Change, Opportunity and Growth

The past four years have been an exciting time for anyone involved in our university. The growth of UBC’s reputation, the renewal of the campus and the influx of new research opportunities have pushed UBC into the top tier of universities in North America.

Much of the credit for this excitement can be attributed to the energy and focus Martha Piper has brought to UBC. She has capitalized on our strength while building new programs and providing support for established ones.

But the value of any university lies, chiefly, in the accomplishments of its graduates, and the willingness of those graduates to support their alma mater. Our job, as an association, has always been to nurture and cultivate that support in the form of participation in university affairs and advocacy for university concerns.

My involvement in alumni affairs at UBC began in 1992 as a member, then chair, of the Commerce/MBA alumni group. Since then, as a member-at-large, senior vice president and president of the Alumni Association, I have had the privilege of serving the university’s graduates at the highest level. During that time, I have been able to travel to many of our regional networks and meet alumni around the world. From my first event onwards, I have never ceased to be impressed with the quality of our graduates, their fondness for UBC, and their unquenchable thirst for information about their alma mater.

Because of the support I perceive from our graduates, I am convinced that alumni cultivation is the most important item on the university’s external agenda, and that we must develop even more programs to respond to the needs of our graduates.

For that reason, and because our graduates now number nearly 200,000, we have been negotiating with the university to expand and reposition alumni services. The Executive Committee of the Board of Directors and our senior staff have examined best practices around North America, and have presented the university with a number of briefs outlining how expanded services can best be administered and delivered. Those discussions are ongoing, and promise to make alumni cultivation at UBC the very best in Canada. We are fortunate to have a strong, capable staff working with us, and I thank them for their dedication and hard work.

I continue to be impressed with the calibre of alumni who become involved in the business of the Association. I would like to thank all those who have given their time and expertise to such a good cause, and wish the new Board the best of luck in the coming years.
The eighth annual Alumni Achievement Dinner was a huge success by any standard. All the seats were sold, the venue was splendid, we raised money for student programs and the event went off without a hitch. To top it all off, it was a great time.

But the best part of the Dinner is always the recognition of the award winners. This year’s recipients were good examples of what UBC does best: produce some of the top performers in every field.

This year, Dinner Chair Bob McGraw introduced the “Illuminating Achievement” theme, and contracted renowned First Nations artist Lyle Wilson to create Raven Steals the Light, now the official logo of the Annual Achievement Dinner.

Next year’s dinner will be held November 20, 2003.
Administration

New Directions, Exciting Times

Exciting times. The past year at the Alumni Association can certainly be described that way. We have accomplished more (and have received more recognition) than ever before. From an increase in events at Regional Networks, a reincarnated Young Alumni program, more demand for reunions and increased member services to more mentoring programs and faculty/alumni involvement, we have ramped up both our commitment to develop new programs and our ability to deliver them.

At the same time, we have expended a large amount of time and energy in organizational self-analysis. We continue to build strong relationships with other units on campus that deal with alumni issues, and continue to work with the university to rationalize those services into a more centralized administrative structure. All in all, it’s been a full, productive year.

As you can see, exciting times can be either a curse or a blessing. The curse seems to be that exciting times bring increased demands on the energies of staff and volunteers. The blessing is that the increased demands bring out the best in that same group of staff and volunteers.

Our work has received recognition this year from the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), and the Canadian Council for the Advancement of Education (CCAE), organizations that provide training and support for alumni, development and advancement professionals. Recognition from these councils defines excellence in our field, and we received awards in 2002 for our annual Achievement Dinner, Trek Magazine, Volunteers are Blooming, The Next Trek event and our e-invitation to new grads.

This recognition reflects the importance we place on the work of alumni cultivation. UBC’s grads have been making an impact on our society since 1915, and have become the most valuable external constituency of the university. They were responsible for three-quarters of all donations made to UBC, are the strongest advocates for building and strengthening the university, and are anxious to be part of their alma mater through volunteer activities with the Association, their former faculties, and with university governance. This past year, alumni elected a new Chancellor, Allan McEachern, and 11 alumni to the university’s Senate. The most rewarding part of being involved in alumni cultivation is working with enthusiastic, capable, committed volunteers who are passionate about their university, and deeply concerned with its well-being.

Our negotiations with the university centre around refining the services we offer as an Association, and increasing the responsibility of the university in delivering some of those services to a broader range of alumni. The negotiations themselves are stimulating, and the prospect of expanding alumni services is energizing for both staff and volunteers.

I would like to thank the many volunteers, including our past presidents, who have made this year so enjoyable, and congratulate the staff for its effort and professional performance. I’d also like to offer a special thanks to Agnes Papke, our former executive director, who guided the Association for nearly 8 years. Her work and her dedication are greatly appreciated.

— Leslie Konantz,
Acting Executive Director
The Heart of Alumni Services

Young alumni gather to socialize and get some tips from an MBA grad speaking about investments; old chums from the class of ’72 decide to call a reunion to compare careers, hairlines and stock portfolios; a teacher in Singapore, BEd’92, tells a group of students about her experiences at UBC and encourages them to apply.

Those are just a few of the events planned and executed by Programs Department staff. The Program Officers are the front line of service delivery for everything from mentor lunches and 60th anniversary reunions to best practices workshops and the Achievement Dinner.

With a staff of four (three Program Officers and one Program Assistant), the department provides the bulk of Association activities.

Reunions

Most of this year’s reunions happened on Alumni Reunion Weekend, October 4-6. The weekend kicked off with an Association-sponsored pancake breakfast and welcome by President Martha Piper, then various classes went off to their various functions.

A highlight of the reunion program is the 60th anniversary reunion, held in November in conjunction with UBC’s Ceremonies Office. That class is gowned and capped, then participates in the fall graduation ceremony, where they proceed across the stage to be recognized by the President and Chancellor.

Career and Mentor Program

Pride in UBC begins in the undergrad years, so the Association works with the AMS and Student Services to involve today’s students in activities designed to foster future affiliation. Events such as Just Desserts, Imagine UBC, Beyond the BA and BSc, career expos for Arts and Science and student send-offs provide strong support for students.

Young Alumni Network

Grads of the past ten years band together for mentoring, social events and professional development. Strong volunteer input and growing numbers of participants make this one of our most vibrant programs.

Regional Networks

AKA branches, part of this program is designed to support President Piper and other senior administrators in their travels abroad. Otherwise, active alumni in 50 branches world-wide gather for social, professional and UBC-oriented events, all planned, organized and administered from Association offices.

Alumni/Faculty Programs

Faculty-based alumni relations are an important part of service delivery. As alumni relations professionals, our staff helps connect other alumni officers on campus to each other, and provide workshops for best practices skill development. We deliver a monthly hotsheet to faculty alumni officers that announces events and provides news about campus activities. We also developed a benchmarking tool to measure alumni participation. Details in sidebar, right.

Walter Gage Fund

We administer this endowment to help current students fund special projects and take advantage of extraordinary educational opportunities.

Member Services

The affinity credit card, life insurance, extended health insurance and the Acard for service discounts provide the old adage, ‘membership has its advantages.’ Member services provide a significant portion of the Association’s annual operating budget.
Point System for Charting Alumni Participation

The Alumni Participation Charting System has been adapted for use at UBC. The Alumni Association is the first in Canada to use such a measurement system. Success of this system depends on the participation of many campus units. Advancement Services, which manages the university’s database of graduates, has been extremely helpful in setting up its software, Viking, to handle the various input and report-producing requirements of the system.

Each time an alumnus participates in UBC affairs, he or she is given points. The number of points ascribed to an activity is based on the importance of the event and the level of commitment shown by the graduate. An example:

1 point — Supplies address update. This is the basic level of interest.
2 points — Returns “Class Acts” info for Trek Magazine, newsletters or class mailing.
— Attends a meeting, branch event, faculty event, etc.
3 points — Attends a reunion, acts as a mentor, gets involved in career networking.
4 points — Purchases an A-card, goes on a trip, volunteers for an alumni committee.
5 points — Significant involvement of time: Reunion coordination, leadership in branches, committees, etc, represents the association at an event.
— Former board/past president activities.
6 points — Highest level. Members of the Board of Directors, BOG, Senate, etc.

NOTE: Because donor records are not available to the Alumni Association, points are not ascribed to alumni who are donors.

Total points are tabulated throughout the year. In 2002-3, the following baseline measurements were made:

| Total alumni tracked: 9,470 |
| Total point accumulation: 28,341 |
| Number of alumni with 8+ points: 357 |
| Number of alumni with 4-7 points: 2,641 |

Points start from zero at the beginning of each fiscal year, so that growth in involvement can be presented graphically, and programs that encourage alumni involvement can be more easily gauged.

We are currently refining the methodology for capturing participants and assigning points, and as all faculties and units become committed to the system, significant increases can be expected for the next few years.
Communications

Getting the Word Out

How do you get the attention of 3,500 dentists? You want to tell them about a reunion and golf tournament and you know they’ll be interested if only you can be sure they hear about it. Do you call them on the phone? Put an ad in the paper? Make an appointment?

This is the challenge facing universities trying to communicate with alumni. In a world where everyone gets bombarded with hundreds of communications every day, just getting through is a major victory.

The Communications Department designs, writes and prints announcements, invitations, scripts, newsletters, brochures, speaking notes, signs, stationary, event packages, position papers, press releases, and all the other things an active alumni association needs to get the word out.

This also includes maintaining the website, preparing documents in the proper electronic form for external printing, and keeping up-to-date with current technology. It also includes, of course, producing three issues of Trek Magazine annually.

Some events require a little bit of everything. The Annual Achievement Dinner requires a theme and a design motif, a ticket sales/invitation package (advertising brochure, ticket, response card, mailing envelope, return envelope), press releases, script and speaking notes for MC and host, sponsorship package, signage, menu, program, table items such as raffle prize tent cards, posters, electronic messages, certificates for award winners and artwork for everything, ready for printing.

And with each item, we face the same problem: how do we get through? We try with a bit of invention, a bit of humour, and a strong sense that the job is worth doing.

Lose the Drill . . .

Grab the Putter . . .

Recent Awards for Alumni Association Programs

Canadian Council for the Advancement of Education (CCAE), June, 2002

- **Gold**: Best University/Alumni Magazine (Trek)
- **Silver**: Best Writing in English (Trek)
- **Silver**: Best Alumni/Volunteer Recognition Event
- **Bronze**: Best E-Innovation in Alumni Affairs
- **Bronze**: Best Alumni Event

Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), March, 2003

- **Grand Gold**: University Periodicals (Trek)
- **Silver**: Writing—Features and Articles (Trek)
- **Bronze**: Publication Design (Trek)

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**Chris Petty, MFA’86**
**Communications Director**
Years with AA: 11
**Best part of job:** The variety of projects and ability to work with many university constituents.

**Vanessa Clarke**
**Communications Coordinator**
Years with AA: 2
**Best part of job:** Editing, organizing and writing material for Trek Magazine.
Board of Directors 2003 ~ 2004

**President**
Jane Hungerford, BEd’67
Past Chair, BC Cancer Foundation

**Senior Vice President**
Martin Ertl, BSc’93
Managing Director, Navarik Corp.

**Treasurer**
David Elliott, BCom’69
Chartered Accountant

**Members at Large**
2002 – 2004
John Grunau, BA’67
Darlene Marzari, MSW’68
Former MLA, Business Owner
Colin Smith, BASc’65
CFO, Rapid Transit Projects, Ltd

2003 – 2005
Raquel Hirsch, BA’80, MBA’83
Marketing Consultant
President, Hirsch Strategies, Inc.
Mark Mawhinney, BA’94
Entrepreneur, Venture Capitalist
Doug Robinson, BCom’71,
LLB’72
Lawyer, Mediator

Committee Chairs

Achievement Dinner
Raquel Hirsch

Advocacy
Doug Robinson

Audit Committee
Colin Smith

Awards
Greg Clark

Executive Committee
Jane Hungerford

Finance
David Elliott

Governance
Martin Ertl

Walter Gage
Thelma Sharp Cook

Young Alumni
Jesse Sims, BSc’00

Returning Officer
Jim Rogers, BA’67

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Ida and Cecil Green Life-Long UBC Supporters

Dr. Bill Gibson, BA’33, DSc’93, brought Cecil and Ida Green to UBC one day in 1967 and showed them the mansion on the cliff, then up for sale. “You should buy this and give it to the university,” he told them. Cecil paused a moment. Ida spoke up. “He’s right, Cecil,” she said. “We should buy it.” Cecil Green Park was born.

Cecil and Ida Green loved UBC. Together they gave $700,000 for a speaker series; Ida left $2 million in her will (she died in 1986) for the maintenance of the house; and Cecil gave $15 million to establish Green College, UBC.

Right, Cecil Green with a bust of Ida, taken in 1992 in the conservatory of the house. Cecil Green died April 12, 2003 in La Jolla, California, aged 102.
Finances

Sound Fiscal Management, Strong Program Support

The Alumni Association, because it is an independent society, manages its own financial affairs. Financial Manager Oiyee Kwan and Treasurer Tammie Mark, manage all accounts payable and receivable, maintain quarterly statements for the staff and board, and organize the annual audit of the Association’s books, which is performed by the accounting firm KPMG. The Association has an arrangement with the university wherein the university manages employee financial services, though all employee costs are borne by the Association.

The graphs at right indicate the annual revenues and expenses of the Association. The budget surplus ($16,632) is due to an unexpectedly high return from one of our affinity partners, registered late in the fiscal year.

The 2002/3 audited statement is available for scrutiny at the Association offices during business hours.

The 2002/3 Alumni Association Financial Statement, audited by KPMG, is available for scrutiny at Association offices during business hours.

The Perfect Setting

When Ida and Cecil Green purchased the “Mansion on the Cliff,” they donated it to the university for use as a town and gown centre. The Alumni Association manages the facility and has its offices there.

Each year, almost 200 couples use Cecil Green Park as the setting for their wedding ceremony. With such a background, how could any marriage go wrong?

The house is also rented for seminars, meetings, celebrations and memorial services. It’s also used as a film set, providing atmosphere and subtext to TV series and feature-length movies.

Oiyee Kwan,
Financial Manager
Years with AA: 10
Best part of job: Year end, when everything adds up.

Ann Merling, BEd’80, MASA’00
Booking Coordinator
Years with AA: 3½
Best part of job: Helping to maintain Cecil Green Park’s architectural integrity.