

Beattie book launched

by Teri Clarke

Despite the televised political debate last Tuesday evening, there was a large turn out at the Jubilee Auditorium for the official Canadian launch of *Frozen in Time*, a book based on the now internationally known University of Alberta Franklin Project.

The book was co-written by U of A Anthropology Professor, Owen Beattie and John Geiger of the *Edmonton Journal*.

The Franklin Project, headed by Beattie was begun in 1981. At that time, "nobody knew or cared about what we were doing," said Beattie.

That all changed in September 1984 when a photograph was released worldwide of a dead man named John Torrington. His grave and body had been found by the researchers in the high arctic earlier that year.

Although dead for 138 years, "he looked as if he had just died," said Beattie. This was due to

permafrost that was only 10 cm below the ground surface.

It was at this point that Beattie was swamped with phone calls and mail; inquiries were coming from every corner of the globe.

Many of those inquiries were probably answered or touched on at the book launch, Tuesday, which included a slide presentation given by Beattie. The presentation was broad in scope, starting off with some history of John Franklin and his expedition during the mid 1840's.

With a fleet of two ships, Franklin and 128 other men departed England in pursuit of a Northwest trade route. They were supplied with an assortment of canned goods to last them a three year period. Within the three years, however, all men perished.

As a forensic anthropologist, Beattie's aim was to try and explain the deaths by studying the bones of the crewmen. With respect to the Franklin expedition, this approach was new, and an

"unknown area," said Beattie.

On two separate occasions, once in 1981 and once in 1982, surveying was conducted by the Alberta researchers. Although they did find some skeletal pieces of caucasian men, they continued to search in 1984 for a sight that was "undisturbed, well dated, and well preserved," said Beattie.

In the summer of 1984 the research team discovered the graves of three of Franklin's crew. Because the bodies were so well preserved, a radiologist and pathologist were able to assist Beattie unlock the secret of the Franklin tragedy.

Beattie concluded the slide show by presenting the most important theory as to what caused the deaths of members of the Franklin expedition. There is reason to believe that food sources were contaminated by the tin cans in which they were stored. The cans were of "poor quality" said Beattie. The seams had been soldered from the inside. Moreover, bodies that were studied "indicate very high levels of lead in all tissues... life threatening levels," said Beattie.

When considering the "complicated series of events taking place" (such things as tuberculosis, scurvy, and starvation) it is "too simplistic" to say that lead poisoning was the sole cause of the Franklin disaster, "although it does appear to be the underlying cause," said Beattie.

Research for the Franklin Project is still under progress.

Following the slide presentation, the evening was concluded with an introduction of the team of researchers who accompanied Beattie to the Arctic.

Autographed copies of *Frozen in Time* were presented to Tevie Miller, chancellor of the U of A and to M. Distad, coordinator of library collections. These books will be presented to the University collection. As well, Jean Mucha received a copy on behalf of the Edmonton Public Library.

Distad noted *Frozen in Time*, "symbolizes the fact the spirit of discovery is alive in Alberta."



Clive Oshry

What the artist didn't paint

Joanne White, Arts student working at the bookstore, emulates a certain famous person as she might have appeared on one of those too few breaks.

New native program

by Will Gibson

After 16 years of planning, a new Native Studies program was recently approved by the University.

The new degree will include the various service courses that the School of Native Studies offers now, including Modern Native Art and the Cree language.

Dr. Richard Price, the director of the School of Native Studies, sees the degree as a culmination of a long continuous process.

"The impetus came from native groups when they petitioned the University Senate to start a College of Native Studies in 1972. In 1984, they (the University) approved the School of Native Studies provided we have the resources. Many people, including Dr. Horowitz, made sure we got the resources."

Ideas for the degree were generated within the School. "Our Academic Planning Committee developed the program and it was approved by our school council in May 1988," said Price.

"Then the General Faculties Council approved it in September 1988."

However, the new program has one last hurdle to cross. The department of native studies still requires the provincial government's approval.

Despite government cutbacks in University funding, Price believes the government will approve the program. "I'm optimistic. I think resources are always difficult and we will be no different, but we should get approved."

Ralph Westwood, an Advanced Education official said, "it is an important initiative. Thus far there is no apparent problem with their submission." The government's decision is expected this week.

Walter Janvier of the Indian Association of Alberta sees the degree as only the first step for natives and native studies in post-secondary education. "We are pleased with this program, but we are still pushing for more courses with native content. I don't know why academics and the administration drag their heels on the question of courses."



Bruce Gardave

The proud authors

Forensic anthropologist Owen Beattie and *Edmonton Journal* columnist John Geiger autograph their joint project *Frozen in Time*, the book about Beattie's now famous Franklin expedition. An interesting side note: the U of A Alumni is selling the autographed copies for \$22.95, while the U of A bookstore is selling the same non-autographed book for \$27.00.



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