 years. Not only are these alumni making advances in their fields, but they're also representing Grebel's excellence on an international level, with careers in countries all across the world.

What better way to celebrate Grebel's 60th anniversary than to highlight the people who helped build upon the College's foundation? Members of Grebel's communications team, along with a few friends, have been interviewing alumni and capturing their unique stories. So far, 16 inspiring profiles have been published on the Grebel website.

Alumni are chosen based on the interesting avenues their lives have taken since graduating, as well as nominations from their peers. It seems to be a trend that Grebel alumni continue to demonstrate a connection to Grebel's core values in their lives. From stories of the first Indigenous President of the Canadian Bar Association to the Associate Director behind hit-films like *Frozen* and *Moana*, the alumni profiles are not only an inspiring read, but an entertaining one.

Do you know a Grebel alumnus who you think deserves to be featured? It's not too late to nominate someone. A new 60 Stories for 60 Years article is published every Tuesday.



**Brian Rudy  
(BES 1989,  
BARCH 1993)**



**Rudy (BMATH 1968)  
and Beverley  
(BA 1968) Neufeld**



**Doris Jantzi  
(BA 1968)**



**Kenny Hildebrand  
(BA 2015)**



**Katie Gingerich  
(BA 2015)**



**Greg Culp  
(BA 2006)**



**Devon Spier  
(BA 2012)**



**Brad Regehr  
(BA 1993)**



**Ron Tiessen  
(BA 1969)**



**Steph Chandler Burns  
(BA 2012, MTS 2017)**



**Paul Born  
(BA 1987)**



**Hannah Redekop  
(BA 2011)**



**Mark Bender  
(MMATH 1965)**



**Maxwell Kennel  
(BA 2013, MTS 2015)**



**Savio Wong  
(BSC 1984)**



**Erin Brandenburg  
(BA 2002)**

READ ALL THE STORIES  
[uwaterloo.ca/grebel/60-stories](http://uwaterloo.ca/grebel/60-stories)

# Recent History Grads Inspired by the Past

BY FARHAN SAEED



**RACHEL ZEHR**  
BA 2022, ENGLISH LITERATURE

What began as a minor in History turned into the pursuit of a master's degree for Rachel Zehr after she discovered her keen interest in early modern history while taking courses at Grebel. Today, Rachel is working towards an MA in History at the University of Waterloo, where she focuses on identity formation in early modern religious communities.

Last fall, Rachel worked under the supervision of History professor David Neufeld to present an exploration of Erasmus' Colloquies at the Erasmus Symposium—a virtual collaboration between Mennonite colleges that invited historians to share and engage in discussions on Erasmus. It was through this experience that Rachel was convinced that further studies in History “were not just desired, but necessary.”

“Studying history enriches my experience of this moment in time— this little blip of space that I occupy in the long span of human history,” Rachel explained. Commenting on her research area of early modern religious life, she said “studying this history doesn't resolve the divisiveness and fracture in the Mennonite communities that I'm in, but it prompts me to attend to those moments where we can lean into difficult conversations and where we can listen to each other well.”



**GWENDOLYN FRIESEN**  
BA 2023, HISTORY

Gwen first arrived at the University of Waterloo in 2019 with no intention of studying history—their interests lay in writing and photography. The pandemic led them to take a Grebel history course on a whim which created a bridge between their interests.

Gwen worked as a photographer for Parks Canada where they captured events, museum exhibits, and re-enactments. “How can I represent the feeling, mood, and tone of this event, illuminate the context, and refine this visual to tell a story?” Gwen would ask, questions derived from their history studies to guide and perfect their photography. Throughout Gwen's degree, they were able to use their writing and visual work in conjunction with an exploration of historical concepts, leading them to produce a short documentary. They also managed an independent six-month visual collection project inspired by the Mennonite Archives of Ontario.

“Studying history has allowed me to make sense of my world; untangling threads of the past to construct narratives and reckon with the present,” said Gwen. “Grebel faculty were an integral part of this, supporting my academic path, encouraging independent projects, and engaging me in conversation.”



**CALLUM REMPEL**  
BA 2023, HISTORY

A long-held interest in world and religious history led Callum to the Grebel campus where he was happily surprised by the opportunity to delve deep into Russian Mennonite history. Not only did Callum's journey in the History program provide him with interesting work opportunities, it also helped him to better understand his family story.

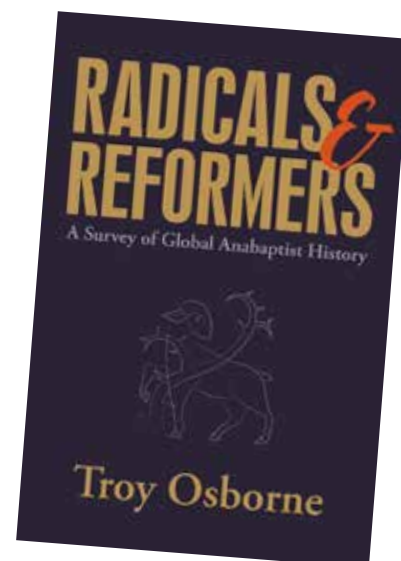
Callum is thankful for supportive mentors such as Archivist Laureen Harder-Gissing, who he said, “played major roles in expanding the horizons of my knowledge and interest in Mennonite courses.” Once he decided to engage in Mennonite Studies, the opportunities began flowing in, such as his internship with the Ontario Mennonite Archives of Ontario. What Callum is most proud of, however, is the Sandra Burt Research Award he won last year from the Gender and Social Justice Department for his digital interactive project highlighting sexual violence in Russian Mennonite communities.

“Grebel set me on my path of personal research and to share my love of history with others,” he said, as he aims to now pursue a degree in teaching. “My education has opened many doors, for which I am forever grateful.”



# Radicals and Reformers: A New Anabaptist History Textbook

From renegade gatherings of Christian believers in the 1500s to a global communion of more than 2.1 million members, the Anabaptist-Mennonite movement has been marked by faithfulness and failure, continuity and conflict, radicalism and reformation. Grebel History Professor Troy Osborne was asked by MennoMedia to write a new textbook that draws from recent scholarship on the global church. “I thought that it could be an interesting challenge, and it would also be useful to produce a book I could use in my own courses,” Troy explained. “One of the attractions of the project was working with an advisory group that included professors from a wide variety of Mennonite colleges and universities.”



Set to be released in June 2024, *Radicals and Reformers: A Survey of Global Anabaptist History*, traces the origins and development of the Anabaptist and Mennonite movements from their beginnings in Europe through their spread across the globe. Troy reflects on the ways that Anabaptists have defined their identity in new settings and in response to new theological, intellectual, geographic, and political contexts. Drawing from current scholarship and a range of written and visual sources, this book provides an overview of how Mennonites from Zurich to Zimbabwe have adapted to or resisted the world around them.

“Anabaptists have always been re-thinking what it means to be part of their movement,” reflected Troy. “Without a centralized hierarchy or shared confession of faith, Anabaptists have spun off into dozens, if not hundreds of directions while (usually) affirming that they were still part of the same historical tradition.” He added, “At the bird’s-eye level, there has rarely been agreement on what binds Anabaptists together, making it very difficult to tell their stories in a unified narrative. The Anabaptist story has become even richer and more complex as the church has grown into a global movement.”

## COMMEMORATING 500 YEARS OF ANABAPTISM: FRIENDS OF GREBEL EUROPEAN TOUR

Grebel alumni, staff, and friends are getting ready to explore Anabaptist beginnings on a European tour in May 2025. Alongside faculty experts Troy Osborne and David Neufeld, travellers will follow this story from the Netherlands through Germany, France, and Switzerland, visiting the very places where events significant to this tradition occurred. Travellers will come away with an understanding of Anabaptist history by visiting the Dutch village of Zaanse Schans, mounting the Swiss Alps in a cable car, and reflecting in a cave where Anabaptists once worshipped in secret. Participants will engage great works of European art and culture at Amsterdam’s Rijksmuseum and Strasbourg’s cathedral. The tour will end with an opportunity to connect past to present with Anabaptists from around the world at a 500th-anniversary commemoration of the first adult baptisms in Zurich. This event, organized by Mennonite World Conference, will include worship, speeches, discussions, walking tours, and art.

Both David and Troy study 16th- and 17th-century Anabaptist history with a social and cultural lens—a perspective that highlights stories of individuals to build a multi-faceted view of the past. So in addition to visiting tourist sites, participants will learn how social structures and cultural dynamics shaped the Anabaptist experience.

“I think participants will be surprised by how a visit to the actual site where significant events took place can transform and enrich their understanding of the past and its connection to their own lives,” said David. “I study early Anabaptism in large part because of opportunities I had to visit places linked to this history as a younger person. Those experiences reshaped my vocation and how I understand the faith tradition I’m committed to. I want to contribute to making similar encounters possible through this trip.”



Troy Osborne



David Neufeld

SIGN UP TO JOIN US: [uwaterloo.ca/grebel/anabaptist-tour](https://uwaterloo.ca/grebel/anabaptist-tour)



# New Capital Campaign will Focus on Residence Renewal

BY FRED W. MARTIN, DIRECTOR OF ADVANCEMENT



A new capital campaign was announced at the 60th Anniversary Gala on October 11. This followed several ‘announcements’ from students, given in the lively spirit of Community Supper announcements. These included invitations to keep dorm room doors wide open during heat waves and a word of thanks to a clean up brigade who mopped up after a ‘waterfall’ down the stairs caused by a plumbing blockage.

These ‘announcements’ highlighted for guests the need to renew and upgrade our residence facilities. While our distinctive saw-toothed roofline and iconic windows are recognizable on campus, they cause ‘solar gain’ that drastically amplifies summer heat waves. And in winter, cold air flowing through uninsulated frames and double-paned glass can cause the curtains to freeze to the condensation.

In addition to window replacements and exploring heat pumps we plan to upgrade our residence washrooms—which have not been substantially renovated since 1963. This will create more options for gender-neutral facilities.

Exact costs for these upgrades are uncertain at this point but at least \$3.5 million is needed in donations, as Grebel does not receive any

government funding for capital upgrades. “I’m pleased to announce that almost \$1.8 has been pledged towards this goal!” said Marcus Shantz, during his comments. “It takes a special kind of donor to understand the needs for these upgrades. This campaign is not about adding new facilities or programs, but links with our strategic plan to “Renew an inspired community.”

The board approved the ‘Case for Support’ and has endorsed this campaign. A campaign advisory including board members, alumni, and parents has had an initial meeting. Further details on this campaign are available on the website with more information coming out early in 2024.

## CAMPAIGN ADVISORY MEMBERS

Anita Tiessen (1981 BA, Board)  
David (2001 BA) and Leanne Lobe (2001 BES)  
Kirk Schmidt (2004 BMath)  
Caleb Gingrich Regehr (2012 BASC)  
Jim Tiessen (1987 BASC, Board)  
Donny Cheung (2001 BMath, Board)

**LEARN  
MORE**  
[grebel.ca/  
donate](https://grebel.ca/donate)



## LIVABILITY

Modern triple-pane windows, combined with air conditioning and improved climate controls will greatly improve student comfort during the hottest and coldest times of the year. New single-use washrooms will meet current expectations for privacy and comfort, and will also enable more flexibility in operating the residence.



## ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Our engineers expect that window replacement alone will reduce space heating energy consumption by up to 44 percent every year. Using heat pumps to supplement existing natural gas boilers will further drive down our greenhouse gas emissions. Grebel’s goal is to reduce its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions 35% by the year 2030.



## INCREASED REVENUES

The lack of air conditioning in our residence impacts our occupancy levels from May through August. In addition, the existing shared washrooms are a barrier for conference groups and other short-term guests. We expect to improve summer occupancy and revenues by making these improvements.



## GOOD STEWARDSHIP

Good building managers anticipate issues and make regular investments to resolve them before serious problems arise. Grebel has worked to renew its facilities over the past several years, and the residence is the next space we need to address. Making these improvements now will ensure that future generations can experience the transformative impact of life as students at Grebel.





## MDS Volunteer Award Supports Service-Oriented Students

BY TIM SAARI, COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT WRITER

Students at Grebel who are attending the University of Waterloo or Wilfrid Laurier University and have volunteered with Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) are now provided the opportunity to earn a substantial scholarship toward one term's tuition.

The MDS Service Scholarship Award was graciously established by Mennonite Disaster Service, with hopes that it will promote student service and volunteering. "MDS has its roots in the longstanding Anabaptist and Mennonite value of service to our fellow humans. Providing a scholarship to students gives them an opportunity to experience one form of service while also receiving some financial support for post-secondary education," said Ross Penner, Executive Director of Mennonite Disaster Service Canada.

"Participating in Grebel's MDS program gave me an opportunity to step outside my comfort zone and experience the hospitality and kindness of strangers," shared Serina Ykema King, a Civil Engineering student at Grebel and an active volunteer with MDS. She added, "I think many people do MDS to help others, but you actually get as much as you give."

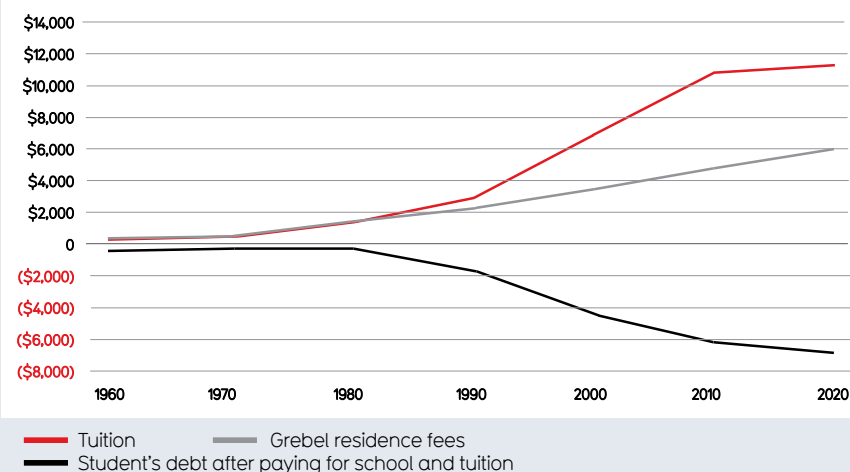
The annual winter Reading Week trip to serve with MDS has traditionally been a highlight of the year, as students made meaningful connections with communities across North America and developed lasting friendships with other volunteers. Ross noted, "We believe a service opportunity like this plants seeds that will bear fruit for years to come."

## Grebel Fund has a 60-Year Perspective

How much of your summer wages were needed to pay for your tuition? That question is being asked to alumni as part of the fall "Grebel Fund" appeal. Farhan Saeed, a coop student working in communications this term, did some research to create this graph that illustrates how times have changed for students over the span of 60 years.

### POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION COSTS MUCH MORE TODAY

Ontario Tuition and Residence Fees vs Net Summer Earnings



Donations to the Grebel Fund support unique programs like Noon Hour Concerts, chaplaincy, PACS internships, and tuition support for graduate students. We invite you to join in the efforts of other Grebel alumni and friends and support Grebel with your year-end giving. New donors who give more than \$100 will receive a complimentary pair of limited edition Grebel socks!



**DONATE ONLINE**  
[grebel.ca/giving](https://grebel.ca/giving)



## Trinity, Then and Now

BY SOPHIA PETTIT, PROGRAM ASSISTANT,  
KINDRED CREDIT UNION CENTRE FOR PEACE ADVANCEMENT

On July 16, 1945, the United States Army successfully detonated the first atomic bomb in a New Mexico desert. Codenamed Trinity, the test marked a pivotal moment in history, as it demonstrated the feasibility of atomic weapons – ultimately leading to the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki during World War II.

The recent box office success of *Oppenheimer* has prompted a new generation to discuss the origins and ongoing dangers of nuclear weapons. Building on this cultural moment, Mary Kavanagh's exhibit, *Trinity, Then and Now*, located in the Grebel Gallery, explores the bomb test's lasting impact in a narrative context.

*Trinity, Then and Now* walks audiences through archival photographs that display the building of the bomb, uranium glass sculptures, and a documentary video that probes the violent earthly repercussions caused by the morbid relationship between humans and nuclear materials.

The Grebel Gallery serves not only as a stage to explore the relationship between art and peace, but also as a container for thought-provoking conversations. For example, on this year's International Day of Peace, Cesar Jaramillo from Project Ploughshares talked about the current state of nuclear weaponry and non-proliferation sixty years after the Cuban Missile Crisis with Masters of Peace and Conflict Studies students and other community members. *Trinity, Then and Now* provided an evocative backdrop and reminder of the harrowing legacy of nuclear warfare.

The exhibition will be on display until February 2024. Visitors are invited to drop in and see *Trinity, Then and Now* during the Gallery's regular hours, Monday through Thursday from 8:30 am to 10:00 pm, and until 6:00 pm on Fridays.

Artist Mary Kavanagh speaks with a Peace and Conflict Studies class.



## Trace, Trajectory, and Truth: A Story of Morocco's Iconic Lute

The following is a brief excerpt from the 2023 Benjamin Eby Lecture "Trace, Trajectory, and Truth: A Story of Morocco's Iconic Lute," given by Music Professor Maisie Sum on November 9, 2023.

Musical instruments are much more than their perceived affordance as sound producing devices. Beyond aesthetic satisfaction, they may be imbued with meaning and carry a special value to the individuals and societies who use and make them. In diverse cultures around the world, meanings associated with history, lineage, spirituality, experiences, change, and more may be encoded onto instruments and attribute to their socio-affective nature. An instrument's significance ranges from the everyday to the spiritual, differs depending on perception, and changes through time.

As such, music's affective potential is embedded in the multiple temporalities it realizes, connecting to and constructing the past and future possibilities at various time scales. Stories about the *guembri* in traveller reports, museums, photographs, scholarship, trade books, state-sponsored public media, not to mention public opinion, are subject to change, adapting with the times. Gnawa stories about the *guembri* connect it to a history of healing and a lineage of practitioners, which convey belief in the *guembri* as a potent force symbolic of its spiritual significance.

Through passing on stories of their ancestors to future generations, practitioners affirm its continual importance to their culture whilst adapting to new performance possibilities in contemporary Morocco. Exploring the temporalities associated with the sight and sound of the *guembri* sheds light on its enduring significance to culture bearers and situates it in within the musical and social fabric of contemporary Morocco and beyond.

WATCH THE FULL LECTURE:  
[grebel.ca/ebyl](https://grebel.ca/ebyl)



# A Sampling of Scholarship

In addition to classroom teaching, faculty and other academic personnel at Grebel accomplish a wide range of scholarship and service in the academy, church, and community. Here is a sampling of recent activities and achievements.

**ALICIA BATTEN** presented a paper, “Healing Body and Soul in the Letter of James,” at a joint session of the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies/Canadian Society of Patristic Studies at York University in May 2023.

**JEREMY BERGEN** wrote an article titled “Mennonite Dispossession of Indigenous Lands as a Challenge to Mennonite Identity” for *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 41, no. 1 (2023): 129-144.

**NATHAN FUNK** gave presentations for two video conference events: UNESCO’s Sixth Regional Expert Consultation on Intercultural Competencies for Peacebuilding: North America, and the Group of 78’s 2023 Annual Policy Conference, addressing the topic of “Peace Professionalism.”

**LAUREEN HARDER-GISSING** gave two presentations—one in May on “Indigenous and Mennonite Encounters in Canada Since 1970: Reckoning and Reimagining” at the Canadian Society of Church History conference at York University; and the other in September, titled “Mennonite Ebbs and Flows: Two Centuries Along the Grand” for the Ontario Genealogical Society conference.

**PAUL HEIDEBRECHT** joined three University of Waterloo colleagues in a presentation on “Why Tech Needs Social Entrepreneurship” at the International Social Innovation Research Conference in Guimarães, Portugal in September.

**RICH JANZEN** has a journal article citation in press with S. Switzer, J. Basabosa, M. Docherty, & Paul Heidebrecht, titled “Community-based evaluation as a strategy to localize Sustainable Development Goals” with a practice note to appear in the *Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation*.

**JANE KUEPFER** co-convoked a national Think Tank on Moral Distress in Long-term Care Workers at the RIA in September. She presented “Addressing gaps in spiritual care in long-term care” at the Canadian Association for Gerontology in October.

**NARENDRAN KUMARAKULASINGAM** published “Bandung and Decolonization” in *Elgar Encyclopedia of Development*, ed. Matthew Clarke and Xinyu (Andy) Zhao (Edward Elgar, 2023), 55-58.

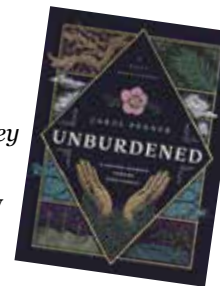
**ERIC LEPP** published a peer-reviewed article “Side-by-Sidedness: A Conceptual Rethinking of Post-Peace Agreement Encounter” in *Journal of Intercultural Studies*.

**JOHONNA MCCANTS-TURNER** presented “In the Wake of Wounding: Advancing Critical Race Feminist Approaches to Reparative Justice through Black Feminist and Womanist Christian Ethics” at the Society for Christian Ethics Midterm Gathering hosted by its Restorative Justice Interest Group in June.

**REINA NEUFELDT** co-led a workshop titled “Awkward Conversations in Mennonite Peacebuilding” with Ndagire Brendah and Issa Ebombolo at the Global Mennonite Peacebuilding Conference and Festival III, at Eastern Mennonite University in June.

**TROY OSBORNE** published the chapter “Whether to Turn to the ‘Strong Hand’ of the State: The Role of the State in Dutch Mennonite Conflict Resolution” in *A Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace: Global Mennonite Perspectives on Peacebuilding and Nonviolence*, edited by Fernando Enns, Nina Schroeder-van ’t Schip, and Andrés Pacheco-Lozano, 254–65. Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2023.

**CAROL PENNER**, worked on *Unburdened: A Lenten Journey Toward Forgiveness* (A Daily Devotional) to be published by Herald Press, January 2024.

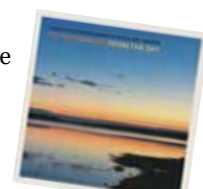


**KATE KENNEDY STEINER** presented “Teaching in Tropes: Ornaments in Chants of W1” at the International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo in May.

**DEREK SUDERMAN** spent three weeks in May teaching Bible with house church leaders in Thailand before attending the 3rd Global Anabaptist Peacebuilding Conference (GMPC) in Virginia, where he presented the paper “Tackling Violence in the Prophets as a People of Peace.” An article co-published with colleagues Lowell Ewert and Mary Lou Klassen also emerged from the 2nd GMPC, “Justice, Mercy, and Faithfulness: Human Rights and Mennonite Faith in the Context of Peacebuilding Practice.”

**KAREN SUNABACKA** completed four choral pieces over the summer, a violin and piano duo with a narrator, as well as a piano trio. The choral pieces were for Ensemble Vocal-Arts Quebec, vox chamber choir (Oxford, UK), Medicine Hat College Girls’ Choir, and Toronto Children’s choir. All pieces have upcoming premieres in 2024. The violin and piano duo, titled *Jack the Fiddler*, included text and was premiered in August in Winnipeg, MB. The piano trio, titled *Embroidered with Jagged Patterns*, was premiered in October at Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg, MB.

Under the direction of **MARK VUORINEN**, The Elora Singers and TorQ Percussion Quartet released a new album in July called *To the Ground from the Sky* featuring newly composed music by Carmen Braden, Annika Socolofsky, Paul Frehner and Melody McKiver. It is available on all streaming platforms.







The All-College Retreat was held at Laurel Creek Conservation Area



Along with a worship team, Marina Wheaton, President Marcus Shantz, Board Member Dorothy Nyambi, Hoda Mahamud, Scott Adema, and Kassim Ibrahim, attended MEDA's annual conference in Toronto.



Act of Community: Planting seeds in the Pollinator Garden



Move-In Day



A hymn sing at Open Doors—the newest name for Family Day/Taste of Grebel



Prof. Jane Kuepfer spoke at Community Supper and brought a 100-year-old friend to share some wisdom.

## #Grebelife

BY FARHAN SAEED

The first week of September brought an atmosphere of excitement to Grebel as a new batch of Grebelites arrived at the residence, joined by their parents and greeted by enthusiastic upper-year students. A spirit of new possibilities could be felt in the air—a spirit that has been gracing Grebel's doorstep for the past 60 years. This fall, the Grebel residence is filled once again, home to 172 students, with 40+ associates. Students hail from across Canada, as well as from the US, United Kingdom, Barbados, Turkey, Vietnam, Philippines, UAE, and Hong Kong.

Gardens are hard work," said President Shantz as part of his welcome address. "A garden is boring if it only has one kind of plant, and a college is boring if everyone thinks the same, acts the same, or studies the same things. A truly impressive garden is one that encompasses many kinds of plants—some that flourish right away, some that take longer. Some that grow better when planted close to certain other plants, and some that need extra space."

"What sort of plant are you?" Marcus asked the crowd of more than 200 Grebel students. "Whoever you are, we want you to know that you belong in this garden."



Grebel students, staff, and faculty came together with the University of Waterloo community to stand in solidarity after the June 28 stabbing in a UWaterloo classroom.



MCC UN Student Seminar at the United Nations in NYC



Student Eva Booker spent the summer growing a beautiful Pollinator Garden.





## New Director of Student Services

BY JEN KONKLE

Jessica Reesor Rempel (BA 2011) has been appointed Conrad Grebel University College's new Director of Student Services. She has already served with distinction in the roles of Interim Chaplain, Chaplain, and, for the past few months, as Acting Director. Jessie brings a wealth of experience in pastoral care, social services, and organizational leadership.


"I'm delighted that Jessie will fill this important role in Student Services," announced President Marcus Shantz. "The range and depth of her work and educational experiences are a very strong fit for the diverse demands and responsibilities of this role, and she has already demonstrated great integrity and good judgement while working in Student Services. I am also inspired by Jessie's compelling vision for Student Services at Grebel and how this department fits into the larger mission and programs of the College and its many constituencies."

Jessica has focused much of her career on young adults. She lived at Grebel, graduated from the University of Waterloo with a Peace and Conflict Studies degree, and earned a Master of Divinity at Emmanuel College at the Toronto School of Theology. She then co-founded Pastors in Exile, a progressive and affirming community-based ministry that seeks to empower young adults as they explore and deepen the spiritual meaning of their lives, world, work, and activism, which she led for eight years. Her past work experience includes offering mental health support, referral, and crisis intervention skills honed while working in an emergency shelter and a long-term care home, as well as leadership experience in several residential settings including at Grebel and Camp Micah. She has also held various roles with Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, where she is an ordained minister.

"Grebel has been such a transformative place in my life, both in my time as a resident and Peace and Conflict Studies student, and in the two years I have spent working in the Student Services Department as Interim Chaplain," reflected Jessica. "As Director of Student Services, I am excited to continue working closely with students in the residence program while also having the opportunity to support the mission of Grebel more broadly as a leader in this unique community. Relationships are at the centre of my vocation, and I look forward to continuing to build strong relationships with students, staff, and faculty at Grebel, as well as the broad network of families, alumni, and others who support the powerful work that happens here."

"Jessie has both a calm, compassionate presence and keen insight into the challenges of administering a residence program," added Professor Carol Penner, another member of the search committee. "We appreciate her commitment to the values Grebel holds and her wisdom in implementing them in our Student Services program."

# Study the Bible. Seek wisdom. Nurture your faith.



## MASTER OF THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

[uwaterloo.ca/theological-studies](http://uwaterloo.ca/theological-studies)

## VISITING CHAPLAIN ANNOUNCED

Chip Bender (MTS 2006) will temporarily join the Student Services team in the role of Visiting Chaplain until the end of April 2024. Chip brings with him a broad diversity of skills and experience as a Mennonite pastor, a Spiritual Director, a street outreach worker, and more recently, as a Psychotherapist at Interfaith Counselling Centre.



"I am very much looking forward to Chip's engaging and supportive presence on the Student Services team over the next six months," said Director of Student Services Jessica Reesor Rempel. "Chip's background in congregational ministry, as well as in community outreach and counselling settings, will richly contribute to the student experience here at Grebel."





## 2023 Alumni Events

Thanks to the 500+ alumni who came out to Grebel reunions and gatherings this year! We enjoyed **1** a four-College Beer and Bites tour, **3** a Blue Jays game, **4** and dinner in Toronto with MEDA participants. The era reunion this year was the late '80s, who put on a show **2** with special guests Bil Weber and the Glum Bunch, other musical acts, **5** **6** and much reminiscing. All Grebelites were invited back for a 60th Anniversary reunion and picnic, hosted **7** by Pete and Kendra Whitfield Ellis. Other activities that day included **9** Ultimate Frisbee, **8** a hymn sing led by several guest conductors including Len Enns, a retired faculty panel, a bouncy castle and kids activities, and **10** a huge picnic with alumni and students. We've celebrated well this year!







On October 11, Grebel celebrated its 60th Anniversary with a special Gala dinner! With guests from every decade, this event paid homage to Grebel's weekly Community Supper tradition. Guests enjoyed a delicious dinner and listened to keynote speaker, UWaterloo President Vivek Goel, who spoke about Waterloo at 100. Current students also shared some Community Supper announcements, and Grebel President Marcus Shantz announced the beginning of a new capital campaign for the renewal of Grebel's iconic residence building. Thank you to everyone who attended!



**60<sup>th</sup>  
Gala  
Dinner**

### THANK YOU TO OUR DINNER SPONSORS:



**EBY FINANCIAL**  
30 YEARS

Ben Eby BSc '10



Gary Leis (BA 1974)



Sheila Shantz (BA 1989)



Russ Snyder-Penner (BA 1989)

### THANK YOU TO OUR EVENT SPONSOR:



**MILLER THOMSON**

Andrew Roth (BA 1994)

# People

**Amanda Kind** (BA 2006) recently released a new EP called *The Good Fight*. Over the last few years, she has been writing, recording, and performing full-time as an artist appearing at music festivals like Bestival, the City of Kitchener's Neighbours Day Kick Off, as well as gigging across the province at various venues.



Centre for Peace Advancement Director **Paul Heidebrecht** (BASC 1994) caught up with **Jared Baribeau** (BASC 2018) in Portugal.



Jared's journey has taken him from Demine Robotics in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, to Smartex.ai in Porto, where he is now helping reduce waste in the textile industry.

**James Carr-Pries** (BASC 2023) represented Team Canada in the 2023 Under-24 Ultimate Frisbee World Championships this summer. James competed in Canada's Junior National Mixed



Team, and after several hard-fought games, the team placed 4th overall.

**Marcia Boniferro** (BA 1999), Student Care Manager at Toronto Metropolitan University, was honoured with the President's Blue and Gold Award of Staff Excellence for an individual. In her role at TMU, Marcia balances helping students navigate multiple complex issues with compassion and care while also prioritizing the health and wellness of her team through exceptional leadership, modelling, and support.



**Susan Fish** (MTS 2022) is pleased to announce the publication of her third novel, *Renaissance* (Paraclete Press, 2023). Susan is also writing a critical history of the Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre and is guest editing an upcoming issue of the Conrad Grebel Review among other activities. Susan loves visiting bookclubs who are talking about her books and can be contacted through her company, Storywell.



**Saifullah Muhammad** (MPACS 2022) is co-founder and Managing Director of the Rohingya Centre of Canada. He was recently featured on CBC Kitchener-Waterloo's Change Makers list and said he found his way to Canada from the refugee camp in



Bangladesh only because he was educated. "This recognition means a great deal to me as a Rohingya. To be counted among these dedicated community builders is truly humbling and inspiring."

**Sharon Lamont** (BA 1980) was designated an Honorary Member of the University of Waterloo this year. (Pictured with her husband Stuart.) Sharon's career at UWaterloo spanned four decades, culminating in a Library senior leadership position and other



noteworthy University-level achievements. During her career, Sharon's leadership and contributions to the Library, community and philanthropy advanced the University's progress toward building a culture of inclusivity and excellence. Sharon retired in May 2021 after nearly 40 years of service, and now sits on Grebel's Board of Governors.

**Faith, Ronen, and Colin Friesen** (MTS 2020) stopped by Grebel in the summer for a visit, travelling from their home in British Columbia.



The Bearded Baritones drew a standing ovation when they sang at Community Supper in the fall. They'll be back on the Grebel stage for Paul-a-palooza on March 8, for all to enjoy! This barbershop quartet includes **Dan Balzerson** (BASC 2012), **Jake Redekopp** (BMATH 2009), **Douglas Epp** (BA 2009), and **Josh Bowman-Matthews** (BCS 2012).

**Erwin Wiens** (MA 1973) returned to Grebel in June for a conversation about his book *To Antoine*. Hosted by the Institute of Anabaptist and Mennonite Studies along with Gelassenheit



Publications, publisher Jonathan Seiling (BA 1999, MTS 2004) and author Erwin Wiens discussed this novel that digs deeply into the lives of Mennonite families and their friends over a 60-year period, from their struggles for survival in Stalin's Russia and Hitler's Germany to their creation of new identities in South America and Canada.



**Steph Chandler Burns** (BA 2012, MTS 2017) was a Community Supper speaker in the summer, where they reflected on the topic "I'm gay, ask me how." Steph started QuAQ when they were a student at Grebel and is now a pastor at Pastors in Exile, a progressive and affirming community-based ministry that seeks to empower young adults as they explore and deepen the spiritual meaning of their lives, work, and activism.



## SEND US YOUR UPDATES!

We want to hear about your life! Let us know about new jobs, marriages, births, retirements, accomplishments, and life adventures. [grebel@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:grebel@uwaterloo.ca)





IAMS held a book launch for Professor Emeritus **Marlene Epp**'s new book, *Eating Like a Mennonite*. Not quite a cookbook or history piece, Marlene's book seeks to explore the complexity and nuances of Mennonite cuisine, diving deep into the various ingredients, environments, and perceptions that have gone into creating these foods. Marlene's book has been featured in the Waterloo Region Record and she was recently a guest on CBC's radio show, The Morning Edition. She noted that it was her interest in the role of women in Mennonite society that partly inspired this book.



Since 2023 marked the centenary of the arrival of Russlaender Mennonite immigrants from the Soviet Union, a service of commemoration was held in July. Planned by current and former Grebel faculty and staff, one highlight of the evening was the premiere performance of *The Place of Memory*. The musical piece was composed and conducted by Grebel Professor Emeritus **Leonard Enns** and commissioned by the Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario for the Russlaender Centenary. It was performed by DaCapo Chamber Choir with **Miriam Stewart-Kroecker** (WLU 2010), cellist. Available at: [youtu.be/FRbsmasMCpk](https://youtu.be/FRbsmasMCpk)

**Correction:** In the Spring 2023 issue of *Grebel Now*, we left **Lynn Thomas's** (BA 2010) name out of the Thomas Family donation of a pool table. Thanks to the entire family!

## Noon Hour Concerts

Most Wednesdays  
@ 12:30pm  
in the Grebel Chapel



## Paul-a-Palooza

FRIDAY  
MAR  
08  
7:00PM  
2024

Celebrate Paul Penner's retirement and lifetime of contributions to Grebel! All are welcome to this farewell and alumni talent show.

## March Open House

SATURDAY  
MAR  
23  
10:00AM  
2024

Explore the Grebel residence, programs, and more.

## Ontario Mennonite Music Camp

AUG  
11  
-  
23  
2024

Combining music education with classic camp activities for students Gr. 6-12.

THURSDAY  
FEB  
29  
7:30PM  
2024

## Sawatsky Lecture

Rev. Dr. Ray Aldred

Director of Indigenous Studies Program  
Vancouver School of Technology

THURSDAY  
MAR  
21  
7:30PM  
2024

## Bechtel Lecture

Dr. John P. Eicher

A Plot-Driven People: Mennonite Narratives in the Age of Nationalism (1870-1945)

SUNDAY  
APR  
14  
2:00PM  
2024

## Grebel's Convocation Celebration

Congratulate the class of 2024 during Grebel's Convocation Celebration.

## Commemorating 500 years of Anabaptism: Friends of Grebel European Tour

May 18-30, 2025

Visit sites of early Anabaptist importance with Grebel history professors Troy Osborne and David Y. Neufeld.

[uwaterloo.ca/grebel/anabaptist-tour](https://uwaterloo.ca/grebel/anabaptist-tour)

SATURDAY  
JUNE  
01  
2024

## GREBEL REUNION '90s ERA

Get ready to reconnect with classmates from the early '90s!  
4:00 PM at Conrad Grebel University College.

[grebel.ca/reunion](https://grebel.ca/reunion)

## CONFLICT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

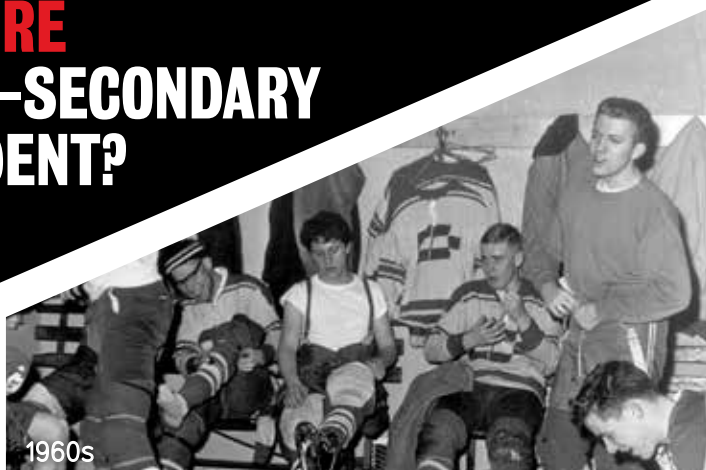
[uwaterloo.ca/conflict-management](https://uwaterloo.ca/conflict-management)

Skills-based  
conflict  
management  
training,  
now virtual.





# DO YOU KNOW A FUTURE POST-SECONDARY STUDENT?



1960s



1970s



1980s



1990s



Early 2000s

## SHARE YOUR TREASURED MEMORIES OF GREBEL!

Do you know someone planning to attend UWaterloo in the fall or in coming years? We need your help as alumni, parents, families, and friends to spread the word about Grebel! Students can experience Grebel with a virtual or in-person tour as they get a taste of residence life and our academic programs.

## GET STARTED AT

**[grebel.ca/future-students](https://grebel.ca/future-students)**



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