

Marcel Trudel



L'historien Marcel Trudel est décédé le 11 janvier 2011 à l'âge de 93 ans. Il a apporté une contribution exceptionnelle à l'histoire et à la société québécoise. Le chercheur a laissé une œuvre novatrice et monumentale en particulier dans la connaissance de la Nouvelle-France. Comme professeur, il a eu sur la formation de quelques

générations d'historiens et sur l'enseignement de l'histoire une influence déterminante, encore perceptible aujourd'hui. L'homme a transmis son savoir-faire et ses règles de pratique avec générosité.

L'œuvre du chercheur

La production scientifique de Marcel Trudel a été remarquable, en quantité comme en qualité. De l'ensemble des ouvrages qui ont marqué l'histoire du Canada et en particulier celle de la Nouvelle-France, aucune œuvre autre que la sienne peut mieux mériter le titre de référence incontournable. Comme en témoignent le jugement de la communauté scientifique et les hautes distinctions reçues, ses écrits ont enrichi au plus haut point la connaissance du passé. Ils ont fait le délice de tous les amateurs d'histoire. Archivistes, archéologues, ethnologues, généalogistes, journalistes, responsables de musées et de centre d'interprétation et chercheurs étrangers y ont puisé une matière aussi abondante que précise. Encore aujourd'hui, personne ne peut aborder cette histoire sans consulter les ouvrages de Marcel Trudel.

Il serait réducteur de vouloir caractériser l'œuvre de Marcel Trudel et de l'enfermer dans des catégories définies. Toutefois on ne peut s'empêcher d'en relever l'ampleur, la diversité, le caractère novateur et le renouvellement dans la continuité. Au total, Trudel a publié une cinquantaine de volumes, quelque 10 000 pages de textes originaux, sans compter les rééditions, les traductions et les articles. Chaque fois, il approfondit son sujet en visant l'exhaustivité, cite avec abondance et donne ses sources en référence. Dans un volume de 600 pages, Trudel signalait environ 2500 références ; autant que ses index comportaient d'entrées.

L'éventail des sujets qu'il a traité est considérable. S'il a concentré ses travaux sur l'époque de la Nouvelle-France, on relève également des études détaillées sur la révolution américaine et le Canada, le régime militaire et les manuels d'histoire. Les cartes géographiques de ses atlas historiques sont encore maintes fois reproduites.

Outre les manuels, synthèses et les cinq volumes de la série de son histoire de la Nouvelle-France, il a traité de façon particulière, la population, l'occupation des terres en 1663 et en 1674, les écolières des Ursulines, le régime seigneurial, l'esclavage et les cadres de vie. Il a également accordé une attention spéciale à l'histoire par les textes sous la forme de reproduction commentée de textes importants comme *L'histoire du Montréal* de Dollier de Casson (1670) ou *Le grand voyage au pays des Hurons* de Sagard (1632) ou encore de séries de textes colligés. Les documents retenus dans son ouvrage sur les cadres de vie touchent les institutions, l'administration, la paroisse, le régime seigneurial, la justice, la population, la main d'œuvre, l'agriculture, le commerce, la famille, la transmission des biens, les communications et l'urbanisme. Et il tient à signaler qu'à bien des égards cette Nouvelle-France est demeurée visible jusqu'à nos jours.

Le parcours d'un novateur

Du début à la fin de sa carrière, Marcel Trudel a innové dans ses intentions et dans le respect des faits historiquement documentés. Dès ses premières années d'étude à Laval, ses professeurs reconnaissent ses aptitudes et ses qualités. Le 27 juin 1941, il propose à Auguste Viatte de produire une thèse sur l'influence de Voltaire au Canada. Le patron éventuel estima toutefois plus prudent de demander à monseigneur Camille Roy d'approuver le choix d'un tel sujet. Devenu professeur de grec à Vaudreuil, Marcel Trudel fut invité par le Recteur de l'Université Laval à poursuivre des études supérieures en Europe. Ce furent les États-Unis, à cause de la guerre. Il en fut rappelé d'urgence en 1947, année de la fondation de l'Institut d'histoire à l'Université Laval.

Ses années à l'Université Laval allaient être marquées par une grande liberté de pensée. Il a mis de l'avant une pratique de l'histoire axée sur cette philosophie, en réaction contre une histoire trop centrée sur la religion, les héros et la pureté de la race. Il a lui-même précisé l'ouverture d'esprit qui y présidait, les relations avec les Français, mais aussi les anglophones, les États-Uniens et les protestants, auxquels il a plus tard ajouté les Amérindiens.

À Laval, Trudel agit à titre de secrétaire de l'Institut de 1947 à 1954, puis comme directeur de 1954 à 1964. Il préside à l'essor de l'enseignement, du développement des études supérieures et de la recherche au début des années 1960. Le nombre d'étudiants explose littéralement, passant de 3 en 1962 à 12 en 1963 et à 42 en 1964. Ses enseignements caractérisés par la rigueur et l'humour sont courus.

Vers la fin de cette période, Trudel écrit que les secrets des dieux ne se rendaient pas à lui. Il faut dire qu'après son *Voltaire* (1945) et son livre sur l'apostat Chiniquy (1955), au début des années

1960, il a participé activement et publiquement au Mouvement laïque de langue française et peut-être s'est-il permis quelques autres provocations. De toute façon, il déménage à Ottawa. Dans ce déménagement, il subit une perte tragique. Par suite d'un accident, une partie des ses fiches de recherche sont détruites par le feu. Tous ses anciens étudiants ont sympathisé, se demandant s'il aurait le courage de reprendre son minutieux travail de dépouillement. C'était méconnaître sa détermination.

L'innovation, Marcel Trudel l'a consciemment et constamment pratiquée et mise en évidence. Dans un ouvrage comme *Mythes et réalités dans l'histoire du Québec*, paru en 1999, il a révisé vigoureusement le rôle et la perception de personnages comme Madeleine de Verchères concluant qu'elle avait créé sa propre légende ou encore les effets d'événements comme la guerre de la Conquête dont il ose signaler les avantages. On pourrait même estimer que des traces de la modernité de ses travaux restent à mettre en évidence. Ainsi, il est sans doute le premier à avoir fait ressortir la diversité culturelle qui existe en Nouvelle-France. Par l'étude de la provenance et de la composition de la population, il constate l'importance du brassage culturel, car à l'époque, dans la vie quotidienne, les distances géographiques et culturelles se perçoivent différemment de celles d'aujourd'hui. Une belle dialectique présent/passé à approfondir.

Les leçons du maître

« Les leçons du maître » - le maître au sens du professeur - visent à illustrer un aspect majeur de la carrière de Marcel Trudel. Elles font référence aux pratiques et aux règles propres à la discipline qu'il a mis de l'avant et qui ont connu des prolongements dans le temps. Elles constituent en quelque sorte une forme de pérennité de l'œuvre du maître. Pas d'histoire sans document de première main ; pas de science sans rigueur et lecture critique!

Marcel Trudel a prôné la discipline de travail et enseigné l'organisation du travail. Il a initié ses étudiants à la pratique documentaire. La fiche régnait en maître : fiche bibliographique et fiche documentaire. Il nous a appris à rédiger ces fiches en prenant tous les renseignements utiles. La fiche documentaire, par exemple, posait des exigences particulières en vue de son utilisation. En haut à gauche, il fallait mettre la référence ; en haut à droite, inscrire la date ; le centre était réservé au sujet. La citation exacte devait se mettre entre guillemets ; des crochets carrés servaient à insérer les réflexions personnelles du chercheur. Pour noter des éléments de contenu au verso, il fallait tourner la fiche du bas vers le haut et non de gauche à droite afin de protéger l'ordre et le sens des mots. Tout cela évidemment était bien avant l'ère des photocopieuses et des ordinateurs.

Il a prôné l'ouverture d'esprit vers d'autres religions, d'autres cultures, d'autres disciplines. Le programme de licence en histoire à l'époque comprenait quatre certificats, dont l'un à l'extérieur de la discipline, soit en géographie ou en sciences sociales. Trudel a en outre suscité des collaborations étroites avec d'autres facultés comme le droit, les sciences sociales et la civilisation. Cette collaboration caractérise encore le

département d'histoire de Laval et les six disciplines qui le composent, ainsi que les centres de recherche interdisciplinaires de la faculté des lettres, même si les sciences auxiliaires d'hier sont devenues des disciplines connexes.

Marcel Trudel a également apporté une immense contribution à une œuvre monumentale, le *Dictionnaire biographique du Canada*, dont il a été le premier codirecteur à Laval de 1961 à 1965. Il a collaboré à baliser la nature des biographies. Sa crédibilité a favorisé le recrutement et la participation d'un vaste réseau de chercheurs. Les 8 400 articles en 15 volumes que compte aujourd'hui le DBC constituent une référence majeure à l'échelle internationale.

L'on ne saurait conclure ce rappel de son œuvre sans relever sa disponibilité envers les jeunes chercheurs. Jusqu'à la fin de sa vie, il a fait preuve de cette générosité comme en témoigne ce petit ouvrage paru en 2005 « *Connaître pour le plaisir de connaître* », qui fait suite à un entretien accordé au jeune historien Mathieu d'Avignon. Cet ouvrage comprend d'ailleurs une bibliographie complète des ouvrages, articles, comptes-rendus et préfaces qu'il a publiés, des écrits relatifs à son œuvre, ainsi que des distinctions qu'il a méritées.

Jacques Mathieu
Université Laval



Garth Wilson, 1960-2010

On 13 November 2010 the museum world lost a passionate advocate with the untimely death of Garth Wilson, curator of transportation at the Canada Science and Technology Museum, after a two year battle with cancer.

Garth Wilson cared deeply about museums and their collections. He knew that collections were the heart and soul of the museum and devoted much of his life to studying, understanding, and explaining artifacts. He knew how much they mattered and, through his work, sought to persuade others of their importance. It was a constant struggle but one he refused to abandon.

Garth combined his interest in material culture studies with a love of the history of technology, especially transportation. In his creative hands, these two fields became one and the results were truly remarkable. As curator first of marine transportation (1989) and then of marine and ground transportation (2003) at the Canada Science and Technology Museum, Garth set out to enhance the national collections, to study and interpret them, and to produce exhibitions and publications that challenged audiences (and some museum colleagues) to see technology in new and surprising ways.

Garth brought imagination, intelligence, and discipline to collecting. He carefully assessed the merits of any object before acquiring it and resisted pressure to take something for purely expedient reasons. As a result of his efforts the transportation collection grew to include more examples of working vehicles (the pointer boat, the Shelburne dory, the salmon skiff), more Canadian content (CCM bicycles, Mercury Montcalm) and more critical infrastructure (Precise Integrated Navigational System). He was particularly proud of his acquisition of the Rice Lake Canoe Company collection.

In exhibitions, Garth's work was equally distinguished. Whether producing a small temporary display or a major installation, he took the challenge seriously and brought all his skills to bear on it. His exhibitions were notable for their meticulous selection of objects, meaningful text and captions, and thematic coherence. His two most important efforts were his most recent: *Canoes: The Shape of Success* (2000) and *In Search of the Canadian Car* (2010). In both of these exhibitions, Garth explored questions of identity and, in doing so, confounded our preconceptions of what a transportation exhibition could be.

Garth's publications were also innovative and challenging and always focused on objects and their meanings. Whether writing for the public in a *Curator's Choice* pamphlet or for a professional audience in *Material History Review*, he invariably found a new and interesting way to pose a question and a fresh approach

to answering it. His last published article is a fine example of how his mind worked. In "Designing Meaning: Streamlining, National Identity and the Case of CN 6400," Garth once again explored issues of identity by focussing his attention on a locomotive that has long been a fixture, albeit a somewhat silent one, on the museum floor. His research brought to light the fascinating story behind this remarkable piece of engineering.

The museum community benefited enormously from Garth's commitment to museology, material culture studies, transportation history and public history. During his career he contributed to scholarship in these fields through a wide variety of journals. He acted as English review editor for *Material History Review* from 1991 to 2006 and, in that role, helped to enhance and extend the reach and reputation of the journal around the world. Garth also taught courses and arranged seminars and workshops in material culture studies for various groups. In 2004-5 he played a leading role in organizing the Canadian Museum Association's *Museum Research Summit* which brought together museum-based researchers from across the country to address the challenges facing collections-related research. It was a huge success. Garth also organized conferences at the Canada Science and Technology Museum including *Technology and the Body* (2004) and *Transportation and the Environment* (2008), the annual meeting of the International Association for the History of Transport, Traffic and Mobility (T2M).

During his career, Garth was active in a number of organizations, all of which benefited from his intelligence, creativity, dedication, and forthrightness. He was a Councillor of the Canadian Nautical Research Society (CNRS) and served on the boards of the Museum Small Craft Association and the Atlantic Challenge Canada Foundation. He acted as an external advisor to the Adirondack Museum. In recent years, he had become deeply involved in T2M, an organization that he thought could bring a much needed broadening of perspective to transportation collections. At the time of his death, he was a vice-president of the organization.

Garth's unwavering commitment to museums and their collections was shared by many but his particular combination of skills and interests was unique and it will be sorely missed. His honesty, integrity, creativity, and intelligence are irreplaceable. His enduring legacy will be his example, which will serve to inspire many and to remind us all of what can be accomplished through dedication to the highest standards of museum scholarship.

Sharon Babaian

Nora Faires



Nora Faires, Professor of History and of Gender and Women's Studies at Western Michigan University, died on February 6, 2011, at the age of sixty-one, from metastatic breast cancer. She was at her home in Ann Arbor, among friends, at the time of her death.

A member of the Canadian Historical Association and a regular presenter or panelist at meetings of ACSUS, the European Social Science History Association, the Social Science History Association, and the Immigration and Ethnic History Society, Nora has been remembered by colleagues and friends for her loyalty, kindness, generosity, warmth,

sense of humor, grace, energy, and strength. Her impressive scholarly output included four co-authored or co-edited books: *Permeable Border: The Great Lakes Basin as Transnational Region, 1650-1990* (with John J. Bukowczyk, David R. Smith, and Randy William Widdis); *Jewish Life in the Industrial Promised Land, 1855-2005* (with Nancy Hanflik); *A History of Women in America* (with Janet L. Coryell); and *Migrants and Migration in Modern North America: Cross-Border Life Courses, Labor Markets, and Politics in Canada, the*

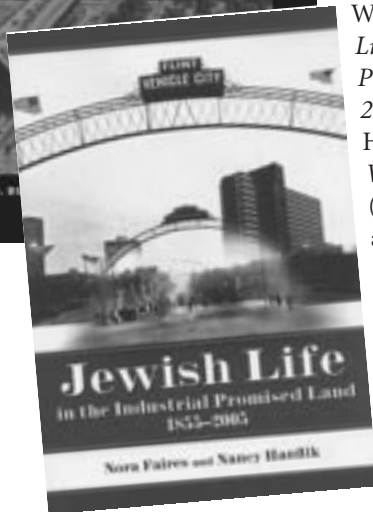
Caribbean, Mexico, and the United States (co-edited with Dirk Hoerder). She also co-edited two issues of the *Michigan Historical Review* on "Borderlands."

Her work garnered several academic distinctions, including two American Historical Association publication prizes, the first, the 1995 William Gilbert Award for the Best Article on Teaching History for "The American Family and the Little Red Schoolhouse: Historians, Class, and the Problem of Curricular Diversity" (co-authored with John J. Bukowczyk), published in *Prospects: An Annual of American Cultural Studies* 19 (Fall 1994): 24-74; and the second, the 2006 Albert B. Corey Prize (biennial), awarded jointly with the Canadian Historical Association for the best book on Canadian-American relations or the history of both countries, for *Permeable Border*. She also held two Fulbrights, the 2000-01 Fulbright Distinguished Chair in North American Studies at University of Calgary and the 2007-08 Fulbright Distinguished Chair at York University.

Though herself born in the United States, Nora was the daughter of Canadian immigrants who migrated to western Pennsylvania in the 1930s. She regularly returned to a family cottage, a log cabin on Lake Muskoka, which she loved dearly. At Western Michigan University, Nora was a prime mover in promoting the field of Canadian Studies.

A full obituary will appear in a future issue of the American Historical Association's newsletter, *Perspectives*. Memorial contributions may be sent to the Southern Poverty Law Center, 400 Washington Ave., Montgomery, AL 36104.

John J. Bukowczyk
Wayne State University



John Norris

John Norris

March 23, 1925-May 2, 2010

John Norris, member of the University of British Columbia's Department of History from 1953 until his retirement in 1990, died in Vancouver following a prolonged struggle with stroke-induced memory loss.

Born in Kelowna, a boy and adolescent during the Depression, and approaching young manhood as World War Two broke out, John was shaped by his early experiences in ways that bred a strong identification with British Columbia, a lifelong concern with social and economic reform, and an entrenched commitment to service. Active duty with the Fleet Air Arm of the Royal Navy from 1943 to 1945 — recognized by award of the Distinguished Service Cross for “meritorious or distinguished service before the enemy” — was an early manifestation of his impulse to serve. Campaign work for the British Labour Party in the transformational general election of 1945 announced a continuing involvement in social democratic politics. Graduation with an MA in history from the University of British Columbia in 1949 marked engagement with a field that would provide important — though far from dominating — opportunities to explore British Columbia's evolution and development.

John's historical work took him into several areas. A strong interest in British history saw him pursue Ph. D studies in the field at University College London and at Northwestern University from which he received his doctoral degree in 1955. Focussing on the first great reforming period in modern British history, he wrote his thesis on Lord Shelburne's attempts to bring ideas associated with Priestley, Bentham, and others in their circle into active politics, completed a book on the subject, and taught in the area during most of his career at UBC. Attracted, too, by the history of science, and especially interested in the evolution of medical practice and the understanding of disease, he explored the etiology of the plague, published on this and related matters, served on the editorial board of the *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, and was Director of the Division of the History of Medicine and Science in the Faculty of Medicine at UBC from 1980 until his retirement. Strongly attuned to the life of British Columbia, he maintained a continuing interest in its history,

treating the province as both a distinctively positioned, Pacific/European settler society (a theme explored in his 1971 study *Strangers Entertained: A History of the Ethnic Groups of British Columbia*) and as an entity situated in complex international and political contexts from the earliest days of European contact (a view strongly expressed in a widely-read *English Historical Review* article on the Anglo-Spanish Nootka Crisis of 1790).

A committed, thoughtful, and innovative teacher, John successfully experimented in the classroom, in one memorable instance with a course in modern British history taught in reverse chronological order in order that students' awareness of contemporary events serve to shift them towards engagement with background, sequence, and, ultimately, a more serious encounter with origins and development in general. An interest in graduate education was especially pronounced: a key figure in the introduction of the Department of History's Ph. D programme in the 1960's, and an on-going participant in planning and reform of graduate education at the faculty and university levels in the years beyond, John was also an exemplary graduate seminar leader, a rigorous supervisor of his students' research work, and a strict but enormously fair and informed taskmaster in all phases of student activity.

Public life exercised an on-going fascination: John's candidacy for the New Democratic Party in the provincial election of 1966 positioned him — had he won his closely contested fight, and had the party won the election — as the leading contender for appointment as Minister of Education. He remained, in the years following, a confidant and advisor of major figures in the party's leadership.

Committed to his fields of interest, to his teaching, and to his university, keenly aware of citizenship's duties and responsibilities, and a generous, honourable, and well-intentioned human being, John was a fine colleague and a strong member of his community. He will be well-remembered, and much missed, by his many students, friends, colleagues, and associates.

Allan Smith

Margaret Banks

Margaret Banks (1928-2010) never doubted that she would have a career in the university. Of course, she assumed that it would be in a history department. After all, she had completed her BA in History at Bishop's (1949) and her MA (1950) and PhD (1953) in History at the University of Toronto. But when she began to apply for academic positions, her own supervisor, Frank Underhill, privately undermined her. In one surviving letter of recommendation he described his 'girl student' as 'quiet.' Although she would certainly write a very good dissertation on Edward Blake — probably the best of the lot, he added — she was 'very mousy.' In the end, he recommended one of his male students who, in fact, got the job.

In those days, almost no women received academic appointments in Canadian history departments. This did not deter Margaret, though. Each year she applied to job ads but each year she received polite rejections despite the fact that she had several publications, including *Edward Blake, Irish Nationalist: A Canadian Statesman in Irish Politics, 1892-1907* (1957).

In 1961 she turned to J. J. Talman for advice because he had managed to pursue his academic interest in history while serving as the University of Western Ontario's Chief Librarian. Talman must have been impressed by the bright, motivated young woman on the other end of the telephone because he hired her as Western's first law librarian.

When she took early retirement in 1989, Margaret could look back on her career with a considerable sense of accomplishment: in addition to her many duties as librarian, she became the first woman appointed to the law faculty in 1967 and, because her PhD was in history, she had been made a member of the History Department's graduate academic unit. In addition to a handful of academic articles on aspects of Canadian legal history — including one on the legal ins-and-outs of marriage between a man and his deceased wife's sister — she had written the widely-used manual, *Using A Law Library: a guide for students and lawyers in the common law provinces of Canada* (1971). Dubbed *Banks* by a generation of law students, law librarians, and law professors — as in 'Could I borrow your copy of *Banks* for a second?' — the sixth and final edition of *Using A Law Library* was published in 1994.

Margaret wanted to retire early so that she could return to her first love: writing history. During the Meech Lake debate, she couldn't believe how little journalists, politicians, and citizens knew about Canada's constitution and its history. 'The things people would say!' she once told me. In an effort to be useful, she published a book entitled *Understanding Canada's*

Constitution (1991). Next, she turned her attention closer to home when she co-wrote *A Short History of the Anglican Church of St. John the Divine, Arva* (1997), her beloved church for several decades.

Later, she combined her interests in legal history, politics, parliamentary procedure, and biography when she published *Sir John George Bourinot, Victorian Canadian: His Life, Times, and Legacy* (2001). It was a true labour of love. On her own dime, she travelled from Halifax to Vancouver and points in between to consult archival collections and rare book libraries.

Bourinot the book is just like Margaret the person: thorough, precise, and, well, delightful. The punctilious clerk of the House of Commons is revealed to be a man of many and varied interests, from politics to poetry and from journalism to history. He was also an early supporter of women's higher education, a cause that was always near and dear to Margaret.

Because of her work on *Bourinot* and because of her intimate knowledge of parliamentary procedure, Margaret was often consulted for her technical, procedural expertise by speakers of the House of Commons and of provincial legislative assemblies.

Left unfinished on her desk were her memoirs. Her working title was 'Only One Link,' a reference to one of her favourite quotations: 'only one link in the chain of destiny,' Winston Churchill said, 'can be handled at a time.'

I first met Margaret in 1997 when I interviewed her as part of my doctoral dissertation. Later, I told her about Frank Underhill's letter of recommendation. She was not at all surprised. She even wrote a short piece for the *Canadian Historical Association Bulletin* entitled 'Response From A Mouse' (Winter 1998). She wasn't angry—it was too late for that. Instead, she was grateful. Underhill, she said, had done her an unintentional favour: he had given her a career as a librarian and as a historian.

When my daughter turned two, Margaret sent her a little stuffed dog named Marvel. It didn't take long before Marvel became Harriet's favourite toy. Like Linus to his blanket, Harriet was to Marvel. She took him everywhere! Harriet is now 11 years old but Marvel still has a place of honour on her pillow.

I will miss Margaret. She was my friend.

Don Wright
University of New Brunswick