Chardonnay Wilman, 19, has been growing her hair since eighth grade and it is now 79 cm long. She says that she only gets her hair cut once a year for religious purposes. "I feel beautiful, but sometimes it get really hot and sweaty, and sometimes it's really heavy."

Dylan Hall, 20, keeps his hair to stand out. "it makes me feel awesome at times. Yes, I pose and do wicked hair flips in the mirror. I feel like I stand out more, and am more memorable," said Hall.

Rastafarian, Franklin Bailey, 44, grows his hair not because of religion but because of his lifestyle. He says that he lets his hair be like this because it's his "way of stand up in the kingdom of the almighty before I am there with him."

The Defining Characteristic

By Taylor Hermiston

Over time, people have passionately made emotional connections to their hair. It is obvious from the amount of time and money we spend taking care of it, stressing about it, worrying about losing it, coloring it, primping it, and fondling it absentmindedly. But the meaning behind having a full head of hair is more than a passionate love affair. Hair has been classified through time as one of the defining characteristics of people and is often used to indicate a person's social position, such as age, gender or religion.

"I only get my hair cut once a year for religious purposes," said Chardonnay Wilman, 19, from Belleville.

"In the old Jewish testament, people would go for long periods of time without cutting their hair to show devotion to god."

Wilman also said that having long hair is a sign of femininity and good health.

Rastafarian is a social and religious movement that allows peo-ple to express spiritual beliefs by wearing dreadlocks. Dreadlocks are the most significant indicator of the religion and is a style made up of beeswax that is twisted into the hair. The process can take up to three weeks before a permanent lock is set.

Fourty-four-year-old Franklin Bailey of Picton, is apart of the Rastafarian religion and has been growing his hair for over seven years.

He has successfully grown it to a length of almost one meter and will never cut it again. For such a long length of hair and the type of style it is, it takes him more than two hours to wash it. Bailey said that it is more like a lifestyle than a religion now and makes him feel proud.

Pride can carry two connotations, positive or negative, a virtue or vice, and most people take pride in their hair in the most positive way because it is a way to express themselves as an individual to others in society.

Along the way, people will judge anything that isn't normal in their eyes and people like Dylan Hall, 20, from Cobourg, fights the right to be an individual by keeping his hair long.

"I keep it because cutting it would be giving in to everyone who has ever made fun of it. Not a week goes by where someone isn't telling me to cut it, laughing at me, or telling me that I look stupid. If I cut it, they win," he said.

Hall hasn't cut his hair since 2006 and is now over 45 centimetres long. When he started growing it out, he was very interested in heavy metal and he said that the hair just went along with the stereotype.

Although considered one of the defining characteristics, people have learned to ignore the social norms and do what they please with it. Hair is such a simple entity and we are lucky that it is one of the things that helps us define who and what we are in our own way.

After receiving a bad haircut, Kimberlee Morrisey, 18, has been growing out her hair since August 2012. She says that having long hair makes her feel good except when she has to do something with it cause it's a pain and takes a lot of time. Her hair is now approximately 50 centimetres.

Corey DeBock-Earhart, 19, has been growing her hair all her life. She says prefers it long because long hair makes her feel beautiful and feminine. Most of the women in her family also have really long hair as well which has swayed her to grow it long.

Kaylea Pham, 13, has no recollection of what short hair feels like and only cuts her hair once a year. Pham says she likes having long hair because it keeps her warm and, in seriousness, it's the only thing that makes her feel feminine. She doesn't wear jewelry or make-up. Her hair is now over one meter long.