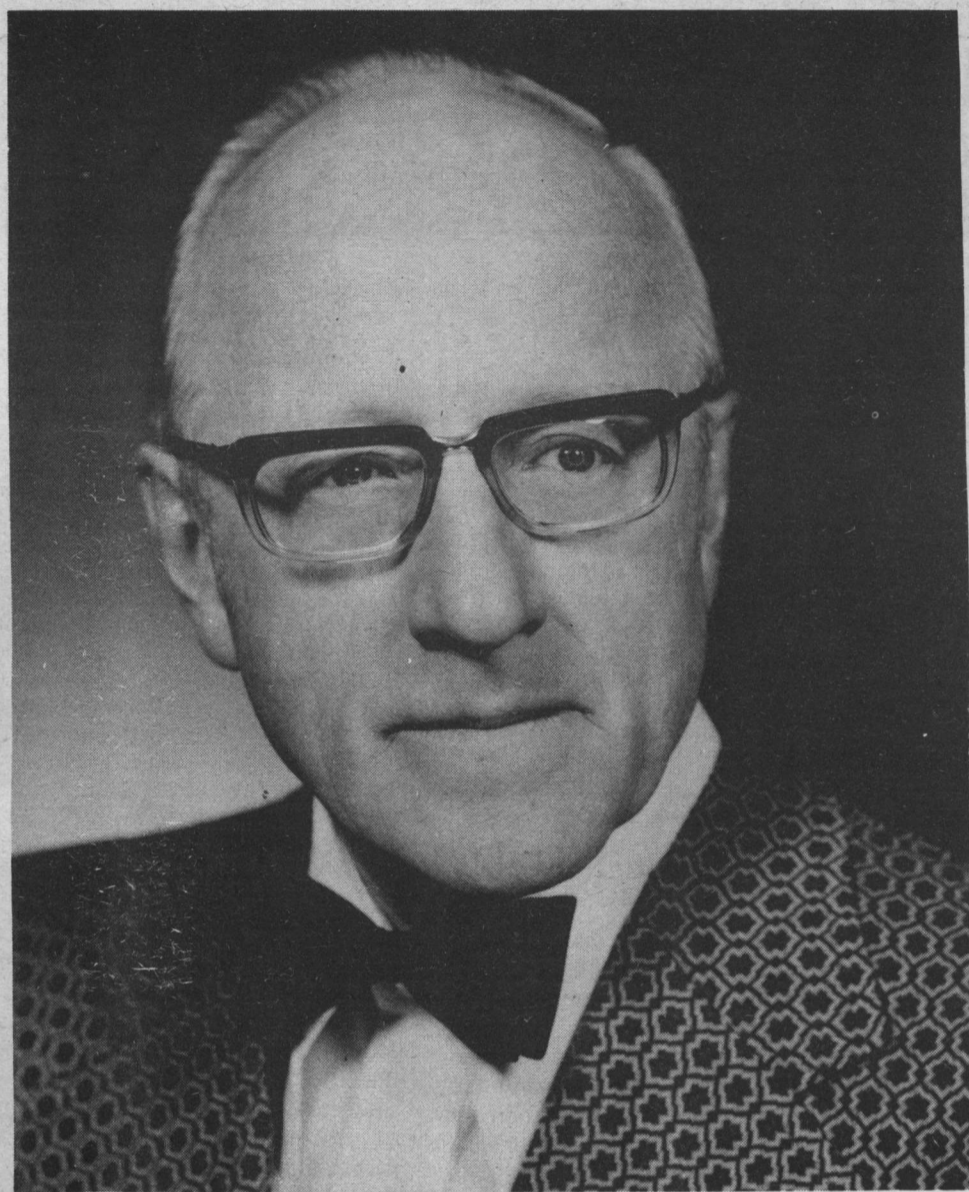


# Distinguished Background Shared By U of A's New

## President



## Biography

"My principal objective will be to take this university to the people. The university must integrate itself with the community."

This aim is held by Harry Gunning, new president of the University of Alberta and a man whose career has spanned the fields of teacher, scientist and administrator and has earned him an international reputation.

Dr. Gunning was born in Toronto in 1916. He graduated from the University of Toronto in 1939 with a Bachelor of Arts degree (honors chemistry, first class) and obtained masters and doctorate degrees in 1940 and 1942 respectively. Both achievements were in physical chemistry.

He was a postdoctoral fellow at Harvard University in 1942-43 and worked with the National Research Council of Canada from 1943 to 1946. He then taught at the University of Rochester (1946 to 1948) and at the Illinois Institute of Technology (1948 to 1957).

In 1957, he joined the University of Alberta's chemistry department as professor and chairman. Under his leadership the department has become one of the strongest on the continent.

Dr. Gunning was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada in 1964 and, in further recognition of his accomplishments in science, he was appointed Killam Memorial Professor by the University of Alberta in 1968.

He received an honorary degree of Doctor of Sciences from the University of Guelph in 1969, the Province of Alberta Achievement Award in 1971, and an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Queen's University this spring. In 1967, he was awarded the Chemical Institute of Canada medal, and during 1973-74 served as president of the Institute.

As a member of the Advisory Council

## Former Presidents

1908-28	Dr. H.M. Tory
1928-36	Dr. R.C. Wallace
1936-41	Dr. W.A.R. Kerr
1942-51	Dr. Robert Newton
1951-59	Dr. Andrew Stewart
1959-69	Dr. Walter H. Johns
1969-74	Dr. Max Wyman
1974-	Dr. Harry E. Gunning

of the National Research Council of Canada, Dr. Gunning was instrumental in broadening the base of federal support for university research and for increasing the total funds available for grants and scholarships.

His research interests include photochemistry, kinetic mass spectrometry and flash photolysis, and he has worked as an industrial consultant in physical chemistry. He has written or co-written 147 scientific publications.

## Text of speech

Eminent Chancellor:

Life is in many ways an unending search for something to believe in, something which will retain its pristine beauty and appeal even under constant attack from the acids of our cynicism and disillusionment. I believe in the University of Alberta, and I am both honored and humbled to have been chosen its President. For this task I would wish myself the warmth and insightfulness of a Walter Johns, the penetrating wisdom of a Max Wyman, and the Ego-Involving concern of a Louis Desrochers, but alas I must be content with much smaller merits.

It is said that we die with only a small fraction of our brain explored, and very few of our abilities completely utilized. I would like to assure you tonight that I will reach into myself and bring all of my limited intellectual resources to bear upon the many problems which will face me as Chief Executive Officer of this great university.

In the seventeen years that I have been associated with the University as Chairman of its Chemistry Department, I have watched it grow from a small institution, struggling desperately to break the chains of parochialism, into a major intellectual centre of international stature. And it is not accidental that very similar words could be used to describe the growth of our Province of Alberta over this same period. The fact is that our university is an inalienable part of the pacemaker of growth for the Province of Alberta and we intend to make our influence increasingly felt in this area.

Much has been said and written about the many new challenges which face our universities today. Certainly we can no longer consider it true that higher education and creative scholarship are regarded with any unquestioning reverence. And this of course is but an example of how we have laid waste the past to the extent that we no longer possess even a small group of commonly-held values on which to build new value systems through experience.

Today we are again in an era of accountability, and our universities will thrive only if they are capable of demonstrating unequivocally that they are essential to those who are called upon to support them. To me this constitutes a challenge which I will take up with great enthusiasm on behalf of the University of Alberta.

In this position, as with other positions which I have had in the past, I find I cannot operate effectively without defining objectives. They focus my energy and provide at least a crude yardstick by which to measure accomplishment. I have therefore put a great deal of thought into what I would like to see done during my tenure as President. I find that I can state my goals with disarming simplicity; I want the University of Alberta to become increasingly meaningful to all those whom the University serves. This is obviously a very complex multi-faceted objective which to fully understand requires a deep knowledge of universities and the many publics with which they can productively interact. Perhaps the University of Alberta can not be all things to all people, but it certainly can be more things to more people. Among those groups for whom I would like to see the University become increasingly important, I would include our students and our alumni, the academic and non-academic staff of our university, the government that directly supports us, and the many publics with whom association would be mutually beneficial.

The basic structural units of a university are not its faculties, but its academic departments, which are so speak the terminals through which the

university links itself on a world-wide basis to the vast knowledge-gathering systems represented by the various intellectual disciplines of the departments. Thus a university mathematician will primarily identify with that international branch of mathematics through which he makes his research contributions. To do significant academic research, which is recognized as significant by the specialists in one's research field throughout the world, requires a high level of creativity, possessed by only a very small fraction of mankind. Since good universities tend to concentrate both knowledge and creativity in their professional staff, such institutions clearly represent a major intellectual resource for the community which supports them. For this resource to serve the community effectively there are many barriers of communication which must be broken down, and in addition new mechanisms for effective interaction must be created. For this process to become operative, those supporting the university must be made aware of the specific nature of this vast reservoir of specialized knowledge, and how it can be used to benefit the people of this Province. The social rewards from such understanding can potentially be very great, since a major university such as ours represents a vast spectrum of human knowledge. And conversely our university can only expect to receive the proper level of enlightened public support when its many publics are fully aware of what we can offer, and are truly in sympathy with our institutional goals.

Obviously the type of constructive communication which I am describing is a complex process which must proceed on many fronts, and at many levels. You have heard Chancellor Dalby describe the outstanding work our senate is doing in building bridges of true communication between the university and the public. To me our senate represents a major thrust in the realization of the broad objective which I have stated. Namely to make the university more meaningful to the public it serves. And therefore I will do everything in my power to provide support and encouragement for the valuable work of this vital part of our institution.

What I have said about the work of our senate applies equally well to our alumni and their association. I will work towards providing the environment in which our alumni can increasingly find identification with the University of Alberta. I will be both sensitive and responsive to the needs of our alumni, since this is one of our publics which I am particularly anxious to serve, representing, as they do, our emissaries in the community-at-large.

Another important area of potentially beneficial interaction lies in the field of university-government relations. Obviously such interactions can take many forms. For example, I want to make our government fully aware of the various types of expertise which we have on our campus, and I would like to see the University increasingly dedicated to working with our government in achieving the many social goals which would benefit the people of this Province. In addition I am looking forward to a very constructive relationship with our Department of Advanced Education. In my view what we need to define for our government are specific objectives within the University with which the government can politically and socially identify. In short I would like to be able to provide to the government answers to the question: What are we getting for the money we invest in the University? In dealing with the government I will attempt to put myself in their position and understand the problems that they have in supporting the university, in turn I am confident that the Department of