

covenant

CANADIAN REFORMED TEACHERS' COLLEGE

"...tell the next generation..."

Chairman's Message ~ Martha De Gelder

**Our hearts are singing with joy and praise.
Great is our God who answers prayer!**

It is with gratitude to him that we announce the appointment of Mr. Allard Gunnink (presently principal of Immanuel Christian School in Winnipeg) to the position of full-time lecturer at Covenant College. He will join our faculty in August 2004, D.V. but is already busy acquainting himself with all the facets and requirements of this position. May God bless Allard during this time of preparation.

Another reason for great thankfulness is the number of students who have enrolled at the college this year. It is wonderful to see that so many young people who wish to pursue a teaching career and who desire to learn how they may carry out this task in the context of God's Word and to the glory of his name. Studying in our one-year program are Ed Balch, Angela Dokter, Joel Sandink, Doug Sikma, and Jonathan vanDyken. In the first year of our three-year program are Christa Agema, Reuel Feenstra, Heidi Kingma, Jennifer Lodder, Eric Smith, Walter Smith, Linnet vanDijk, Marla vanDijk, Mary-Ellen van Doornik, and Jessica Vis. Julia Schutten and Michelle Versteeg are studying as year two students while Cornelius Broersma, Katherine Nijenhuis, Jackie Reinink, and Elizabeth Smith study as year three students. May God continue to give all that is needed day-by-day to those who study at the college.

Further, we thank God that our present faculty members continue in their task at Covenant College: Rev. D.G.J. Agema, Mme. T. Boisvert, Mrs. K Dieleman, Mr. W.F. Horsman, Miss J. Kingma, Dr. F.G. Oosterhoff, Dr. A. Witten and Dr. C. van Halen-Faber. May God continue to grant strength and wisdom to these instructors.

Finally, we are deeply grateful to God for continuing to provide for all our needs. We praise him for the many loyal and faithful supporters who give from what he has given them for the education of future teachers. To God be the glory!



“Seeing Through Apples...”

Christine van Halen-Faber



On November 20, 2003, on the occasion of the defence of my dissertation, a festive reception was hosted by the Center for Teacher Development at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. This ceremony was attended by my supportive, patient, and understanding spouse, my grateful parents and siblings, several hopeful student-colleagues,

my always-encouraging doctoral supervisor (Professor C.T. Patrick Diamond) and helpful committee members (Professors David Booth and Ardra Cole) and other faculty, and a thoughtful external examiner (Professor Max van Manen, University of Alberta). Earlier that day, I had successfully defended my doctoral thesis leading to the Doctor of Philosophy degree. This constitutes the "end" of a journey that began in 1999. Faithfully supported by my colleagues and of the Board of Covenant College, I completed the required course work and the comprehensive examination, and then embarked on the research and the writing of a dissertation. I chose to do an inquiry into the learning that occurs when students become student-teachers, then move to become teacher-candidates, and finally enter the profession as "first-year teachers." I had chosen to work with six enthusiastic students (now third-year teachers!) at our College. I collected the "data" for my study throughout the year these six co-participants were enrolled in the Diploma of Education program, and

then followed them during their summer-of-preparation and into the first three months of teaching.

With the support of my supervisor and Committee, I wrote about the unique facets of our teacher preparation program that results in teacher development, explaining how such a program of studies includes faith-based values, and supports the distinct character of our Reformed Christian schools.

“ I chose to do an inquiry into the learning that occurs when students become student-teachers, then move to become teacher-candidates, and finally enter the profession as “first-year teachers” .

My thesis is entitled, *Seeing through apples... An exploration into the ethics and aesthetics of a teacher-educator-researcher's arts-based beginnings*, and in the course of seven chapters, I use a series of shape-changing apples as a metaphor to convey aspects of the experience of the six teachers, and my own experiences as a teacher-educator researcher. The work follows a qualitative research design, is narrative in its approach to the text, and uses artistic (visual and poetic) re-presentations of the "data."

Working in the field of educational inquiry, but within the philosophical constructs of epistemology (theory of knowledge) and ontology (theory of existence), I am especially interested in exploring how intuition and imagination play a role in educational research, and how these in turn connect with axiology (theory of ethics and aesthetics). I use the traditional medium of batik to illustrate how an inquiry, the very "life work" of an inquirer, is also an evolving and shape-changing work of art. I further emphasize how all forms of inquiry render a partial seeing at best, "a seeing dimly"

(1 Cor. 13:12), even when it is a seeing through the eyes of faith. Teaching and learning, including a learning-to-teach at our Covenant Teachers' College, is only a small part of a much larger task, as together we "... tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord" (Psalm 78:4). Together we may look forward to that great day when we will know fully as we are fully known. Indeed, this prospect provides us with great comfort and thankfulness!

From the Seat of the Vice-Chairman

~ Peter Vandersluis

For the past year I have had the honour of working alongside an enthusiastic and devoted team of governors. From month to month we were able to take up the task of tending to the needs of Covenant College. This has included promoting the cause of the college within our reformed community; managing its resources; tending to staffing requirements, student enrolment, and property needs; seeking accreditation, and planning for the future.

The past months have seen some governors retire and new ones come on board. We especially take note of the retirement of Mr. Jack Pieterman. Jack has served as governor for many years, and as chairman for a number of them. His experience and input will be missed. As board, we ask that the Lord will bless all who have laboured and who continue to labour for the college in this way.

One of the tasks the board continues to grapple with is that of seeking accreditation. We have many challenging hurdles to overcome in this regard, yet our commitment remains firm. It is the vision of the Board that graduates from Covenant College be able to serve schools across Canada and in the U.S.A.

One of the requirements for accreditation is that we have a constitution and set of by-laws that are available on the Internet. Over the past several years, the Board has been busy updating our constitution and by-laws and we thank all member societies across Canada who provided feedback in this regard. With this task nearing completion, we have established a college website. Please visit us at www.covenantteacherscollege.com

One further matter that constantly draws the attention of the governors is that of finances. For three years in a row the college has operated on a deficit income. It is of great concern to the governors that we operate in a fiscally responsible manner. This has been realized in the fact that total expenditures for these years have been only about 90% of our budgeted amount. Needless to say, cutbacks eventually catch up with any organization and things can only be put off for so long (e.g., paving as required by our building permit). It is also true that seeking accreditation does not come without a price tag. We appeal to all of you, therefore, to consider supporting the college with your financial resources. The suggested donation for 2003/04 is \$300.00, but any amount is greatly appreciated. Consider it an investment for the future!"

As I reflect back upon my first year as governor at the college I see the mighty hand of our God at work. Each day the students have been able to open their books and be led through the various courses by well qualified instructors, and all of this within the context of the Scriptures and our Reformed Confessions. The cooperation of our Reformed schools for the practicum component of our programs has continued--for which we are grateful. The mentoring provided by seasoned teachers is invaluable. Thank you! As Board we expect that, with the Lord's blessing, our current student enrolment of twenty-one will cause our schools to be well served in the years to come. This, after all, is the goal that all who labour at and for Covenant College seek to attain.

CONGRATULATIONS!

As Mrs. de Gelder subtly noted in her opening piece in this newsletter, our principal, Mrs. Christine van Halen-Faber, recently saw her studies crowned with a doctorate degree in philosophy. Dr. van Halen did her graduate work at OISE (the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education), Canada's premier school for educational research. At our request, she has written a summary of her research project for our readers.

That project, I may add, is an important and innovative one. The entire area of arts-informed approaches to knowing is new; little had been done so far in the field explored by Christine, and her dissertation will no doubt gain widespread attention.

As Board members we express our pride and gratitude upon the completion of this truly pioneering work and we extend our sincere congratulations to Dr. van Halen. It is our heartfelt wish that, under the Lord's blessing, she may be enabled to serve our College and our College community for many years to come!

On behalf of the Board,
Sharon Hofsink



Two Special Book Collections

Upon entering our library, the eyes of a visitor will undoubtedly be drawn to a beautiful oak cabinet, now the home of two very special book collections given to us by the founding principal of the college, the late Mr. T.M.P. Vanderven. For us, these books are a fitting reminder of our brother's work and place within our college. We remember Tony as a teacher whose love for the Word was obvious as he strove to tell the next generation of teachers. We remember him as a colleague whose love for books was equally obvious. All kinds of books. Books on teaching and learning, philosophy, curriculum design, language arts, the art and science of reading and writing, and... children's books. Books always had a very important place in colleague Vanderven's heart. An avid reader himself, Tony also collected books, even entire series of books.

Toward the end of his life, Tony expressed the wish that two of these complete series find a permanent home at Covenant College. We have complied gratefully with this wish. With deep appreciation, we thank Mrs. Adriana Vanderven and her family for the gift of two truly notable children's book collections: The Newbery Medal winners, and the Caldecott Award books.

The John Newbery Medal, named for an eighteenth-century English bookseller, is awarded annually by the American Library Association for the most distinguished American children's

book published in the previous year. The purpose of the award was stated as follows: "To encourage original creative work in the field of books for children. To emphasize to the public that contributions to the literature for children deserve similar recognition to poetry, plays, or novels. To give those librarians,



All kinds of books. Books on teaching and learning, philosophy, curriculum design, language arts, the art and science of reading and writing, and... children's books.

who make it their life work to serve children's reading interests, an opportunity to encourage good writing in this field." The Newbery Award became the first children's book award in the world and was awarded for the first time in 1922 to Hendrik Willem van Loon for his book, *The Story of Mankind*. This year's (2003) winner is Avi for his book, *Crispin, the cross of lead*.

The Randolph Caldecott Medal was named in honour of a nineteenth-century

English illustrator. This medal is also awarded by the American Library Association. It is presented to the artist who has created the most distinguished picture book of the year. A picture book for children is one that provides the child with a visual experience. Such a book has a collective unity of storyline, theme or concept, developed through a series of pictures. This medal was first awarded in 1938 to Dorothy P. Lathrop for her book, *Animals of the Bible. A Picture Book*. The 2003 winner is Eric Rohmann for his book, *My friend rabbit*.

As a college, we will take real care to

maintain these collections, and continue to purchase the winning choices as they are announced. These books will always have a special place in our library, the heart of our college.

**Are you cleaning up?
Are you downsizing?**

Do you not know what to do with your old issues of *Clarion* and *Canadian Reformed Magazine*? Covenant College would love to receive them.

Please contact us at
(905) 385-0634.