

# UPEI Celebrates Lack of Permanent Classrooms

by Erin FAGAN

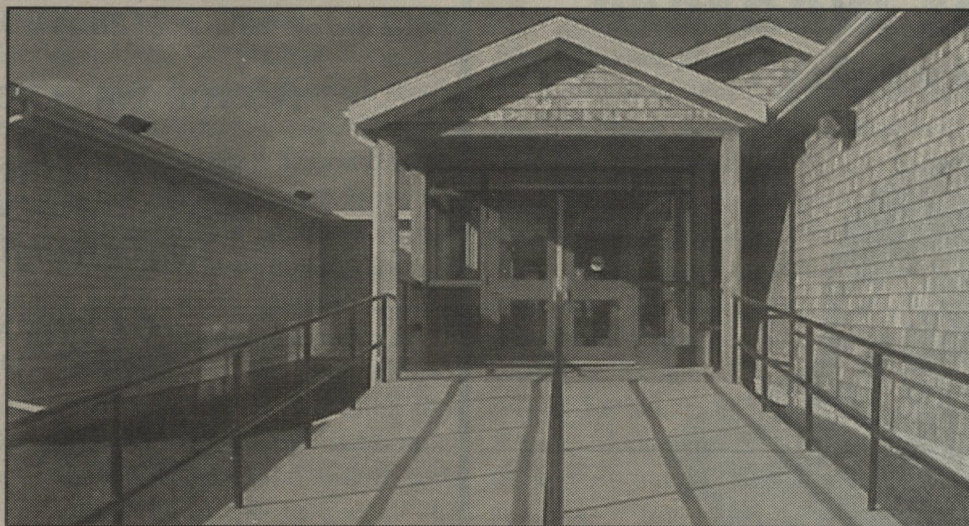
On Wednesday of October 17th, at approximately 12:30 p.m., a small group of students could be found in the lobby of the classroom centre, cramming last minute details for an afternoon Theatre Studies mid-term. Simultaneously, an open house was being held as an official, inaugural ceremony for the new building. The open house, complete with a ribbon-cutting, was attended by various UPEI officials and employees of Roseneath Homes and the APM Group, the makers of the modular structure.

As UPEI President Wade MacLaughlan launched the ceremony, Tim Banks (the head of APM), told the students that, "We're going to feed you after," referring to a large lunch spread awaiting everyone in room 101. MacLaughlan also expressed that, "I'm glad they're (the studying students) having a free lunch."

"We're really proud of this facility," he added, "This place is growing. . .it has reminded me that this is a university on the move. This is to celebrate that we've (UPEI and Roseneath) worked together and done this in a very short time."

Noting the pouring rain outside, MacLaughlan also remarked on the helpfulness of having "a roof over your head, especially on days like this," and invited the crowd to imagine sitting out in the field.

MacLaughlan, incidentally, made reference to the collaboration's genesis on a Saturday morning about five or six months ago, alluding to a "fertile" meeting with Tim Banks. Later, while elaborating on this aside, he called it a "brainstorm."



The new classroom centre. Yay!

"We were looking at the Alumni, and enrollment growing. We were not in a position to build new buildings at that time . . . it takes years to do permanent construction."

"It is amazing what you can do with modular buildings now, and it works. Everything I hear is positive . . .the rooms have good sound and light," MacLaughlan added.

Kent Sheen of Roseneath Homes took the podium next, and described what has been the company's "really great first year in business." Having built forty modular buildings over the year, he remarked that "this is our greatest accomplishment. . .these are very different from mobile classrooms of the past."

He then described the features of the building and the process of construction. Ten 32 by 48 foot units were built at Roseneath's Poole's Corner site, and were then transported by truck. The individual units sat over part of the summer in the parking lot while the foundation was laid, and then the units were assembled to form six large classrooms and two AVC

research offices. This on-site process took about eight weeks.

The building, as described by Sheen and the displays at the open house, was designed to be moveable and expandable according to the university's needs. The most celebrated features, as cited by the official press release, are the concrete foundation and tiles, many large windows for natural light, and in-floor heating. Sheen remarked on the usage of similar modular units in other projects such as "many different types of businesses, recreation centres, or as a senior's complex."

Sheen also took the time to thank UPEI representatives, Roseneath employees, and Tim Banks, and alluded to the "twists and turns along the way."

After the ribbon-cutting and photo shoot, the audience was invited into room 101 for mixing and mingling, where a manual slide show and displays were featured.

The prime attraction, as alluded to by previous speakers, was the tempting assortment of sandwich wraps, snacks, desserts and beverages as catered by Cara, complete with Impressions cafe

mints, autumnal flower arrangements, and brightly coloured gourds for decoration.

Also in attendance were Student Union representatives, Cynthia Dennis and Caolan Moore, who had been invited to attend.

"We're happy to be here . . . we're fairly happy with the building," stated Dennis, who added that, "It's great that we're expanding here at UPEI."

Another student, who had been studying in the lobby, noted that "they're really trying to promote this."

As the event wrapped up around 1:30, another group of students could be found just outside the room. They were waiting for their 1:30 class in room 101.

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