

BUAA Wall of Fame Award Nomination

Dr. R. Matt Bray

Dr. R. Matt Bray (BA Brandon, 1964; MA Manitoba 1968; PhD York 1977) was promoted to Full Professor at Laurentian University in 1996 and became Professor Emeritus in 2007. Dr. Bray is widely recognized for his outstanding contributions to research and scholarship in the history of Northern Ontario.

When Dr. Bray began his career, regional history was an emerging field and for over four decades, he made Laurentian University a hub for research on Northern Ontario. As founding Director of the Institute of Northern Ontario Research and Development (INORD), Dr. Bray created a vibrant hub for regional research by securing peer-reviewed funding, hosting conferences, and publishing new scholarship. During his tenure, INORD secured significant national and provincial grants. The first grant resulted in a conference on Temagami, and his co-edited book, *Temagami: A Debate on Wilderness* (1990). A second conference led to the co-edited book, *At the End of the Shift: Mines and Single-Industry Towns in Northern Ontario* (1992). Under Dr. Bray's direction INORD secured a \$62,900 SSHRC grant and published *The Bibliography of Northern Ontario / La bibliographie du nord de l'Ontario, 1966-1991* (1994).

Dr. Bray's book *A Vast and Magnificent Land: An Illustrated History of Northern Ontario* (1984, with Ernie Epp), funded by the Ontario Ministry of Northern Affairs, marked the bicentennial of Northern Ontario settlement. Proceeds from that project funded two major initiatives: creating the Laurentian University Archives to build further research capacity in Northern Ontario; and establishing scholarship funds (over \$175,000) for graduate research on Northern Ontario history. Dr. Bray's extensive publications appeared in *Sudbury: From Rail Town to Regional Capital* (1993); journal articles on the business history of mining in Sudbury; twenty-two articles for *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, and six entries in *The Dictionary of Canadian Biography*.

Known as an innovative educator, deeply committed to teaching undergraduate and graduate history, Dr. Bray developed courses on the history of Northern Ontario, giving this region's economic, social, and cultural importance wider recognition among scholars. He co-edited two textbooks, *Reappraisals in Canadian History: Post-Confederation* (1992) and *Reappraisals in Canadian History: Pre-Confederation* (1993), both widely adopted at universities across Canada.

Dr. Matt Bray is well-known as a scholar citizen, lending his scholarly expertise to several Sudbury institutions. His book, *Science North: Evolution of a Northern Dream* (2011), makes the history of this world-renowned science centre accessible to a wide public. He also consulted on the visitor experience for Dynamic Earth, a facility promoting the history and significance of international nickel mining. Dr. Bray edited a scholarly history of the complex development of his own institution, *Laurentian University: A History* (2010), described by peer reviewers as "an important contribution to the history of higher education in Canada."

Dr. R. Matt Bray is recognized as a pathbreaker in Northern Ontario history. Always collegial and collaborative, Dr. Bray's achievements in promoting and disseminating research on the history and development of Northern Ontario have ensured the continued vibrancy of the field, at Laurentian and far beyond.