

Whetung Theatre, Sutherland Campus

The lecture theatre first opened to the public in opened as the Brealey Campus Lecture Theatre in November of 1984. Aside from class lectures the College hosted a number of events in the theatre from pianists to visiting politicians, such as Ed Broadbent and Bob Rae.

In January 1985, William F. Whetung passed away at the age of 73. Passing away on the first day of his retirement from the Fleming College Board of Governors. Following a number of meetings Dr. Charles Pascal proposed to the Board of Governors on January 13, 1985 that the theatre be named after Mr. Whetung and the proposal was accepted unanimously. The naming of the theatre was then announced publicly at the January 28th Board of Governors meeting.

On Monday, October 23, 1995, the date Bill would have been 84 years old the Whetung Theater was rededicated to honour and remember the Native culture he represented. The artwork inside the theater was added during the summer of 1995 by local artist David Beaucage Johnson. The images are taken from the Teaching Rock at Petroglyphs Provincial Park.

William F. Whetung

William F. Whetung was a Mississauga of the Curve Lake First Nation. Throughout his life he was committed to improving the public education system and encouraging native youth to pursue their educational goals.

Born in Alderville, Whetung had lived in Lakefield from 1938 to the time of his death. He was a graduate of Lakefield High School and had spent 2 years at the Guelph Agricultural College before attending and graduating from the Peterborough Teachers' College.

He had served on the Lakefield Public School board for 2 years and was chairman of the Lakefield and District High School Board in 1956 and a trustee with the board for 15 years.

He had also served on the Peterborough County Board of Education for 11 years, serving as Chairman in 1972 and 1976.

He served on the Lakefield village council for 4 years and had a complex named in his honour in 1972 at the Lakefield District Secondary School (now closed).

He served 3 years on the Peterborough Housing Authority, among a number of other appointments in the Lakefield and Peterborough communities.

(Source: Peterborough Examiner, January 2, 1985)



Figure 1: William Whetung, Fleming College Board of Governor Photo, circa 1982

David Beaucage Johnson



Figure 2: *Glory* by David Beaucage Johnson, SSFC Art Collection

David Beaucage Johnson is an Anishnaabe artist from Curve Lake, known for his paintings incorporating the images from the “Teaching Rocks” located at the Petroglyphs north of Peterborough.

*“David’s mix of representational and semi-abstract elements create an environment teeming with the, normally, unseen. It is difficult to visit the ‘Teaching Rocks’ in Peterborough, Ontario without envisioning the ancestral spirits David brings alive on canvas. The locations and landscapes have great significance in the paintings and are a part of the story they tell. David’s richly spiritual paintings have been published in two books of Ojibwe stories by Basil Johnston.” ~excerpt from *Visionary Landscapes*, Michelle Hendry January 13, 2010*

David also painted similar iconic details at the Crombie Theatre at the Frost campus in 2000 when the theatre was named after former Principal Glenn Crombie and came in to complete a refresh of the paintings in 2015 at the request of the college. David also painted a mural outside of the Aboriginal Student Lounge (now Security office). In addition to his mural work on the College campuses, the College holds two of David’s paintings in its permanent Art Collection.



Figure 3:
Maninoowan by
David Beaucage
Johnson, SSFC Art
Collection

(Source: Kawartha Lakes This Week, October 19, 2015)