

PEOPLE PROFILE

UPEI SALUTES YOU URBIE!



"A faithful fan's the noblest work of God and an indispensable ingredient to create and maintain team spirit and morale... For years uncounted, St. Dunstan's teams have had such a supporter... His image became so much a part of our athletic life that his memory will outlive alike the honey of victory or the gall of defeat."

These well-deserved words were used to describe the loyalty and support of Urban Sylvester "Urbie", McInnis, at the 1969 St. Dunstan's Award Banquet, where he received a testament of honour, and was accorded an honorary life membership in St. Dunstan's Varsity Club. Urbie's support for the old alma mater's sport teams has continued with the formation of UPEI. Urbie is such an important part of UPEI and has so much to tell about its life and history that the SUN felt it was about time this fountain of information was tapped.

Urban, more commonly called Urbie by all, was born in St. Andrews, N.B. but came to P.E.I. when he was only six weeks old. He lived in St. Vincent's Orphanage, which is now the Addiction Foundation of P.E.I., situated across the street from the campus. While growing up there,

Urbie always planned to work across the street at the University. When he was 26 years old he left the orphanage and worked at Mount St. Mary's, only for one year, until he came to St. Dunstan's in May of 1948. That makes it 31 years that Urbie has worked for the two universities, the longest worker on campus.

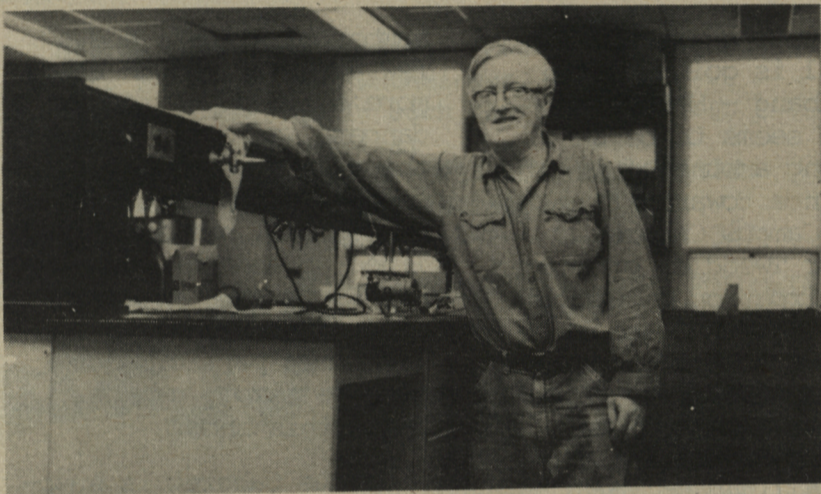
Urbie remembers much about the earlier days of the University. Quite a few changes have taken place since then! When Urbie first came here to work there were only four buildings: Dalton Hall, Cass, Main Building and Memorial Hall. There was also a farm on campus which was worked normally. Dalton Hall, which has since been renovated, was once a residence. The residence was all male. No girls were living on campus then. The top floor of Main was also used as a dormitory, until not that long ago. Mr. Mike Hennessey, the Registrar, is one of the former students who lived on the top floor of Main. Urbie also remembers some professors who have come back to UPEI after having studied at S.D.U. Rev. Dr. Charlie Cheverie, Rev. Dr. Thomas MacLellan, Rev. Dr. Wendell MacIntyre, and Rev. Dr. Allan MacDonald were once on campus with Urbie as students, now as teachers. (We tried to find out how they behaved during their student days but I think Urbie has been warned. He was very discreet.)

Urbie remembers when the Gym was built in 1950. Up until that time he had had to go in town for basketball games. Also, at first there was only an Outdoor Rink here so all hockey games were played at the Forum. (Times haven't changed that much, Urbie!) The dining hall

used to be in Main basement, where Security is now located, and on the floor above that, in Student Services department, the elevated floor there shows where the Chapel's altar was. Marian Hall, the first girls' residence, was built in 1959, followed by Bernadine in '68.

In April 1969, Saint Dunstan's University and

like working with students and I think they like me too." Gordie Grovestine, Lab Assistant in Biology, who knows Urbie well, backs this up: "He's a darlin' fellow and all the students like him." Millan Smith, who has worked with Urbie in Duffy Building for 7 or 8 years, says, "He's a nice fellow to work with," and he adds: "He likes the women." Urbie has seen St. Dunstan's



Prince of Wales College merged, to establish UPEI. The biggest change Urbie found was that the "priests and nuns were all gone". He says he has now become used to this and likes the present system as much as the old.

Urbie was part of the maintenance strike which lasted for 3 weeks in October-November of '75. He says, "I wasn't much for it but had to go along with it because I was in the Union." At one point some students and professors joined in sympathy with the strikers and marched down to the legislature, where Premier Campbell told them to go back to arbitration. Urbie feels everyone was satisfied when the strike was over.

Urbie has had an interesting history at the University. He attends almost all home sports events and has done some travelling with the football team. He remembers the time the UPEI Debating Team won the Atlantic Championship and in a victory parade, Urbie rode a horse through the middle of Charlottetown. Another time some Biology students hung a skeleton in the back entrance of Duffy for Urbie to find. Urbie now works in Duffy Building all the time, enjoys it, but has worked at one time in almost all the other buildings. He says, "I

expand and grow to become UPEI, which continues to grow. His opinion on establishing a Veterinary School at UPEI is: "I think it would be good. It would increase the number of students and make them more interested to come here."

Urbie has lived in residence since he came to work at the University. He now lives with the male students in Marian Hall, since it became a male residence. He has a private room and says he doesn't mind the noise, "as long as it's not too late." He says he finds the food from the cafeteria to be fine, even though some other people complain. "You'll always have some people who don't like it", he notes. He enjoys living with the students, he adds.

Urbie will be 58 years old on April 25. That means he will be retiring 7 years from July. When that time comes, he says, "I'll be lonesome to leave here, because it's my home." Not only will he miss UPEI but he will be missed by the students, staff and faculty alike. He is an important part of UPEI, as a worker, fan, and friend. To quote his testament of honour, "Urbie has become a legend and a name. He is part of the spirit of St. Dunstan's (and UPEI)." We salute you, Urbie, for your dedication to and support of UPEI.

