

MICHELLE CHAN

WHERE ALL THE LIGHTS ARE BRIGHT The University will reopen the historic Hudson's Bay Building on 10 September.

Bay Building back in business

SCOTT FENWICK
News Writer

After sitting empty for more than a decade, Jasper Avenue's historic Bay Building will be filled back up by the University of Alberta this fall.

The U of A's Faculty of Extension and the Executive School of Business will now occupy the building, renamed Enterprise Square and set to open officially on 10 September. TEC Edmonton, a research centre that helps link University researchers with commercial interests, will also move in.

"We really hope this will play a key role in the revitalization of downtown, which has made such big gains in the last few years," said Deb Hammacher, the University's Associate Vice-President (External Relations).

"The University wants to be more integrated with the community. Enterprise Square is all about partnership."

The move is expected to attract 1200 staff and students daily. Jim Taylor, the Downtown Business Association's Executive Director, noted the University is solving one of downtown's biggest problems.

"One of the last black holes on Jasper [was] the Hudson's Bay building," he said. "When the University started to show interest in it, it was really important ... because this is a huge chunk of property right in the core."

Taylor also expects numerous shops to open around the new campus because of the increased foot traffic.

"You extend the number of hours of people on the street by bringing in all those Extension students in the evening," he said. "This is a tremendous bonus to the revitalization of downtown."

The Art Gallery of Alberta, whose temporary home is currently in the Bay Building, is also looking forward to the campus' opening.

Tony Luppino, the Gallery's executive director, said that when they looked to relocate during construction of their permanent site, it was of mutual interest to move in with the University, as the Gallery only moved a few blocks from its previous location, and the University gained an art gallery.

"When we came in here ... the idea [was] that the University will carry on some kind of art gallery when we're gone," he said. "It was a good deal for everyone because it's important for the University to have good public programs [and] public spaces."

The expected boom led all three levels of government to help the University buy and renovate Enterprise Square, kicking in a combined contribution of \$37.5 million for the project. The University covered the remaining \$49 million in renovation costs.

One reason the building sat empty

since the 1990s was because of its size: it occupies the entire block between 102 and 103 street along Jasper Avenue. However, the City of Edmonton designated the building a historic resource in the 1980s, ensuring its outer structure would be protected.

"[The building] was like a fort—a block square—and didn't lend itself to building condos because you had so much internal space," Taylor said.

After the Bay department store moved out in 1995, very few businesses were able to occupy the entire building because of its size and restrictions on its windowless façade. In 1997, A-Channel moved into the southeast corner of the first floor, but the building has remained largely empty—until now.

According to Hammacher, the building's size and shape fit well with the University's plans for it.

"What we wanted to do with the building just fit perfectly with the floor plate that was there, and the city's requirements to preserve the façade," she said.

Offices will still get natural light, as an atrium with a glass roof was built in the building's central public space. Hammacher said the atrium will make Enterprise Square a major downtown gathering space.

"You're taking a really dark building and turning it into one of the brightest spots downtown."

Turner to tackle elections as new CRO

NATALIE CLIMENHAGA
Senior News Editor

Craig Turner has his work cut out for him after stepping in this summer to fill the role of Students' Union Chief Returning Officer (CRO).

The second-year science student replaced Rachel Woynorowski, who had held the position since June 2005, in July. As CRO, he will be responsible for running the main SU executive and councillor election in spring 2008, as well as the upcoming General Faculties Council and SU Council by-elections on 27 and 28 September.

Woynorowski, who is now Ward 3 elections coordinator for the City of Edmonton, said she is pleased Turner was the one to take over due to his apparent interest in elections.

"He seems to be very, very dedicated, [and] very excited, which is something you definitely look for—someone who

is really excited to be involved with elections," she said, adding that without a genuine interest in elections, it is unlikely a CRO would be willing to put in the long hours the job often requires.

She also added that her main focus during their transition period was on teaching Turner a lot of the logistics that are required in order to get campaign posters and voting stations up and running.

"You don't realize how much work is required to make [the election] process appear simple and run smoothly," Woynorowski said.

"The biggest challenge that I found was fighting student apathy," she said, explaining that, as CRO, Turner will have to find ways of communicating to students that elections are important and that they should be voting.

Currently, Turner is just focusing on getting through the upcoming by-

elections without a hitch.

"For the by-elections I'd like to just kind of run it, see if there's anything we can improve on, and then improve on that for the general election," Turner said, adding that ballot security is one issue he will be looking at confronting in the spring election.

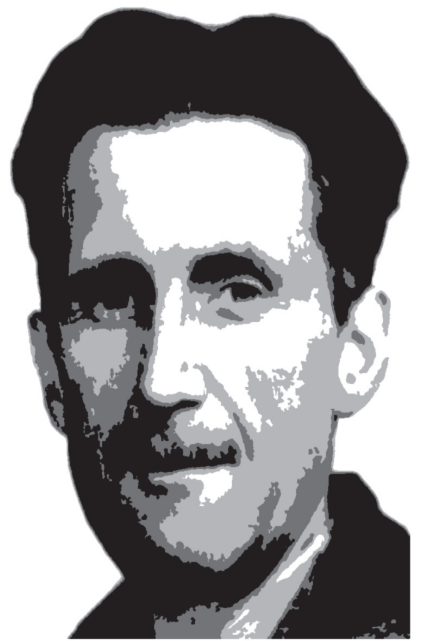
Turner also explained that the SU has changed gears on its poster campaign for the by-elections by focusing more on targeting individual faculties in order to hone in on the areas where people are running to fill vacant seats.

In the meantime, Woynorowski advised Turner not to underestimate the willingness of students to get involved.

"If you take the time and investment to make sure that students have the information, [then] they will read the information, they will vote, they will become informed about the issues, and they will care," she said.

Eric Blair is widely regarded as the greatest journalist of all time. You may know him better under the nom de plume

GEORGE ORWELL



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