

**UPEI's Twenty-Second
Recognition of Founders Ceremony
Friday, December 15, 2023, 1:30 pm
The McCain Foundation Learning Commons (286A and 287)**

Citation for Mr. Leo Cheverie

Read by Mr. Simon Lloyd, University Archivist and Special Collections Librarian

It is with honour and a measure of sadness that I present to you the late Leo Cheverie, a long-time member of the Robertson Library staff.

It's hard to describe Leo in just a few words—"larger than life" is perhaps an apt description for him.

Leo came to UPEI in 1980 after graduating from Souris High School—and he never left! During his student years, he worked at the Robertson Library as a student assistant. After graduating in 1984 with his Bachelor of Arts in history and Canadian Studies, Leo joined the library staff the following year. He loved research and teaching students and others how to find things. If he didn't know the answer to your question right away, you could count on him to find it.

He was amazed at the transition of library services during his career—from using manual card catalogues to look up information to digitization that made previously out-of-reach materials discoverable to everyone—for example, oral historian Dutch Thompson's interview with Leo's grandfather who lived to be 100 years old. Leo loved the fact that the Robertson Library served the entire province.

Leo was involved in campus activities during and after his time as a student. He was one of the early supporters and leaders of the World University Service of Canada initiative at UPEI, supporting refugee students through sponsorships, advocacy, fundraising, and empathy. In recognition of his contributions to WUSC, he was awarded its Alumni Award in 2007.

He felt privileged to be part of a university community and was keen to support its members—students, staff, and faculty. He was a dedicated member and supporter of CUPE, serving as president of CUPE 1870 and a member of the executive for many years. One of the accomplishments he was most proud of was his work with Dr. Rosemary Herbert to develop a campus-wide wellness committee. This initiative led to a more substantial employee assistance program that supports all UPEI employees and their families.

On campus and in the broader community, he was known as a passionate advocate and activist—a crusader against injustice and a supporter for many causes from housing and health

care to land use and Indigenous rights. Even after his diagnosis of cancer, he traveled to Parliament Hill in Ottawa to advocate and lobby with the Canadian Cancer Society for change and support for people living with cancer.

He was politically active, community-minded, a life-long learner, a strategic thinker and organizer, and an enthusiastic supporter of the arts, especially music. He was so proud to be named Music PEI's Volunteer of the Year in 2020.

Leo has left an incredible legacy for the UPEI community and indeed the entire province. In his memory, his family is establishing an annual scholarship in perpetuity for UPEI students.

For his passion for learning and life, his advocacy for and contributions to the UPEI and Prince Edward Island communities, we are proud to name the late Leo Cheverie a Founder of the University of Prince Edward Island.