

Ici et là
Here and there

Campus



Dr. Gorelick arrives at the river's edge for his trip to work.



Transportation

Meet Carleton's intrepid cycle-canoe commuter

Neither wind, nor rain – but maybe ice – will keep Root Gorelick from his appointed rounds

DEPENDING ON YOUR point of view, Root Gorelick may have the best commute ever. Before winter set in, Dr. Gorelick, a professor of biology at Carleton University, was getting to work and back in a canoe on the Rideau River.

There was, however, the small detail of transporting the canoe the several blocks from his home to the river's edge. The solution: pulling it behind him on his bicycle.

Curious passersby frequently stopped him

for a chat as he prepared to put in the canoe or take it out of the river. "It actually delays the trip sometimes in both directions, but that's okay. It makes for a more social day."

He could simply cycle to work, which he figures would take about one-third the time. But "it's just not the same. There's something really relaxing about taking the boat," he says. "For me, it's good for new ideas. My mind just completely wanders."

Dr. Gorelick occasionally canoed to work starting in 2009, but in those days he drove the canoe to the river. A fellow biologist, whom he'd invited to give a pair of talks at Carleton in 2010, gave him the idea of using a bicycle.

The professor, Charles Goodnight of the University of Vermont, kayaks to work on Lake Champlain. "I asked, 'How do you do that?' And he said, 'Well, I have a trailer that goes behind my bike.' I said, 'really?'"

As of Dec. 1, Dr. Gorelick was still at it but he figured he had only a couple of weeks left before he'd have to store the vessel for the season. He'll return to it this spring, then begins a year-long sabbatical starting this summer. "But once we're back I'll keep doing it. This is too much fun to let go of." – LÉO CHARBONNEAU