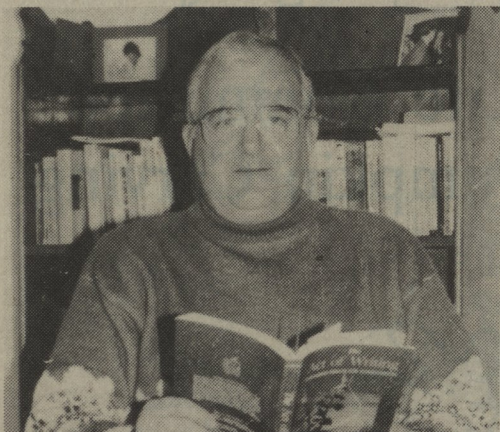

Professor Focus

By Kheng-Wee

Francis J. Ledwell,
Professor of English



Professor Ledwell was born in 1930, in a little town called St. Peter's in P.E.I. He graduated from Saint Dunstan's University with a Bachelor degree in Arts with a major in History. He went on further study in Theology at Saint Augustine's in Toronto. He then taught in Saint Dunstan's High School, where he was a principal for nine years. "During the course of that time, I took some mathematics courses at Boston University, and I eventually taught Freshman and Engineering mathematics at the college," he said. At the age of 34, he went and took his Master degree in English at Notre Dame.

When asked if U.P.E.I. has changed a lot since the days of St. Dunstan's, Professor Ledwell declared "IMMEASURABLY!!" He told me that there were around 250 students back then and only about 8% of those students were females. "Practically everyone lived in residence. Everyone knew everyone else." Life as a young student was full of discipline. "We were not permitted out at nights except for one night a week. We had to be up and out for seven o'clock every morning. If one was to miss more than three classes, then one was not permitted a grade for that course." Although he led a strict life, it did not stop him from behaving like today's students. "We

had all kinds of fun. For example, playing sports, playing bridge, going to dances, going out on dates," he grinned. "When I was an undergraduate, there wasn't any house parties.

There were always large group parties where we would have parties with the nurses from the nursing school downtown. This is how we always get together!" Therefore, this made up for the lack of female students on campus! "The nursing school was our major resource!"

We were comparing students of generations and Professor Ledwell said wistfully, "people themselves don't change. The students now and the students then are the same; wonderful, lively, full of life, full of FUN, sometimes going a little bit to excess, everybody always does. That's what it is to be young." The biggest difference he sees in students today in contrast to his student days is, as he said; "students now tend to take themselves much more seriously. It is a fact of life. Everybody was laid-back in my time, there wasn't a great deal of concern about competing against each other."

Taking a trip back memory lane, Professor Ledwell found himself once more in a big arena of Notre Dame where the football games were played. He recalled vividly the amount of people that was there; "at a football game with sixty thousand people sitting there was almost the population of P.E.I. That's astounding!" The other part of the memory lane trip was not as thrilling to Professor Ledwell as he said with a sober voice; "I've had my down times as a student. I had some difficulties maintaining my interests with Latin and Philosophy. I got tired of Latin. I did, I REALLY did!" There were two professors who influenced him the most when he was a student. One of the professor turns out to be Professor O' Grady, who is currently with U.P.E.I.'s English department. "He was my teacher and my mentor for many years. We have been in association with each other ever since 1948. Can you believe it?" Professor Ledwell laughed. "I was