

# Meiji visitors meet Canadian hosers

by Jason Nolan

During the usually quiet month of August, 37 Japanese students from Tokyo's prestigious Meiji University visited York University for the "Canadian experience".

The Meiji summer programme of York's English Language Institute ran from July 30 to August 22, and involved first to third year students studying diverse topics including Japanese literature and Economics. The programme, which is in its fourth year, is coordinated by Marlene Burnholtz, with assistance from Nancy Chong.

Meiji is the oldest university in Japan, created by Emperor Meiji in the 19th century as the country embarked on its first wave of westernizing reforms. Situated in the



heart of Tokyo, this private institution is close to the Imperial Palace, book stores, music stores and coffee shops.

The Meiji students did not come to Canada simply to develop their English skills; their technical, grammar skills are often as refined

as those of many Canadian students. What they are here to do is to learn about Canada. Our idiomatic expressions, slang and dialect cannot be taught in a Tokyo classroom, but need to be experienced first hand in real life situations. According to Burnholtz, students were able to learn and practice their English skills in a variety of contexts.

Subjects included Canadian history, political systems, geography, social institutions and culture. The Meiji students tried to use their existing English skills and developed new ones through their interactions with native English speakers as well as experienced non-native speakers. Getting used to the wide variety of accents is always a struggle for those who want to be able to

communicate globally in English.

A major component of the programme this year involved the use of volunteers. Eight York students — Jeff Fung, Alan Bresgi, Alison Goh, Linda Millman, Sen-Ting Pan, Toru Yoshikawa, Larry Yamamoto, Richard Yu and Yasushi Endo — helped to undercut the WASP stereotype that many Japanese have of Canadians. They participated in activities including baseball games and barbecues, but they also helped the Japanese students shed their preconceptions about Canadians.

The stereotype of a European-Canadian was countered by the reality that Canadians find their native roots in just about every country on earth. When asked why they wished to volunteer, responses varied along the lines

of travel interests, a desire to broaden horizons, and a social interest in meeting new people.

The Meiji students had a chance to travel around Ontario, see the sights and practice their English. Their itinerary included a weekend canoeing in Algonquin Park, a visit to Ottawa and Niagara Falls and the CN Tower.

Chong's environmentally-oriented group even spent time at the Maple garbage dump. Students also took the opportunity to visit with a Canadian family for two days.

If you plan to travel to Japan or join the ever-growing number of York students and grads who get valuable job and life experiences teaching English in Japan, you can get a head start by making friends and contacts here at York.

Bookstore  
repeals  
York  
credit,  
brings  
VISA  
and MC

by Peter Stathis

The York University bookstore is no longer giving credit to students. It officially revoked the university credit card privileges May 1 and now offers Mastercard and VISA charge card service as a replacement.

John Hedgecock, Executive Director of York Bookstores, said taking the bookstore credit card away wasn't really a relevant issue as students today have alternatives and can easily acquire charge cards like VISA. When asked why York would remove such a generous student service, Hedgecock emphasized that the university was not in the credit business and that the York card had become an "administrative nightmare."

Hedgecock admitted that unpaid accounts were part of the problem but not the main reason for the policy change. He pointed out York's notoriety for long lineups outside its bookstore and said that these lines would move faster with MC and VISA cards than York credit cards.

There is only one other university bookstore that still offers credit to its students — MacMaster — and according to Hedgecock, it will soon be ending this service. Hedgecock said he would promote early book selection to both faculty and students so that course texts next year would be available by mid-August. This would further alleviate the early September lineups.

Kelly Abraham, Manager of Operations at the bookstore, said his staff had sent out letters to all returning students as well as taking out an advertisement in *Excalibur* to make everyone aware that the York credit card is no longer an option at the bookstore.

## Bethune handbook censored

by Ira Nayman

The Acting Master of Bethune College asked that the Bethune Student Handbook 1990-91 not be distributed in a mail-out to first year students, claiming that one story in it was "potentially damaging to the reputation of Norman Bethune College."

The article was physically cut out of the majority of handbooks, which had yet to be distributed. Although too late to be included in the mail-out, Bethune College Council President Sarah Payne said the edited handbook would be distributed at Orientation.

According to Payne, BCC lawyer Harvey J. Ash advised her that the article on the college's history ("A students'-eye view: The first two decades") could be considered libellous on four separate counts. "We were disappointed that it could be considered libellous," Payne said.

"There is a lot of information in this handbook," she remarked, "that students would love to read."

Judy Libman, Acting Master of Bethune, informed BCC of her decision in a letter on August 15.

The story, she wrote, "is an inaccurate representation of the history of the College, and as such, the University's legal counsel advises may be defamatory. Moreover, in our view, the article presents a distorted and negative view of the College to incoming students and may well discourage the participation of students in College activities."

Libman, on vacation, was unavailable for comment.

BCC has "had a lot of support" for the handbook, said Payne, especially "from students and student governments saying they loved it." Even the Council's lawyer told them, "This is what a student handbook should be about."

The handbook contains a brief description of the life of Dr. Norman Bethune, the Canadian surgeon who performed heroically for the people of China (for whom the College was named), a message from Payne, information on clubs and organizations around the College and the campus, a calendar, important phone numbers and a guide to safe sex.

Bethune students will have to wait until next year for a history of their College.

## Asian students host Alexander

by Gurpreet Malhotra

On July 14, York University played host to a successful leadership conference. What set this event apart from many of the other academic activities on campus was that it was geared towards university students across the province who were of South Asian descent.

Lieutenant Governor Lincoln Alexander gave the opening address to the receptive audience of 100. Alexander congratulated the organizers, the Ontario Federation of South Asian Students (OFSAS), for providing a "forum for people to meet from various schools... a forum to exchange ideas, and most importantly, a forum to pursue leadership and excellence."

The conference lasted all day and included seminars revolving around the themes of effective leadership. The seminars dealt with interpersonal relations, negotiating skills, team management and presentation skills. The lead-

ership conference was the first of its kind not only for the South Asian community but for the student community at large.

The organizers were recent past presidents of the York, Waterloo and UofT Indian Student Associations who banded together about four years ago to form a strong network among similar campus groups across the province. According to Pardeep Dhupar, one of the founders and current coordinators of OFSAS, the federation has been "very well received and is now represented on all campuses with South Asian student organizations throughout the province."

Alka Burman, also a key organizer, went on to add that OFSAS has recently been approached by South Asian groups on campuses as far away as the University of British Columbia, Michigan State and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He said, "we will be doing our best to increase communications between all such groups in the months ahead."



Bethune College's handbook was banned from mail-out to students. Two offending pages on the college's history have been removed, and the book is set for distribution during Orientation.

## Correction

*Excalibur* would like to correct the article appearing in the July 4 issue, "Arthurs unlikely bearer of degree" [to Nelson Mandela]. The article portrayed York president Harry Arthurs in an unnecessarily negative light.

First, several erroneous points in the article were clarified by Mr. Arthurs, specifically his strong, personal commitment to divesting South African funds directly upon his appointment as President in 1985 carrying through until total divestment was achieved early in March of this year.

Secondly, the article should not have run in the news section of the paper as it was an admittedly one-sided perspective on a very complex issue. Regrettably, Mr. Arthurs was not given the opportunity to rebut the arguments made against his position and that of the university before the paper went to press.

*Excalibur* apologizes for all injuries to President Arthurs' reputation that the article may have caused him on this particular issue.