

Trent University needs a coat of arms!

Nathaniel Christopher

Next year will be Trent University's fortieth anniversary. This will be a momentous school year that ought to be marked with celebration and reflection. We could get a special cake, or put up another plaque, but I think we should use this milestone as impetus to apply for a Coat of Arms from the Canadian Heraldic Authority. Although heraldry has its origins in Europe, the Canadian Heraldic Authority was established in 1988 and the heralds incorporate both European and Indigenous designs in their work.

Heraldry draws its origins from the Middle Ages, when knights would paint their shields with individual emblems as a form of self-identification. Gradually the art and science of heraldry developed beyond the painted shields of warrior knights. The sovereign who in turn appointed heralds to administer this authority in their name assumed the control over granting and using arms. A Coat of Arms is a powerful expression

of authority, ownership and identity. Heraldry has a timeless quality that sets it apart from logos, which can be designed by anyone.

Trent has earned the dubious distinction of being one of the few Canadian universities without a coat-of-arms.

Trent's distinct logo is commonplace throughout campus and on university publications. This simple, and easily recognizable logo was designed in 1965 by Allan R. Fleming - Canada's foremost logo designer, who also designed the world famous Canadian National (CN) logo.

Eric Aldwinkle designed Trent's first logo in 1963. Aldwinkle was Vice-Principal of the Ontario College of Art. In addition to designing this logo, he also designed the coat of arms for the University of Toronto and York

University. Our first logo was a heraldic device that had a gold sword and background, a red vertical bar and three horizontal navy blue stripes.

In early 1963, Aldwinkle's logo was sent to the College of Heralds in London for official approval. In those days Canada did not have its own heraldic authority - any Canadian organizations and individuals who wanted lawful armorial bearings had to petition Her Majesty's heraldic offices in London or Edinburgh. At the time this was an unappealing option for many. It was prohibitively expensive (about \$1000 in 1966), and many felt that a new Canadian university should not seek overseas approval for its design. In the end it was the prohibitive cost that prevented Trent from proceeding with a bona fide coat of arms.

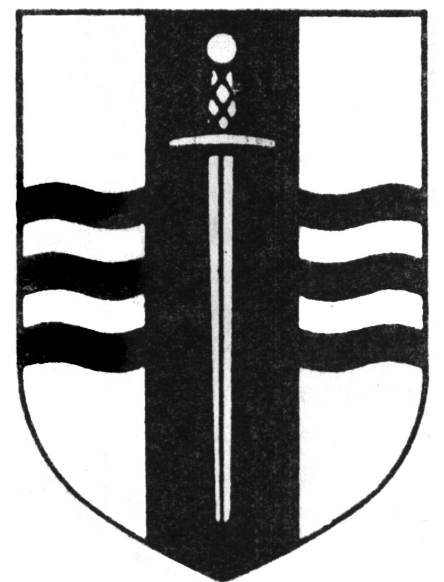
Thus Trent has earned the dubious distinction of being one of the few Canadian universities without a coat-of-arms.

Some people at Trent believe that the ancient symbolism embodied in

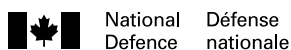
heraldry is inappropriate for our modern campus. Richard Millar, the Publications Co-ordinator for the Communications Office feels that Heraldry with its strong roots in Europe, is irrelevant to Canadian history. Millar believes that the logo is sufficient. "Heraldry is ancient - it has nothing to do with the twentieth century whereas the logo was designed at the same time the university was founded in 1964."

I argue however, that a coat of arms can have its place in a modern university. Simon Fraser University, Brock University, and the University of Victoria were all founded at around the same time as Trent University and they each have a coat of arms. The University of Northern British Columbia is an ultra-modern campus founded in 1994 - it too has a coat of arms.

Nathaniel would like to thank the staff at the Trent Archives for their help in researching this topic.



Eric Aldwinkle's Trent Coat of Arms



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Briefly

Computers and audio visual equipment was stolen from classrooms and the Audio-Visual department two weeks ago. According to Pete Wood, Director of Information services at the Computing Services Department, the theft happened over the weekend. Wood described the value of the equipment stolen at "certainly five figures." "They were pretty organized, I expect

Looking through Trent's Academic Calendar, it would be easy to think that the University had no music. The Calendar proceeds straight from Modern Languages to Native Studies without even mentioning what Samuel Johnson calls the least disagreeable of all noises. However, Trent is certainly not without Music.

Trent University Music Society (TUMS) is a group that receives a levy from every student and seeks to bring Music to Trent. TUMS supports three ensembles each year: the Jazz Band, the Madrigal Choir and the Concert Choir.

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