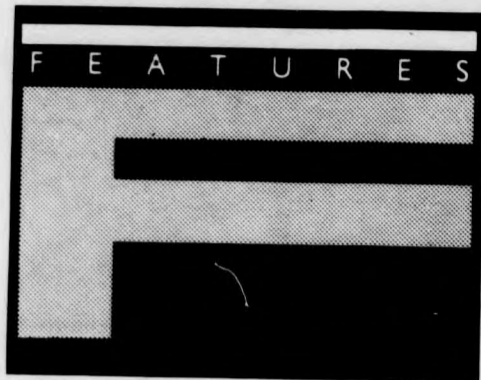


BEYOND ACADEMIA:

York's far side



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A stranger visiting York territory during class changes this month may well wonder if some sort of storm warning is in effect, as students scurry through narrow hallways in search of elusive classrooms, labs, lecture halls, food, and facilities (not to mention toilet paper).

By October, the rush subsides somewhat and campus activity slows to a gentle lull—one can almost hear the muzak. There is no need, however, to be beguiled by this placidity. When the mundane aspects of orientation end, real exploration is possible.

With its own pond, cinema, historic sites, cricket field, and observatory, York is hardly the "wasteland" it is so often labelled. *Excalibur* offers this informal walking tour for curious and sturdy-legged enthusiasts.

One of the first buildings to block your panoramic view of York is the monolithic Ross Building. You may notice that facing Keele Street is a long ramp leading up to a tree-lined plateau jutting out from Ross. While the trek up the ramp is considered arduous for some, it is well worth the effort: from this outdoor plaza you not only get the best view of the campus from all sides, but can also watch people below in the cafeteria courtyard, get a close-up of George Rickey's *Four Squares in a Square* sculpture, visit the Scott Religious Centre's chapel, then cool off or warm up in the Scott Library.

This cement paved retreat may seem like an odd place to find an engraved quote by York's founder, Murray Ross. Yet the original purpose of the area was to hold open-air convocation ceremonies (now held in the Tennis Centre). In the meantime, it is a great escape from the hustle and bustle of Central Square below, if an when the weather clears.

But for those who year for a quasi-cosmopolitan, and definitely trendy atmosphere, this is the place to congregate. Aside from offering such conveniences as drug stores, a beauty salon, jewellery and clothing stores, a record shop and more, it also provides many sources of vital information. The Council of York Student Federation (CYSF) office at 107 Central Square is a good place to start, to meet your student representatives and find out about York's many clubs. Tables will be set up outside the Bookstore to provide more information about clubs and events, and this is the central polling station for elections and referenda.

The two "Bear Pits," those sunken areas near the Bookstore entrances, have fallen into relative anonymity over the years. Once used to hold public forums, guest speakers, and student rallies, they now play host to an art poster sale, Multicultural Week, Career Week, and election speeches. That you will no longer find York's President addressing students directly in the pits is a sign of the times—the Bear Pits are now regarded primarily as a meeting place for fashion trendsetters.

At the northern end of Ross, also on the main floor, are the Canada Employment Centre, the Career Centre, the Post Office, and the Lost and Found Office.

Central Square is also the home of three other essential, but often overlooked, services: The Sexual Harassment Education and Complaint Centre (room 104A), the Women's Centre (South Ross 156), and the Math Learning Centre (S310R). The Women's Centre sponsors a variety of projects and events, including films, guest speakers, poetry readings, and concerts. The Math Centre offers free tutoring to anyone taking a math course.

The Office of Student Affairs, just north of the Green Machine line-ups, will tackle any question you may dare to raise about extracurricular activities. They provide literature about York regulations, lockers, booking Central square tables (for clubs or selling merchandise), off-campus housing, clubs, student newspapers, and York's work and study abroad program.

Sooner or later this term, York will fall prey to thunder, hail, and snow storms. It is at precisely this time that most students discover the pedestrian tunnel linking the Stedman Lecture Halls, Vanier and Founders Colleges, and the Behavioural Sciences Building. The tunnel is perhaps one of the most scenic weather-escapes in Ontario—the place for pop-artists to hone their craft and for graffiti buffs to wield their spray-paint.

The five-minute tunnel tour can take up to half an hour if one stops to read all the make-shift road signs. And the intersection between the Vanier and Stedman extensions is one of the warmest spots on campus to dry or thaw out



shoes. Two bits of tunnel caution however: go with the flow during "rush hour" (class changes), and bring a friend when tunneling at night.

What if you are caught in a storm and wake up wheezing the next day? The Health Services Centre, in 201 Vanier College, has five doctors on hand to attend to your ails, free of charge, with OHIP insurance. Services include annual check-ups, physical, birth control counselling, venereal disease testing, and minor surgery such as wart removal and stitches.

Staying healthy at York can be a strenuous exercise; our seasonal monsoons compound the architectural wind tunnel problem, and threaten to turn grassy terrains into dangerous mud fields. Escaping into the bright fluorescent indoors isn't always a solution either, as reconstituted air is pumped ceaselessly into windowless rooms. For more information about atmospheric pressures at York, visit the Centre for Research in Environmental Quality (CREQ), hidden in an innocuous looking trailer just west of the Ice Rink.

Due south of the CREQ apparatus is a body of water officially titled "York Lake" by York's mapmakers. It is better, and more appropriately, known as Stong Pond, being close to Stong College and much more of a pond than a lake.

Rumours once circulated that a sunken car lay in the pond's unfathomable depths. Just last month however, *Excalibur* scavengers witnessed the pond being drained, and no vehicle of any sort could be found.

This man-made cement basin holds not only water but such wildlife as foot-long goldfish, crayfish, and at the end of this foodchain, racoons.

Near Stong Pond lies two of York's three historic buildings, Hoover Homestead (west of Fraser Drive, near Black Creek Pioneer Village), and Hart House, hidden in a web of bushy undergrowth behind Osgoode Hall Law School. Christian Hoover's home was built over 130 years ago, and is considered a fine example of "board and batten siding" (overlayed wooden slats) construction in Ontario. Both it and Hart House are now supervised by York's Housing Department and are leased as faculty residences. Stan Horseman, a groundskeeper on campus, resides in Hoover House, while Bill Farr, the vice-president of finance and employee relations, occupies Hart House.

At the other end of campus, near the Keele and Steeles Avenue intersection, stands an old barn and house. From a distance, the farm site appears to be vacant, and looks incongruous against its backdrop of dark, factory-like buildings (the Physical Plant Workshops and Central Utilities) and the tail residence apartments of Complex 1 (Vanier, Founders, Winters, and McLaughlin Colleges). The house is what is left of Jacob Stong's farm, occupied by him from 1854 to 1879. Stong House was sold to York in 1951, and is presently under consideration for official North York Historical status.

Before York built its Fine Arts Buildings, Stong House was used as a studio for student artists. True to this tradition, it is still administered by the Faculty of Fine Arts and used as a painter's studio. Ron Bloore, a York professor whose paintings can be seen on campus, presently lives and works in Stong House.

From Stong Farm, one can also see the Kinsman National Institute on Mental Retardation, and, to the

west, York's International Tennis Centre. In addition to the Centre Court, protected by a magnificent bubble, the Tennis Centre has four clay and five hard courts available to students.

If architectural data leaves you numb, perhaps you'll find York's theatres, cinemas, and art galleries more energizing. Not just for Fine Arts majors, these facilities cover a wide array of artistic expression, from world-renowned artists (such as Oscar Peterson last year) to student workshops.

To start with, the campus at large has become a veritable art gallery, with over 40 indoor and outdoor works in its acquisitions. Some pieces, such as Lise Gervais' *Confederation* in the Central Square cafeteria courtyard, and Mark di Suvero's often vandalized *Sticky Wicket* (that playful, oversized, orange steel toy) between Central Square and the Administrative Studies Building, have become common sights. But others, like the most recent Louis Stokes' *Not Really Trees* exhibit (notice the phallic white poles amidst fluttering black flags on the mound) are almost enough to make tires screech and footsteps halt.

Campus art tours, conducted by the Art Gallery of York University (AGYU) staff, are a great opportunity to view a cross-section of York's sculptures. As well, tour guides will provide some fascinating morsels of information. Did you know that Michael Hayden's *Escalator Place* (the array of lightbulbs alongside the escalators) in the Scott Library used to play music upon human touch? Or that Hugh Leroy's *Rainbow Piece* (the bright arches in the fountain outside Scott Library) is still, 14 years after installation, unfinished?

Besides the AGYU, which hosts exhibits from around the world, York has other galleries which show mainly student work. They are the Instructional Display Area (called only by its acronym, the IDA Gallery) in room 102 Fine Arts Building (known as FAB), the Samuel J. Zacks Gallery (109 Stong College), Winter's Gallery and Founders Gallery (both located in their respective colleges).

Need a little more action? York has both the cameras and the lights in its plush Nat Taylor Cinema at the northern end of Central Square (look for the dark mirrored walls). Equipped to show both 16mm and 35mm



films, the cinema is used primarily for film courses. Many a devoted film buff, however, has managed to creep in unnoticed. Years ago, the cinema advertised its schedules in *Excalibur*, but as film courses have since increased in popularity, non-registered students must now be more discreet in their ardour. If the cinema is full, please have the courtesy to leave.

A less extravagant but more viable alternative to Nat Taylor Cinema is CYSF's Reel and Screen series, held on Friday and Saturday nights in Curtis Lecture Hall "L." Reel and Screen monthly listings are posted in abundance across campus, so there's no excuse not to catch your favourite movies, whether old or new. Admission prices are nominal.

Still another, and more private option, is the large

non-circulating film selection in Scott Library. Over 1,300 films and 500 video cassettes are available for individual or group screenings on campus. The library also has a wide selection of award-winning York Fine Arts students' films.

For those with an ear for more than droning professors and gossiping peers, Radio York can be heard from many locations on campus (such as pubs and residences), and may soon be heard city-wide if their bid for an FM license is approved this year. As it is run on a volunteer basis, anyone can offer to spin those tunes. (Due to Radio York's license application, it will not be on the air until the middle of the school year.)

The Scott Library also has a listening room, where its prolific selection of records and tapes can be heard privately at your leisure (but only in the library, since they are non-circulating). Musical scores, both classical and modern, are also available there.

If group scenes are more appealing to you, York has its own Choir, which often performs with the Toronto Community Orchestra based at York, and if all you need is some practice, sound-proof music modules line the basements of McLaughlin and Winters Colleges, and can be used with a user's fee.

York has three theatrical spaces, one in Atkinson College, Samuel Beckett Theatre in Stong College, and Burton Auditorium, connected to the Fine Arts Building. They can serve a wide variety of purposes, from drama to concerts and guest speakers. The Theatre Department stages many plays each year, including workshop productions, the Graduate Company's professional shows, and The New Play Festival. Something else to look our for is the Fine Arts Festival, a smorgasbord of events by all Fine Arts faculties. Vanier also hosts a cabaret performance annually.

If you prefer jocks to harlequins, or just want to get—and stay—in shape, rest assured that Recreation York will have a sport that appeal to you. A good way to begin your athletic training is by taking a comprehensive fitness test in the Physiology Lab at Tait McKenzie. The 45-minute test involves body composition measurements, motor performance tests, and cardio-respiratory fitness evaluations, and includes counselling on your specific exercise needs. It costs \$25 for members, and \$30 for non-members. For membership information, go to the Control Rooms in Tait McKenzie.

The Physical Education Department offers squash, handball, paddleball, racquetball, and tennis courts, a weightroom, and a 25-metre indoor pool with three diving boards.

Non-credit instructional sports programs are also offered, at fees ranging from \$12 to \$47. Why not spend your spare time learning tai chi, skating, jazz dance, aerobics or skiing? Recreation York also has programs for the disabled.

If you want to become active, but need the excitement of a team sport, York has both recreational and competitive leagues in volleyball, soccer, hockey, basketball, flag football, softball, and water polo.

In June, York hosts an open Triathlon (anyone who can swim 60 lengths, cycle 25 miles, then run 6 miles, deserves a cheerleading squad of their own). And for more leisure-minded enthusiasts, the Summer Softball League will be in operation from May to September.

There are 11 sports clubs on campus, including such adventurous activities as aikido, lacross, cricket, and scuba diving. Any full time student or Recreation York member may join these clubs, which will meet September 29, 5-7 p.m., in 230 Bethune College.

If all these active verbs exhaust you, there are also many places at York to relax. The Bobby Orr Sports Clinic offers physiotherapy for starters. And college common rooms are a good place to crash when your roommate has fallen in love. When all else fails, climb up to York's observatory on a Wednesday evening for some old-fashioned romantic star gazing.

