

Pool Blog

1966-1967

ROBINSON, E. A.
(PETER)

Farewell Principal Robinson - welcome Professor Robinson

By CONNIE RAE

Over 300 people turned out at Erindale College's north campus recently to honor the college's principal, Dr. E. A. Robinson with a luncheon and a cake made for 150 people.

The inscription read Farewell Principal Robinson—Welcome Professor Robinson. Dr. Robinson retires as principal July 1 and will be succeeded by Professor P. W. Fox.

Dr. Robinson, who has been with the college almost since its inception in the positions of associate dean, dean and principal, was welcomed back "into the honorable business of teaching and research."

Des Morton, dean of humanities and a newly-elected vice-principal, hosted the presentation of gifts to the administrator-turned-teacher.

Among the mementos: A gold and green scarf knitted in college colors by Lois Seppala, his executive assistant; research application forms, a model man made out of test-tubes, a color photograph depicting Lislehurst, the historical residence of Erindale's principal and a gold medallion—a forerunner of a newly-initiated award in his honor.

The medallion is named the E. A. Robinson Medal and was completely fashioned at the college. It will be presented each year to the top academic students from each of the four divisions. The silver-plated medals will be personalized and each will bear the college crest and 10 maple leaves to signify Dr. Robinson's tenure at the college.

Dr. Robinson, an inorganic chemist from England who served at McMaster and University of Toronto, was asked to help organize Erindale in 1966 when it had a faculty of 12 and a student body of 150.

"Thanks to those who shared my vision," said Robinson, "Erindale now has a faculty of 200 and a freshman body of 1,450 and is much more than just a small adjunct to the University of Toronto. It is a happy community of simple souls that makes our colleagues at St. George try a little harder.

He attributes part of the harmony of Erindale College, on Mississauga Road, north of Dundas, to the surroundings.

CHANGE

"Over the last 10 years I have seen a great deal of change in the attitude of students," he said. "They are enormously concerned—perhaps overly concerned—about the

future and there is a significant number of older students."

Students tend to want to specialize and focus on an occupation that is in demand, he said.

"But tomorrow's opportunity viewed from today may not be there when you arrive."

Students tend to get into a "psychological box."

The great complexity of the world and the expansion of new knowledge puts a great demand on students, he said, but a

broad education gives a strong concentration of insight and adaptability for future job opportunities.

His background as a chemist served him well as an administrator, he said. "Both require qualitative judgments."

Dr. Robinson has done research for the defence board and the National Research Council, working with hydrogen bonding and compounds. He has also visited Russia as guest lecturer of the USSR.

There is a great deal of

interaction between such countries as Russia, Brazil and China now, he said.

"I have reservations about all societies that have nuclear power," he said, "even settled countries, but it gets more dangerous the more unstable the government," he said, citing Argentina as an example.

"Visualize someone with the paranoia of Nixon

Dr. Robinson is the author of over 60 papers.



Photo by CONNIE RAE