It is a pleasure to welcome new and returning students to the School of Optometry. As I get older, I realize that I soon may have worn or read every t-shirt that’s ever been written. One of my favorites was contributed by a group of parents of youngsters with vision impairments. It offers a simple but eloquent admonition that is attributed to the late Mother Teresa. “Do not wish for leaders. Do it … person to person.” It properly acknowledges the tremendous power of individual personal interactions to effect change, even in the face of daunting adversity. All of us who practice, teach or study Optometry in the depressed health services hinterland called Ontario must remember this. It reminds us that our individual clinical actions have a compelling role in advancing our profession, even when co-ordinated political actions may falter or fail.

The manifest relevance and legitimacy of expanding the scope of optometric practice within the province’s besieged health care system were evidently no match against the raw political lobby of those who vigorously opposed it. The ensuing bureaucratic adjudication prompted a timidly neutral but admirably expeditious recommendation for decisive inaction. Politicians routinely must weigh the perceived benefits of contemplated actions against any political consequences that they perceive might accrue. In retrospect, decisive inaction seems like a highly logical and inevitable outcome in this matter, especially considering the significant political risk of provoking Ontario’s powerful and already disgruntled medical lobby. The final communication of this decision was delayed for some time while the bureaucrats carefully scripted its text and patiently waited for a politically “ripe” moment for its proclamation.

The quality and capacity of UW graduates to practice primary care optometry at the requested contemporary level are verifiable and unchallenged. Society’s need for these ocular therapeutic services and optometry’s legitimate role in their provision has prompted the enactment of enabling legislation in most jurisdictions throughout North America. Among the very best practitioners working within these enlightened jurisdictions are alumni from Ontario’s University of Waterloo School of Optometry. Their fellow graduates who opt to remain in the province of their alma mater must repress significant portions of their training and experience so their patients can seek over-the-counter therapeutics or reluctant medical assessment. In the courtroom of public opinion, this is wasteful, inefficient, costly, and ineffective.

The subtext of the Minister of Health’s factually flawed announcement suggests that this initiative was doomed from the outset by its dubious political merits. Our collective effrontery at the Ministry’s decision now prompts us to launch and support competing political actions. Perhaps overlooked are the opportunities that we have to inform our patients and fellow health profession colleagues concerning the folly of the Ministry’s current political position and the contrived logic that was crafted to support it. And perhaps the key is to simply communicate this message over and over … person to person … as I’ve just done.

Respectfully, Graham Strong, Director
Dr. Tony Cullen Receives World Honour

At the Annual General Delegates Meeting of the World Council of Optometry, held in Helsinki, Finland on May 28th to June 2nd, Professor Tony Cullen was named the 2001 International Optometrist of the Year. Dr. Cullen was recognised for his worldwide advocacy of optometry as a primary care profession, his contributions in North America and Europe to public health legislation relating to optometry, his internationally recognised research, and his leadership in world optometry.

Dr. Cullen arrived at the School in 1978 from the University of Houston. He received his optometric education at The City University, London where he later earned his Ph.D. The same institution also conferred a D.Sc. honoris causa on him in 1995. He also holds a Master’s degree (Ophthalmology) from the University of Saskatchewan and a Doctor of Optometry (PCO).

Dr. Cullen is a past-president of the American Academy of Optometry. He serves as an international advisor to several universities and national optometric organizations. He has acted as an expert reviewer on optical radiation effects on the eye for both the United Nations and the World Health Organization. He is a delegate to the World Council of Optometry where he is Co-Chairman of the Education Committee.

Over the past 35 years his research activities have included ocular circulation and angiography, contact lenses, optical radiation and ophthalmic materials. His major interests are ocular environmental toxicology specialising in the effects of ultraviolet radiation on the eye and environmental safety issues. Dr. Cullen has been an invited lecturer in every Canadian province except PEI, the majority of the United States and more than twenty other countries on every continent.

Dr. Cullen is a former Director of the School of Optometry and Associate Dean of Science. As a Full Professor in the School his primary teaching responsibilities are anterior segment disease, systemic disease and ocular health clinic.

Dr. Tony Cullen(right) receiving the citation scroll as the 2001 International Optometrist of the Year from Dr. Scott Brisbin (UW OD 1975), President of the World Council of Optometry, at the General Delegates Meeting in Helsinki.
Continuing Education TPA 2001, THANK YOU’S

Regular readers of our newsletter will recall that the School undertook an ambitious continuing education programme for 2000/2001. Phase I, Surpassing QA Expectations, was warmly received and well attended in May 2000. Continuing Education for the new Millennium Phase II TPAs was presented in two sections, Didactic and Practical, in February and April of this year and was reported in our Spring 2001 issue.

Those who attended our programme this year will understand the enormous undertaking that this programme presented. In total 100 hours of continuing education were presented over 11 days, almost 4 times our usual annual programme. The programme was a huge success despite the size and “thank you’s” are very much in order.

First, to our sponsors, Thank You! Notwithstanding what appeared to be a substantial cost for our programme, sponsorship helped keep the fees down. Without generous support from our friends in the profession, the programme simply would not have been viable. The School is committed to providing the very best continuing education and recruited world-renowned expertise for our programme. This philosophy has significant cost implications which is why we sought and received financial support from our industry friends. Alcon Canada, our platinum sponsor, was onboard early allowing us to ensure that the programme would be delivered without fear of cancellation. Innova Medial Ophthalmrics supplied a fantastic array of speciality equipment for the practical section. Several companies who are normally part of our trade show donated their trade show fees to the programme. Viva International, Ophtapharma Canada Inc., Western Optical, and R&R Optical all graciously provided financial support that helped keep our programme fees as low as possible.

Second, to our programme staff, Thank You! Anyone who has been involved in the organization of a programme such as this can appreciate the enormity of the task. Recognition is due these dedicated folks. Drs. Gino Bilotto, Michelle Senchyna and Lisa Prokopich developed, organized, managed and delivered this very successful programme. A year of planning and development went into presenting the 11 days. Ms. Elizabeth Reidt, Ms. Anne Weber and Ms. Marilyn Smith, our staff, deserve many thanks for the incredibly long and demanding hours leading up to and during the programme. Students also played a big part in the programme so we have a special “thanks” for them for giving up their spring break.

And last, but certainly not least, attendees, Thank You! Your loyalty and support for the School is very much appreciated. We hope that your experience was enjoyable and that you will continue to support future continuing education course offerings at the School of Optometry.
Conference Activity

**Ontario Association of Optometrists 2001 Annual Symposium**
Hamilton, Ontario, April 5–7, 2001
A. Cullen – “So You Have a Headache” and “Secrets of the Sclera”
L. Jones – “Contact Lenses Today”

**Annual Meeting of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology**
Fort Lauderdale, Florida, April 29–May 4, 2001
Silvestri G, McCreesh BM, Quinn MJ, and Hudson C – “Diabetic macular edema: A comparison of scanning laser derived topographic edema maps and clinical mapping to detect progression”
J.P. Varikooty, Simpson T, Jones L, and Fonn D – “Ocular discomfort during tear drying: A method to simultaneously acquire discomfort ratings, ocular surface video and sensation attributes on a pseudocontinuous scale”
McCreesh BM, Hudson C, Quinn MJ, Flanagan JG, and Silvestri G – “Change over time of a scanning laser derived edema index in patients with progressing diabetic macular edema”
Gilmore, E and Hudson C – “Frequency-of-seeing characteristics of the short-wavelength sensitive visual pathway in young normal subjects”

**8th Annual Ontario Health Promotion Summer School, Presented by the Centre for Health Promotion of the University of Toronto**
London, Ontario, June 2001
B. Bobier – “Outcome Measures in Pre-School Vision Screening”

**New Zealand Contact Lens Society**
Blenheim, New Zealand, March 2001
L. Jones – Keynote address

**BCLA Conference**
K. Dumbleton, Fonn D, Jones L, Williams-Lyn D, and Richter, D – “Severity and management of contact lens related complications with continuous wear of high Dk silicone hydrogel lenses”

**Dallos Award Lecture**
L. Jones – “In vitro evaluation of the dehydration characteristics of siliconehydrogel and conventional hydrogel contact lens materials”

When Irish Eyes Are Smiling!

Edward Gilmore joined the School of Optometry as a Canadian Institutes of Health Research Postdoctoral Fellow (Health Professional Degree) in June.

Ed undertook his Optometry professional qualification at the School of Biomedical Sciences, University of Ulster, Northern Ireland and graduated with a First Class Honours degree in June 1999. He then took up a pre-registration position at Cheltenham General Hospital, Gloucestershire, England in August 1999, where he gained extensive experience in ocular disease, low vision and contact lens optometric practice. Prior to joining the School, Ed worked as a research assistant in the Clinical Vision Science Laboratory, Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast for 8 months.

Ed is currently enrolled as a Masters student (supervised by Dr Chris Hudson) and has commenced studies that will document the natural history, and establish new markers, of early diabetic retinopathy. Ed brings much needed experience and enthusiasm to the Multi-Disciplinary Laboratory for the Research of Sight-Threatening Diabetic Retinopathy.

Welcome to the School, Ed!
“Websites ‘R’ Us” or that’s the way it seems around the Centre for Contact Lens Research (CCLR) these days. The CCLR which, in its thirteen year history, has studied a wide variety of topics related to the eye, the ocular response to contact lens wear, contact lens materials and contact lens care products, has its eye, at least partially, on cyberspace.

A search of previously published information is a useful tool to use as a starting point for anyone who is interested in increasing his or her knowledge of a particular topic. Almost since its inception the CCLR has been attempting to establish an internal database of references to published information related to the cornea and contact lenses. These efforts recently caught the attention of Bausch & Lomb and they presented the CCLR with a proposal to combine Bausch & Lomb’s financial backing with the CCLR’s expertise. As a result an Online Searchable Contact Lens Reference Database is being developed and will be launched in the Fall of 2001. It encompasses approximately 45 journals and consists, initially, of approximately 25,000 references. Abstracts are included with the majority of the references and the information will be updated on a monthly basis. The database will be accessed by the public through the Bausch & Lomb website at www.bausch.com.

Silicone hydrogel contact lenses have been in development for the past ten years and the CCLR has participated in much of the research. Over that time they have gained considerable expertise to the point that the Centre is now collectively one of the leading experts worldwide on silicone hydrogels. CIBA Vision realised an opportunity to capitalize on this expertise as an educational resource for practitioners, students and colleagues. They approached the CCLR to develop a website that would amass the information that has been published by CCLR members and other groups and to present it in an “easy to access and use” manner. The CCLR subsequently teamed up with the Cooperative Research Centre for Eye Research & Technology (CRCERT) in Sydney, Australia and, with the combined expertise and CIBA Vision’s funding, the website was developed and launched in August, 2001. It currently includes editorial type articles by the world’s leading experts, a research library containing a glossary of terms, current publications and a question and answer section. The information is updated regularly and more features are planned for the future. The website can be found at www.siliconehydrogels.com.

While these websites have involved considerable time and effort by CCLR members, they have not been the sole focus of activity in the Centre. CCLR members continue to pursue research in extended wear of contact lenses, presbyopic contact lens options, imaging and digitizing of ocular features and many more exciting areas of cornea and contact lens related research. For more information on the CCLR and their activities, a visit to their website at www.optometry.uwaterloo.ca/~cclr/.

NEWSLETTER SUGGESTIONS?

Please send your comments and submission ideas to Lauren Walker
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New Assistive Device Aid Brings the World Back to Life for People with Low Vision

by Mark Eltis

Betacom Inc., an innovator in the development of vision and technology solutions for independent living has recently put its latest vision aid, The VisAble Video telescope™ on the market. The VVT is “a hand held portable video vision aid ... designed to redress common dimensions of impairment such as visual acuity, reduced contrast sensitivity reduced scotopic function and glare sensitivity.” This new device offers people with low vision the ability to see objects and text at all distances, using a hand-held, autofocusing video device with zoom magnification and contrast enhancement features. The enhanced image features high SVGA resolution, low light sensitivity, and displays images over a very large field of view. This unique assistive device was developed in co-operation with optometrists at UW’s Centre for Sight Enhancement.

Edward Long, President and CEO of Telesensory Corporation, one of the international distributors of the VVT says that the invention “is an exiting new product that we think will provide increased independence for people with vision impairment.” The VVT evolved from a ten-year research and development partnership between Waterloo’s Centre for Sight Enhancement and Betacom Corp., with funding from the Ontario Rehabilitation Technology Consortium. According to Dr. Ann Plotkin, head of the Centre for Sight Enhancement only one in ten patients requiring low vision treatment actually reach one of these specialised centres. It is often difficult for patients to navigate through the maze of our health care services to find clinicians who provide contemporary low vision care. Moreover, there is the financial hurdle of paying costs not covered by insurance.

Dr. Graham Strong, Director of the School of Optometry says that life-changing assistive device technology is often available to help people, but many people never find it because of the paucity of clinical low vision services available across the country. And when people do find devices like the VVT that will help them tremendously, funding is a major problem. In the end, Strong believes the aging baby boomer population will greatly increase the demand for products such as the VVT which will serve as a catalyst for health care reforms, ultimately increasing the accessibility of these sight-enhancing devices to the public.

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Optometry Clinic Outreach

by Marlee Spafford

It is good to take a moment every once in awhile to celebrate the extra and unique activities provided by University of Waterloo Optometry Clinic personnel. Each year, the Clinic is pleased to provide a variety of outreach services in the community that enrich the lives of both the members of the community and the personnel involved.

In July, 165 children benefited from the efforts of three of our opticians, Paul Finney, John Haney and Marilyn Smith. They worked together to support Children’s Farm Safety Day in the region. Paul and John made 200 pairs of sunglasses for children at no charge to the participants or the program and Marilyn worked with the Working Committee for Children’s Safety Day 2001. Children were taught about all forms of safety on the farm including how to protect their eyes.

Access to eye care is a concern of all optometrists and there are ways in which the Optometry Clinic tries to help sectors of the community. Our resident (currently Dr. Trent Ujimoto) and a group of interns intermittently provide a day of home care. People who are housebound (typically because of physical challenges) are examined in their homes and required spectacles are delivered on a subsequent day. The Clinic also receives calls from a local women’s shelter. The shelter sometimes houses a woman who is in need of eye care and unable to pay for a non-insured eye exam. The care is provided at no charge. During most summers, the Clinic also provides no-charge examinations for a limited number of child victims who have lived near areas affected by the Chernobyl nuclear accident. These children visit the Kitchener-Waterloo area for several weeks in the summer as part of a program to benefit their health and overall welfare.

Heidi Wagner, Chairperson, CFSO 2001

On Thursday June 14, 2001, the graduation awards ceremony was held at the School of Optometry. This ceremony honours graduating students and their academic performance in both didactic and clinical courses. Twenty five awards were presented. Dr Susan Bischof obtained the top academic standing in the graduating class. As well, there were 23 students on the Dean’s Honours List (students must have an overall average of at least 80% to be on the Dean’s Honours List). Also at the ceremony, Dr Lyndon Jones was presented with the Distinguished Teaching Award and Dr Debbie Jones was presented with the Distinguished Clinical Teaching Award. Guest speakers included Dr Pierre Simonet, from the Université de Montréal and Dr. Richard Kniaziev from the Canadian Association of Optometrists.
Looking Out for the Vision of Canadian Soldiers

by Jeff Hovis

Drs. Jeff Hovis and Ralph Chou of the Ophthalmic Standards Laboratory have undertaken several projects for the Canadian military’s “Clothe the Soldier” initiative during the past two years. Their research has focused on developing optical performance standards for eye and face protectors for the Department of National Defence. The impetus for the protective eyewear is the steady rise in battlefield related eye injuries that has been occurring over the last century and the new laser threats. Results from their work will be used to help evaluate the equipment being considered for use by the Canadian Forces.

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A College President Steps Down

by Bill Bobier

If one studies the successful steps in the advancement of Optometry in Ontario, one of the greatest victories was the Health Disciplines Act of 1974, in which Optometry gained the status of a self-regulated health profession, a position then shared only with medicine, dentistry, pharmacy and nursing. In addition, concessions were made for privileges that are well established today, use of diagnostics and use of the doctor title are a couple of examples. It has been pointed out that the reason that the small profession of optometry overcame what appeared to be extremely difficult political odds at the time was the strong interaction between the College, Association and School.

The importance of the harmony of the 70s was something that Susan Cooper brought to her presidency which began in 1999. Having served on numerous College committees and the executive for 12 years prior, the presidency afforded Susan the opportunity to consolidate her previous efforts to increase communication among the various Optometric organisations, the College, the school, including faculty and students, the OAO, and the Vision Institute. She correctly recognised that although each had a different mandate, the resulting differing points of view should foster discussion and allow more informed solutions.

Susan worked towards the College being more open and approachable towards members. In addition, she oversaw improved efficiency in college operations. Stepping down from the presidency does not mean ending her leadership within the profession. In her own words “Now that I have ended my term as president, I have a new direction. As chair of QA I am looking forward to refining our Random Assessment Program. This profession is ever changing and as such, the QA program will be constantly changing and evolving.” In addition, she will be working towards ensuring that young optometrists are involved in Optometric organisations. “My grad year of 1977 is well into the older half of the profession in this province, and there is something to be said for experience, but we need new and fresh ideas, and we need these people to participate in their professional organizations.”

Susan—on behalf of the School of Optometry we wish you continued success and thank you for your dedication and insights as the president of the College of Optometrists of Ontario.
Waterloo Student to Redesign Museum Web site

by Mark Eltis

Third year computer science student, Saeed Gharnagh has joined the Museum team to help revamp its website. Saeed comes to the Museum of Visual Science through the University of Waterloo Co-op Education and Career Services Work Placement Program.

Saeed, an Ontario Scholar, has received rave reviews for his work as a security analyst for the Royal Bank Financial group, and for his work overseas at the Sharif Institute in Iran. His varied background in computer studies and his special interest in programming will make him a valuable addition to the School of Optometry and his talent of great benefit to both the Museum and those visitors who are only a mouse click away.

http://www.optometry.uwaterloo.ca/~museum/
Chloë Callender has spent over 30 years fighting for social justice. Reminiscing on her encounters with racism in Canada this tireless educator, community developer and leadership trainer says, “I don’t judge a country by some little experiences”. In fact, Chloë Callender has spent most of her life teaching people not to succumb to prejudice and ignorance.

The first race relations consultant the Waterloo Catholic District School Board has ever known, Mrs. Callender was the guest of honour at this year’s Mayor’s Dinner in Kitchener. Her husband Dr. Murchison Callender, a professor emeritus at the School of Optometry, and her family were at her side. “I think more people should realise that with support systems around a person they are bound to succeed,” says this founding member of the K-W Caribbean Canadian Cultural Association and first president of the local chapter of the Black Woman of Canada. Chloë Callender’s interests are as diverse as the community which she has so diligently served. Having completed two terms on the Board of Governors and Senate at WLU and the K-W YMCA, she is presently serving on the board of the Canadian Network for Peace and Conflict Resolution and the board of trustees at St Mary’s hospital.

This former recipient of the Woman of the Year award for her achievements in the area of multiculturalism has wasted little time since retiring. Chloë Callender was the first co-ordinator of the Betty Thompson Youth Centre helping troubled teens. She also co-founded project “Skylark” which encourages coexistence among different groups and celebrating the differences that make our country unique. Strength through diversity has always been a cornerstone of Chloë Callender’s world-view. She has always combated ignorance by emphasising the contributions of minorities to our society and teaching people to open their hearts and minds. “If you expect negative things from someone, quite often, that’s what they’ll give you. But if your expectations are positive, very often the results will be the same”. If the last 30 years are any indication, we can expect Chloë Callender to continue to be a pillar of the community and an example to us all.

Recent Graduates

Rajaraman Suryakumar, MSc
Photorefractive measurement of convergence-accommodation in children

Sophia Zaidi, MSc
Quantification of chick lens crystallins in experimentally induced ametropia

Jennifer Hunter, MSc
Optical analysis of new methods for presbyopia correction

Derek Louie, MSc
Method development for the quantification of tear film sIgA and lysozyme deposits on silicone-hydrogel contact lenses

Angela Kyveris, MSc
Development and utilization of methods to characterize human ocular prostanoid receptors

Vivian Choh, PhD
A novel in situ physiological model to measure optical & biophysical changes during avian accommodation

Kitchener Mayor Carl Zehr (left) with Chloë Callender (right).
A proud supporter of Optometry in Canada
New Acquisition

Tradecards first appeared in England during the early part of the 17th century. They served a dual function by directing people to stores during a time when street numbering systems did not exist, while advertising soap, cosmetics, and medicinal products as seen here.

Tradecards became popular partially due to the high cost of advertising. After the turn of the century, the production of tradecards diminished as newspaper and periodical distribution increased and advertising became more affordable. The rise in mail order catalogues and increased regulations pertaining to the advertising of patent medicine are both thought to have contributed to the end of tradecard production.

(Above), Dr Isaac Thompson’s Celebrated Eye Water—25 cents per bottle. John L. Thompson, Prop’r, Troy N.Y.

MUSEUM Matters

Coalition of Canadian Health-Care Museums and Archives

In 1999, the Coalition of Canadian Health-Care Museums and Archives was formed. Today, the coalition consists of over twenty-seven institutional and individual members dedicated to the preservation of the history of health care.

If you wish to learn more about the various health care museums and archives in Canada, please explore the CHIN (Canadian Heritage Information Network) website at www.chin.gc.ca/

Engineering Science Quest returns

Once again, the Museum of Visual Science hosted the ESQ (Engineering Science Quest) Camp from the University of Waterloo. Once a week for eight weeks, groups of children 6-8 years of age trekked across campus to the School of Optometry to learn about everything from the anatomy of the eye to the history of spectacles and eye safety.

This summer, there was a special emphasis placed on introducing children to optometric instruments and the importance of regular eye examinations. Our visitors were able to combine learning and fun by experiencing live demonstrations.

Museum Assistant Mark Eltis gives a tour of the Museum to young visitors from ESQ Camp.

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