

Riding high with the MAD Lab

Students invited to attend Forestry Fair at the annual Sussex Balloon Fest



This fall, students from the Mount Allison Dendrochronology (MAD) Lab were among the 40 exhibitors at the Fundy Model Forest Network's annual Forestry Fair, held in conjunction with the Atlantic International Balloon Fiesta in Sussex.

Margaret Leighton, Natasha O'Neill, and Ben Phillips, along with geography professor Dr. Colin Laroque, set up a booth at the Forestry Fair and spent all day Saturday giving public presentations about current MAD Lab projects.

Mount Allison's MAD Lab is currently the only dendrochronology lab in Atlantic Canada formed to investigate tree rings. Dendrochronology is the study of tree rings that can tell us not only how old a tree is but also gives us an idea of past climates, ecosystem dynamics and even human activity in the area that has been captured in the rings of trees.

Some of the topics that students discussed at the fair included: the discovery of the world's oldest red spruce tree, (discovered right here in NB in 2005 by Phillips); dating of historical structures in the Maritimes, particularly churches by looking at the preserved beams; examining the effects of clearcutting treed bogs; and restoring bog ecosystems to viable forests.

Colin says, "The students did a wonderful job making their research accessible to everyone, even kids as young as seven. The MAD Lab crew not only prepared their research for this event but also designed the display and made 'tree ring' cookies for our younger audience. We've already been invited back for next year."



Student Margaret Leighton talks to some 'budding' tree-ring experts and their parents. (Photo courtesy of Colin Laroque).

Updates from Modern Languages...

Dr. Monika Boehringer was invited by the Canadian Federation of University Women to present a talk on Acadian Women Writers during the Atlantic Regional Council in Moncton in October. Monika joined fellow Allisonian **Margaret McCain** ('54), former Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick who served as the keynote speaker at the event.

Jennifer Woods received the Austrian Ambassador's prize for excellence in German for 2005-2006.

Third-year student **Jenna MacDonald** and second-year student **Katelyn Sylvester** were the recipients of the James Robert Inch Memorial Undergraduate Prizes for excellence in French Studies for 2005-2006. The prizes are funded through a 1923 bequest from the estate of Professor Inch's daughter, Mrs. S. W. Hunton, in memory of her father. It was later augmented by a 1983 donation by the estate. James Robert Inch is perhaps best remembered as Mount Allison's President from 1878 to 1891. He also served Mount Allison as a teacher of several subjects throughout his career, from the late 1840's until 1891.