"WALK SOFTLY WHEN YOU CARRY THE DEAD"

Top forensic dentist David Sweet, OC, is frequently called upon to help identify victims and perpetrators of violent crime.

PLUS

Citizens lead forensic investigations in Mexico

Take a look inside the brand new Robert H. Lee Alumni Centre

The rise and fall of the Old Gym

India’s school for the marginalized
In Short

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Cover
“Walk softly when you carry the dead”
Top forensic dentist David Sweet, OC, is frequently called upon to help identify victims and perpetrators of violent crime. The work takes patience, precision, creativity and, above all, compassion.

Search for Mexico’s Missing
Thousands of Mexicans have gone missing over the past decade, and the country’s citizens are demanding answers.

Help! Teeth Hurt
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Caste Against Type
An award-winning documentary tells the story of some of India’s poorest students.

Interview
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ON THE BLOCK

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Those were the scenes this April at Cecil Green Park House, a 1912 mansion perched on the northern tip of UBC's Vancouver campus where alumni UBC has been headquartered for the past few decades (walking to meetings held on the other side of campus requires a map and some sandwiched). It's architecturally impressive, historically interesting, has a sea view and is surrounded by idyllic gardens. You'd think it'd be relevant to leave. But not if you knew where we were moving to.

On the morning of April 20, alumni UBC staff arrived at their new workspace inside the Robert H. Lee Alumni Centre – so near the paint was still wet. As the building's earliest occupants, we were able to witness the finishing touches being added to the spacious and inviting public areas, from paving stones and shrubbery on the outside to hi-tech interactive screens, display cases for UBC memorabilia, and some stylish lounge chairs and tables I would steal if I were dishonest (or had a bigger purse) on the inside. The alumni centre was coming to life – it was like watching a building being born. And it's your baby. If you want to take a quick peek at the new arrival on campus, turn to page 14.

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A CENTURY OF COMMUNITY

There are very few institutions that can be measured in centuries, but universities feature prominently among them. Later this year, UBC will be celebrating the Centennial of its first class in 1915-16. This Centennial, running from September 2015 to May 2016, will be about reaching out to communities and inviting them to connect with us.

As connected alumni, you know the importance of keeping in touch with the university and with each other, wherever you are. There are more than 300,000 alumni in more than 140 countries, and our UBC LinkedIn-Higher Ed group already has close to 200,000 alumni and student members. In fact, alumni are UBC’s single largest university community. This is why the launch event for the Centennial will include the official opening of the Robert H. Lee Alumni Centre. This historic event will take place on September 30, 2015 - 100 years to the day that UBC first opened its doors.

If anything symbolizes the distance we have traveled in a relatively short time it is the Robert H. Lee Alumni Centre. This new centre - the first of its kind in Canada – is a place for connecting, collaborating and lifelong learning.

It is a place that supports innovation, social discourse and the exchange of knowledge and experience. It is a home and a resource for our alumni community for life.

Our alumni are a community but they are also working in our communities through a vast spectrum of causes that align with UBC’s desire to serve and improve our society. The UBC 100: A Legacy of Possibility project highlights around 500 community projects that our alumni are involved in, right here in BC and as far away as Guatemala, India and Burkina Faso. It is inspiring to read their stories and to see other alumni joining in. This, to me, is the very definition of community.

In our community closer to home, the university and the Alma Mater Society have been deeply involved in the recent transit referendum in BC, urging students to make their voices heard and help us all plan a sustainable future for transit here in the Lower Mainland.

Our community in the Okanagan – now 10 years old – continues to demonstrate the transformative power that is unleashed when universities and their communities grow hand in hand.

Downtown, at UBC Robson Square, we welcome more than 400,000 community members for adult educational programs, meetings, conferences and public seminars each year.

And our Learning Exchanges in the Vancouver Downtown Eastside and in downtown Kelowna are hubs where faculty, staff, alumni, students and local citizens come together for learning programs tailor-made for their communities.

So when I look back to 1915, it is that first community of 379 students who put their faith in this brand new entity called the University of British Columbia, I am struck by their courage and their sheer optimism, even as the Great War raged in Europe.

Now, one century later, our university has been transformed by, with and through our communities and I look forward to celebrating with you in the Centennial year ahead.

Arvind Gupta
President and Vice-Chancellor

To look forward to UBC's second century
• To engage with the community on issues that are important to that community
• To look back at our first 100 years and celebrate the work we did and the legacy we left
• To lead UBC into its second century with a new vision for the future

Robert H. Lee Alumni Centre, will take place on September 30, 2015 - 100 years to the day that UBC first opened its doors. This celebratory event will feature 360 performances, narratives and websites covering everything from Aboriginal studies, to the arts, to environmental challenges, to visioning the future.

The response to the call for Centennial initiatives was overwhelming. Preparations for the Centennial year have involved more than 20 committees, 150 projects, and 700 volunteers. UBC expect to launch more than 150 initiatives in the year to come.

The Centennial will close officially at Alumni Weekend on May 28, 2016. In our community closer to home, the university and the Alma Mater Society have been deeply involved in the recent transit referendum in BC, urging students to make their voices heard and help us all plan a sustainable future for transit here in the Lower Mainland.

The Global Impact Map will visually capture UBC’s footprint in British Columbia, Canada, and the rest of the world. The map will be a highlight of the soon-to-be-launched UBC Centennial website, which will be your go-to guide for celebrating a hundred years of UBC: a look at our past, a taste of our future, and information about all the celebratory activities.

Alumni, students, faculty, staff, friends and partners of UBC are all being invited to add a pin to the map to represent themselves and their UBC connections and activities. UBC’s vast alumni network is made up of more than 300,000 members living in more than 140 countries. Adding a pin to the map is an opportunity for you to tell us where you are, share your story, and learn more about your fellow alumni. What you share is completely up to you. Stake your claim at www.ubc100.ca

The accomplishments of UBC’s global community of alumni represent an inspiring account of positive social, cultural, and economic change in the world. The October 2015 Innovation Awards recognize some outstanding individuals who, through their extraordinary activities, have connected the university with communities both near and far to create positive change.

Save-the-date: 2015 alumni UBC Achievement Awards Tuesday, October 27, 2015

The accomplishments of UBC’s global community of alumni represent an inspiring account of positive social, cultural, and economic change in the world. The October 2015 Innovation Awards recognize some outstanding individuals who, through their extraordinary activities, have connected the university with communities both near and far to create positive change. Tickets available for purchase July 2015.

Call for Centennial Initiatives

There are many reunions scheduled for the summer months. To find out if your class is planning one, please see alumni.ubc.ca/reunions

Now supporting preservation of bird habitats

Vancouver and the Okanagan have passionate bird watchers and environmental conservationists. Inspired by the birds they spotted during a road trip through the Carolinian forest, the Hesses’ journey started with a UBC Night Course on birds of BC and turned into a lifetime passion for avian research. The Hesses expressed this passion with a gift in their wills to UBC, ensuring vital funding for ornithology research.

An estate gift can support research or education in sustainability, science, health care, business, arts and culture – virtually any field.

To establish your legacy with a gift to UBC call 604.822.5373 or visit www.centennialubc.ca/legacy/
Time for an Oil Change?

By Cory Allan

Coconut oil sales are on the rise. Sainsbury’s in the United Kingdom reports coconut oil sales are up 442 per cent over 2013. The popularity of coconut oil as a culinary oil, used both as a beauty product and for cooking, has it flying off the shelves. Avocado oil is not too far behind.

Gail Hammond, a dietitian and food, nutrition and health lecturer in the Faculty of Land and Food Systems, discusses the coconut oil craze and why mixing it up in the kitchen can be a good thing.

Why do you think coconut oil has gained popularity among consumers?

There are three things that immediately come to mind: consumers are becoming more nutrition savvy. Recent research has challenged the longstanding notion that saturated fats are harmful to heart health, and celebrity endorsements of coconut oil have turned up the heat on using it for everything from beauty products to cooking.

Interviewer: What are the health benefits of consuming coconut oil versus other oils?

Avocado oil is being consumed in increasing amounts amid growing evidence that it is healthy for the body. Avocado oil is high in monounsaturated fats, which lower the ratio of ‘bad’ HDL cholesterol to ‘good’ HDL cholesterol in the blood. Avocado oil is low in saturated fats and cholesterol and high in monounsaturated fats, which are healthier fats than saturated fats. It is a great choice for cooking with.

Interviewer: How should we be using coconut oil?

Coconut oil sales are up 442 per cent over 2013. The popularity of coconut oil continues to rise, and it is a great choice for cooking with.

Interviewer: What types of oil are best for cooking?

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The scientists don’t know yet whether anything similar will turn up in other animals – the ballooning threats of frogs, for example, or the long and fascinating feathered dinosaurs.

This discovery underscores how little we know even of the basic anatomy of the largest animals alive in the oceans today,” said Nick Pyenson, a paleoceanographer who is curator of fossil marine mammals at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of Natural History. “Our findings add to the growing list of evolutionary solutions that whales evolved in response to a larger ocean facing in millions of years.”

“Rorquals are the largest group among baleen whales, and include blue whales and fin whales. Specimens the researchers studied were obtained at a commercial whaling station in Iceland.

UBC RESEARCHERS STUDY EARLY FORMATION OF GALAXIES

A discovery by a team of astrophysicists including UBC researchers promises to advance a long-running puzzle about how the universe formed. The work of UBC researchers Douglas Scott, a professor in the Department of Physics and Astronomy, and his colleagues, was published in the journal Physical Review Letters.

The work of UBC researchers Raymond Anderson, Horacio Bach, Julian Davies, Urs Hafeli and Charles Thompson will also benefit from the new funding.

A PROMISING TREATMENT FOR HUNTINGTON’S

Dr. Blair Leavitt, a professor in UBC’s Department of Medical Genetics, and his colleagues took a closer look at this part of the genetic code. They identified critical regions where proteins, called transcription factors, can bind to the DNA and control the function of the HD gene. Changes in these DNA regions can play both good and bad roles in the disease.

“Changes in these DNA regions could help us understand how small genetic differences in the DNA surrounding the HD gene can both delay and accelerate the disease.”

Researchers found that when the DNA change is found on a normal chromosome with no HD mutation, it turns off the expression of the good gene and allows the mutant gene on the other chromosome to predominate, speeding up the onset of the disease. If the DNA change is found on a chromosome with the HD mutation, it turns off the bad gene and offers individuals some protection from the disease.

According to Leavitt, these findings provide critical evidence to support the development of new drugs that could reduce the expression of the gene that causes HD. Leavitt is already involved in the testing of one gene silencing treatment that shows great promise, and will begin the first human trial of this therapy for HD later this year.

UBC PARTNERS WITH CHINESE UNIVERSITIES

UBC has signed an unprecedented number of partnership agreements with leading Chinese universities that are expected to pave the way for greater academic and cultural exchange between Canada and China.

Four agreements will establish joint degree programs between UBC and highly respected institutions, including Peking, Zhejiang, Fudan, and Southwest universities.

Two agreements will focus on promoting research collaboration. UBC and Chongqing University have agreed to set up a new materials laboratory that will study alloys, and Beijing University of Chemical Technology is partnering with UBC to establish a clean energy research lab.

UBC also signed student mobility programs with Zhejiang University and Chongqing Municipal Education Commission that will establish two-way educational exchanges between UBC and China.

The agreements were signed during UBC president Arvind Gupta’s recent mission to China, during which he met with key government and education officials and visited a research centre for Alzheimer’s disease and childhood development disorders at Chongqing Medical University, one of UBC’s largest and most successful joint projects in China.

UNIQUE NERVE STRUCTURE DISCOVERED IN WHALES

UBC researchers have discovered a unique nerve structure in the mouth and tongue of rorqual whales that could be a unique “bungee cord.”

The stretchy nerves explain how the massive whales are able to balloon an immense pocket between their body wall and overhanging blubber to capture prey during feeding dives.

“This discovery was totally unexpected and unlike other nerve structures we’ve seen in vertebrates, which are of a more fixed length,” says Wayne Vogl of UBC’s Cellular and Physiological Sciences department. “The rorquals’ bulk feeding mechanism required major changes in anatomy of the tongue and mucous blubber to allow large deformation, and now we recognize that it also required major modifications in the nerves in these tissues so they could also withstand the deformation.”

In humans, stretching these nerves usually damages them. In these whales, the nerve cells are packed inside a case in such a way that the individual nerve fibers are never really stretched, they simply unfold.

“Our next step is to get a better understanding of how the nerve core is forced to allow its rapid unrolling and re-rolling during the feeding process,” says UBC zoologist Robert Shadwick.

The number of seagulls in the Strait of Georgia is down by 50 per cent from the 1970s and UBC researchers say the decline reflects changes in the availability of marine food.

Researchers collected 100 years of data on population numbers of Glaucous-winged Gulls, the most common seagull species found in the Lower Mainland, Victoria, Nanaimo and elsewhere in the region. They found that the population increased rapidly beginning in the early 1970s, but started to drop after the mid-1980s, with their investigation pointing to diet as a major factor in the decline of the bird’s health.

“The birds are obviously a generalist – they can eat whatever’s around,” says the study’s lead author Louise Blight. “If they are experiencing a population decline, the gulls may be telling us that there have been some fundamental changes to the marine system.

Gulls rely predominantly on fish-based marine diets, largely eating small fish and shellfish, but over time moved to a diet that incorporated more foods found on land, such as garbage and earthworms.

“They’re presumably eating terrestrial-based marine sources because the things they prefer to eat are less available,” says Blight, explaining that there are probably fewer forage fish in coastal waters and less diversity among them, than was the case prior to industrial fishing – and that gulls need fish to breed successfully.

“Gulls are an indicator of our coastal marine ecosystems,” she says. “We need to be restoring ecosystems along the coast, and that includes restoring fish populations.”

Study co-author Peter Arceo, FBR’s chief of conservation biodiversity and forage fish, says reductions in marine food abundance and quality help explain why the population of two other bird species in the region, Marbled Murrelets and Western Grebes, also declined significantly since the 1970s and ‘80s, respectively.

“Our studies of marine bird populations in the Salish Sea show that restoration and management plans for the region can be improved by incorporating historical information on the causes of ecosystem change,” he says.

The findings of UBC researchers in the paper ‘Gone by 50 per cent from the 1970s and UBC researchers say the decline reflects changes in the availability of marine food.’

UBC researchers have discovered a unique nerve structure in the mouth and tongue of rorqual whales that could be a unique “bungee cord.”

The stretchy nerves explain how the massive whales are able to balloon an immense pocket between their body wall and overhanging blubber to capture prey during feeding dives.

“This discovery was totally unexpected and unlike other nerve structures we’ve seen in vertebrates, which are of a more fixed length,” says Wayne Vogl of UBC’s Cellular and Physiological Sciences department. “The rorquals’ bulk feeding mechanism required major changes in anatomy of the tongue and mucous blubber to allow large deformation, and now we recognize that it also required major modifications in the nerves in these tissues so they could also withstand the deformation.”

In humans, stretching these nerves usually damages them. In these whales, the nerve cells are packed inside a case in such a way that the individual nerve fibers are never really stretched, they simply unfold.

“Our next step is to get a better understanding of how the nerve core is forced to allow its rapid unrolling and re-rolling during the feeding process,” says UBC zoologist Robert Shadwick.

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“WALK SOFTLY WHEN YOU CARRY THE DEAD”

Top forensic dentist Dr. David Sweet, OC, is all too familiar with the tragic aftermaths of violent crimes and natural disasters. And, more than once, he has been forced to confront his own mortality. Yet this gifted and compassionate scientist is as positive as they come.

BY ROSEMARY ANDERSON, BA’74

1

It’s well after midnight when a young wife leaps off the bus and walks toward her apartment. Behind her, unheard and unseen, a man emerges from the shadows. Gumption propels him; fear symptoms, which wrack the woman and force her at gunpoint into her car. Then he drives to a secluded area on the outskirts of town where he viciously assaults her and dumps her body in a shallow running water in a nearby creek. A few hours later, an early-morning jogger spots the woman’s body submerged in shallow water near the edge of the creek.

The police find a gun and a bow that they suspect belong to the victim, but she has been stripped beyond recognition. They need to confirm her identity so they can trace her last hours and get on the killer’s trail before it grows cold. The killer has also provided a vital clue: when attacking the woman, he bit her left shoulder so hard that the pattern of his teeth is branded in her flesh. When do they call to positively identify the body and analyze the bite mark? A forensic odontologist.

UBC associate dean and professor of dentistry Dr. David Sweet, DMD’78, has been on the receiving end of such calls numerous times. Since he became an odontological consultant, learning to “forensic dentistry,” he has been involved in more than 100 real-life CSI cases and has seen evidence of the most depraved things human beings can do to one another.

Sweet got his first taste of forensic dentistry in the late 1970s when he was a general practice in Cranbrook, BC, his hometown. A police officer called regarding a fatality in which a car had gone off the road and burst into flames. From the license plate, they knew who owned the car; an officer called regarding a fatality in which a car had gone off the road and burst into flames. From the license plate, they knew who owned the car; the owner was one of Dr. Sweet’s patients. Would Sweet mind bringing in that person’s dental chart to see if he could positively identify the body?


A gruesome scene greeted him at the morgue, one that his dentistry courses had not prepared him for. But when the pathologist pulled back the charred lips, the teeth were white as paper and perfectly intact. Teeth are the hardest substance in the human body, protected by enamel, making them resistant to fire. Sweet had done a crown for the man not long before. “You have a creativity that you do fillings with,” he explains. “When you do a restoration you shape teeth exactly the way you do when they’re normal. I do all that. And I know when they’re my patient.”

In 1982, biosynthetic human insulin was introduced, largely replacing the beef- and pork-based types of insulin that, until then, were prevalent. Over time, it emerged that a significant percentage of people who use human insulin don’t get symptoms, such as sweating and tremors, to warn them when they’re becoming hypoglycemic. Sweet was one of these people. Before long, his kidneys began to fail. He would soon have to go on dialysis, the doctors said, and then he’d need a new kidney.

So in 1984 he sold his thriving practice and moved to Vancouver to be close to his physicians. His reputation as an outstanding dentist preceded him, and he was promptly invited to teach in UBC’s Faculty of Dentistry. “I felt like I’d fallen into a big hole and come out smelling really good,” he says.

Within a couple of years, he won a UBC Dentistry teaching award. Despite this achievement, he was informed that he hoped to get tenure he’d have to develop a research portfolio, and hold a clinic. “So I threw this pamphlet in front of me,” he says. “But when I picked up the forensic odontology pamphlet they said, ‘Forensic what?!’”

Forensic odontologists devote a lot of time to helping identify victims and perpetrators of crime. As Sweet describes it, when a perpetrator has been “executed and thrown away,” by a killer, his team’s main goal is to help repatriate that person to their family. They do this by confirming the victim’s identity through dental comparisons and bite mark and DNA analysis, and by sharing their insights as to how the victim met their death. Painful though this knowledge is, it helps give closure to those left behind.

Not everyone is cut out for such work. In addition to extraordinary patience, fore motor skills, precision and accuracy, it demands a deep understanding of anatomy. Sweet had all of these, in spades.

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FEATURE  •  Forensic dentistry

He had been in third-year sciences and on his way into medical school when John Anderson, a teaching assistant in Dr. David Suzuki’s genetics class, suggested he consider dentistry. “You’ve told me you like woodworking and you love building things with your hands, and you are very good at the lab with your manual skills,” Anderson said to him. “Dentistry is a medical profession too. And, here at UBC, you take medical courses for a couple of years before you really start treating people. I think you’d thrive in something like that.”

To this day, Sweet is grateful for the encouragement Anderson gave him. “I love my work. The creativity, the art as well as a bit of mystery, is just the perfect fit,” he says. Forensic odontology is like trying to solve a puzzle, he likens to flying, or quietly skimming the waves. Whether turning out the next project for natural catastrophes, and still get up at school. He is amazed by Sweet’s “ability to see the dealing with mutilated bodies and murders,” says Anderson. “I love my work. The creativity, the art as well as a bit of mystery, is just the perfect fit.”

Because bite injuries are found in eight out of 10 sexual assault cases and homicide cases that involve physical altercation, the ability to match a bite mark conclusively with a suspect’s dentition can significantly influence the court’s decision to free or convict the suspect. But what happens to a person after they’ve been “impressed, in day and day out — for decades — in the investigation of horrific crimes.” It’s a very dark area dealing with mutilated bodies and murders,” says Dr. Daniel Berant, a recent graduate of UBC’s dental school. He is amazed by Sweet’s ability to see the human body and protected by enamel, the charred lips, the teeth were white. “I was in a cove in Hawaii with my wife, Chris. We were snorkelling, looking at giant green sea turtles. A Polynesian man on shore asked Sweet what he had seen. Hearing the story, he exclaimed, “That’s incredible!” and added, “In our faith, the sea turtle means two things: peacefulness, and longevity.”

When, at last, Sweet went on office, reading the pathology report. “I had to refer back to the original scans to confirm the size and estimated that they had died in 1947. The skeletal remains of two children — a boy and girl, aged about six and eight, and estimated that they had died in 1947. Witnesses came forward, recalling disgusting scenes of a couple seen first with two boys — one playing with a hatchet — and a little later without the boys. Police dismissed the leads. In 1997, a Vancouver police officer found the children’s remains from the Police Museum, where they were on display, and took them to the BOLD lab. When Sweet extracted pulp from the teeth, using the freeze-drier DNA recovery method he had invented, he found that the teeth were both boys and that they shared the same mother but had different fathers. The case remains unsolved.

In 1995, Sweet earned a PhD in forensic odontology for an innovative technique. Using the same DNA analysis techniques he developed to retrieve DNA from human bite injuries. Shortly after, the police contacted him at BOLD to analyze a bite mark on the body of Tanya Smith, who was murdered by the “Abbotsford Killer.” This police did not yet know about his new techniques. Although Smith’s body had been cremated in the Vedder River more than five years before that day arrived. During those intervening years, he built the BOLD lab’s Bureau of Legal Dentistry (BOLD lab), which was tasked with education, research, and forensic dentistry; he worked on hundreds of murder cases; he invented a technique for getting DNA out of teeth, making the BOLD lab the place of choice to which police agencies across Canada send teeth and bones for forensic analysis; he founded the British Columbia Forensic Odontology Response Team (BC-FOREST), a 50-member core group of dentists, hygienists and certified dental assistants trained to respond effectively in the event of a mass disaster in Canada or internationally; and he earned a PhD (cum laude) in forensic medicine from the University of Granada, Spain, where he invented a method that enhances DNA recovery from scint traces of saliva left on skin near bite wounds.

When the pathologist pulled back the charred lips, the teeth were white as paper and perfectly intact. Teeth are a such a sign that he was going to be okay. “I hadn’t had my PET scan yet,” he says, knocking loudly on the wooden table he’s seated at. A few weeks after their snorkelling adventure, he and his wife were sitting in the office, reading the pathology report and Phillips’s obsession with the size and location of the tumor,” the pathologist had written, “because nothing is visible on the current scan. Completely resolved.”

Dr. David Sweet had fallen down yet another deep hole and come out smelling great. The BOLD lab relies on donations to fund its research. To find out more about the work of the BOLD lab, or to make a donation, please visit www.boldlab.ubc.ca

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Welcome to the Robert H. Lee Alumni Centre, your home for life in the heart of our Vancouver campus – inspired by UBC’s unique modernist tradition of campus architecture. A LEED Gold sustainable structure, it features expansive glass walls and extensive use of Douglas Fir and Western Red Cedar in the public spaces of the interior, providing a warm and distinctly West Coast home for current, past and future students.

Starting with a conversation in 1999 and 16 years in the making, the centre was imagined and driven by alumni volunteers and funded, in part, through the generous donations of more than 1,000 UBC grads. Its primary purpose is as a meeting place where alumni can learn, mentor, network and celebrate. The venue will be the host space for alumni UBC lectures, social events and continuing education. There are seven different function spaces, each designed for unique needs and all available for rental with preferred rates for alumni. The facility also includes the Graham Lee Innovation Centre and the Wong-Trainor Welcome Centre, making it the front door for everyone who visits campus.

Inside, an exciting experience awaits in more than 40,000 square feet of space that includes exhibits and an interactive display chronicling UBC’s history and the achievements of its alumni.

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WALTER C. KOERNER FAMILY TERRACE LOUNGE  A welcoming space with comfortable modern-classic furniture and access to the top floor balcony.

With the support of UBC alumni worldwide, UBC and the UBC Alumni Association are building a home for alumni to reconnect with their alma mater and each other. The new Robert H. Lee Alumni Centre will foster entrepreneurship, networking, mentoring and lifelong learning. To help the new Robert H. Lee Alumni Centre become a vital and vibrant space, we invite your support. alumnicentre.ubc.ca

over 300,000 UBC alumni from all over the world are building a home for alumni for life with your help.

start an evolution
In the absence of a rigorous government-led approach for investigating the thousands of missing person cases in their country, Mexican citizens are taking matters into their own hands. Rodolfo Franco, MA’06, is helping to coordinate their efforts.

BY MICHAEL AWMACHT, BA’01, MET’09

“If 43 students can go missing in a town in Guerrero, there’s no reason why 43 students from the university I teach at could not go missing tomorrow,” says Rodolfo Franco, a part-time faculty member at Tec de Monterrey, as he gravely describes the human rights situation in Mexico. The country is on edge. It has been entrenched in a drug war for nearly a decade, and lately it’s become apparent that anyone could be a kidnapping target. The 43 young men he’s referring to are the students from the Raúl Isidro Burgos Rural Teachers College of Ayotzinapa who disappeared from the town of Iguala last September. The case made international headlines, and lately it’s become apparent that anyone could be a kidnapping target. The official version of events (that the students were official investigations are seldom thorough and most cases are never solved. Many families are left wondering what happened to their loved ones and unable to get closure.

Franco, who is the director of strategy and fund procurement for the recently formed Mexican NGO Gobernanza Forense Ciudadana (citizen-led forensics), offers his perspective on why these cases are not often investigated. “At the local level it is a clear issue of corruption,” he says. “Police forces are certainly mixed with criminal organizations, and sometimes they’re at their service.”

While corruption explains why many individual cases are not investigated, the scale of the problem suggests a systemic failure at the federal level is also to blame. “I think it’s a matter of capacities and organization,” Franco says. He explains that the office of the attorney general regularly tells him that the government’s DNA database will soon have the capacity to distinguish between DNA samples from discovered remains and from the families of the missing, making comprehensive cross-referencing and potential identification possible. Although this would be a step in the right direction, he says, it is unlikely that the database could have ever been designed without this function in mind.

Franco, whose graduate studies at UBC focused on human rights norms and the limitations of human rights systems, suspects the federal government has other reasons why it’s unwilling to investigate the thousands of missing persons cases that exist in the country. “I think the general perception is that this is a humanitarian crisis, and the government will never come to terms with the idea that this is a humanitarian crisis, and I think they’re very worried about their international reputation.”}

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The government’s recent focus has been on crisis management instead of on building the institutions, rules and norms required to combat the underlying problems. Regardless of the reasons, the families of missing people are not looking for excuses. They want answers. And in the absence of rigorous official investigations, citizens have begun investigating cases themselves. It was this reality that drove Franco and some friends from his undergraduate university to recognize the potential for a citizen-driven approach to combating the corruption, arbitrariness and lack of investigative transparency surrounding Mexico’s missing people. His friends founded Gobernanza Forense Ciudadana (GFC) in 2012 with this purpose in mind, to provide resources and a collaborative forum for families searching for loved ones.

Franco explains that each state has its own definition of “disappearance” and its own forensic system. Because of this, jurisdictional issues can be a barrier to investigations. If someone disappears in Monterrey, for example, and their family lives in Mexico City, the authorities would open an investigation and begin their search in Monterrey. After a few enquiries, he says, they might discover that it’s impossible to gain access to remains left in Monterrey, or that local authorities won’t cooperate. As a result, these investigations don’t lead anywhere. “There are families that watch the news every day to find out if a mass grave has been opened somewhere in the country, just so they can travel there and file a new complaint in that new jurisdiction,” Franco says.

Although mass kidnappings are not uncommon in Mexico, this case was different for a couple reasons. First, these students were not involved with the area’s drug cartels. And second, from the beginning it was widely suspected that local authorities had played a major role in their disappearance. Although dozens of arrests have been made and at least one student’s charred remains have been identified, many questions still linger. There’s a pervasive feeling that the federal government only investigated the disappearances because the case was receiving so much international attention. The official version of events (that the students were likely killed after being handed over to a drug cartel by corrupt members of local law enforcement) is not fully accepted. The families of the missing men, along with large segments of the Mexican population, still believe the government is hiding something.

The result is a lack of faith in Mexico’s justice system. Over the past decade, more than 27,000 people have gone missing across the country. While some are eventually unearthed in mass graves, official investigations are seldom thorough and most cases are never solved. Many families are left wondering what happened to their loved ones and unable to get closure.

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Franco, whose graduate studies at UBC focused on human rights norms and the limitations of human rights systems, suspects the federal government has other reasons why it’s unwilling to investigate the thousands of missing persons cases that exist in the country. “I think the general perception is that this is a regular crime,” he says. “The government will never come to terms with the idea that this is a humanitarian crisis, and I think they’re very worried about their international reputation.”

Because of this, he explains, the government’s recent focus has been on crisis management instead of on building the institutions, rules and norms required to combat the underlying problems. Regardless of the reasons, the families of missing people are not looking for excuses. They want answers. And in the absence of rigorous official investigations, citizens have begun investigating cases themselves. It was this reality that drove Franco and some friends from his undergraduate university to recognize the potential for a citizen-driven approach to combating the corruption, arbitrariness and lack of investigative transparency surrounding Mexico’s missing people. His friends founded Gobernanza Forense Ciudadana (GFC) in 2012 with this purpose in mind, to provide resources and a collaborative forum for families searching for loved ones.

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In the face of these bureaucratic hurdles, and the fact that they rarely have access to remains themselves, families have been forced to pursue creative avenues in their investigations. When Franco’s friends conducted their research, they began contacting missing-family networks to pressure the government to act. “We realized that there had been some thorough investigations with the help of forensic anthropologists, and we were surprised.” They decided to work together and leverage their collective forensic knowledge to pressure the government to act.

First of all, the authorities seemed reluctant to listen to or act upon the information gathered by families. When Franco’s friends conducted their research, they started contacting mobile phone companies to retrieve security tapes as part of their timeline reconstructions.

Second, the families were disorganized and not effective at holding government officials accountable. “These Biobanks should be used by the government to solve the case.”

Recognizing this, GFC created an online National DNA Biobank using mail-in DNA sample kits, like those of the Mexican government. “We realized there was a lot of knowledge among citizens,” he says, “but there were some problems.”

This is something that even the attorney general has publicly stated. “He talks proudly of a GFC member in this regard. He talks about the way the Mexican administrations have presented themselves to the international community: as defenders of human rights that are violated.”

He says that Guerrero’s government is beginning to understand that citizens are demanding more accountability and have little tolerance for superficial investigations that are only conducted for appearances’ sake.

To conduct DNA tests that definitively proved the remains were those of their daughter.

The government will only be able to present legitimate and credible results insofar as they open up the forensic processes and explain how they get the results they get.” He says that for this to happen, civil society organizations need to monitor the government and pressure them to change their processes.

How have the government and opposition parties responded?

The state has not proven itself capable of defending human rights, protecting vulnerable populations or prosecuting violations. In the way the Mexican administrations have presented themselves to the international community: as defenders of human rights that are violated.”

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These events are serving as a trigger for civil society to push the political parties to be more responsive. Maybe there is also the potential for a new coalition of political forces to emerge.

A recent Vancouver protest highlighted concerns about Canada placing ‘safe third’ countries for asylum seekers. Immigration Canada put that decision in place in February 2015. This was based on the idea that it has limited resources to deal with claims for asylum and refugee status. The implications are that Mexicans potentially asking for asylum will face higher obstacles to achieve that.

The justification for placing Mexico on the “safe list” comes from the way the Mexican administrations have presented themselves to the international community: as defenders of human rights that are violated.”

The state has not proven itself capable of defending human rights, protecting vulnerable populations or prosecuting violations. In the way the Mexican administrations have presented themselves to the international community: as defenders of human rights that are violated.”

Although Franco hasn’t had anyone close to him disappear, he knows he is not immune to torture and execution. “It’s a small step, and there’s still a lot of work to be done. GFC has funding to collect 1,500 samples and aims to have the Biobank populated with complete DNA profiles for at least 500 missing person cases by the end of this year. In that way, enough samples will have accumulated to show the government that, with all of its resources and expertise, has not been able to conduct DNA tests that definitively proved the remains were those of their daughter.”

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If you're involved in a worthwhile initiative and want to support it by tapping into your UBC network, it's time to visit the entrepreneurship kit – including a professionally produced video or photography session to help promote their cause, and mentoring sessions with UBC experts. You've already helped support 300 projects. Its next iteration will have a matchmaking function, allowing UBC social entrepreneurs to seek out volunteers with specific skill sets, as well as non-financial support such as equipment and meeting space.

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1. Visit the website
2. Fill out the application
3. Submit your application by the deadline

**Deadline**

5th May 2023

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**Managers Youth Development Initiative**

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- A system that facilitates navigation in the pool for visually impaired individuals and blind parents.

**REACH Initiative**

- An innovative program designed to engage, inform, and educate the community with the goal of improving palliative care and bereavement care.

**Project Funds**

- A Canada-based non-profit organization that has organized surgical missions to provide otherwise unaffordable care to indigenous populations in rural regions of Guatemala.
The phenomenon of hearing voices is usually viewed as a symptom of mental illness to be suppressed with medication. The Hearing Voices movement, which began during the 1980s in Europe and is now gaining traction in North America, is taking a different therapeutic approach.

The multiple Oscar-winning picture Birdman earned praise for its highly choreographed visual technique, star Michael Keaton’s physical performance, and its multi-layered narrative. But to Natasha Merrick, who identifies with mental illness, to see a different therapeutic approach.

"The voices would tell her stories about crimes they had committed as if they were trying to elicit sympathy from her. They would pick on her when she was broke and destroy experiences she enjoyed, such as listening to music. One day she left her home and went to stay with friends to escape them. On her return, she realized that she couldn’t let them control her anymore. Soon after, she was sitting on the couch and she saw a vision of her great uncle Jack. She began feeling unwell and knew she had to leave. Eventually, she was hospitalized. They felt that the therapies available weren’t sufficient. Walker suggested she start a Hearing Voices group. They felt that Merrick, who had completed peer support training, could be an ideal fit to work with the group. They asked her to be a co-facilitator along with Harowitz. This was the first Hearing Voices group in British Columbia. While she wasn’t familiar with the Hearing Voices movement, Merrick felt that it aligned with her own way of thinking. She researched the method and began to work with the group. One of the strategies she encouraged was to map a new course. She had already explored many ways of looking at her illness, reading all kinds of books and theories. She wondered if she had experienced trauma, which frequently figures in the histories of people with schizophrenia, but concluded that she hadn’t. She started researching her uncle Jack and found out fascinating details about his life in the war. She decided to ask her uncle Jack and her grandmother if they could help her. They said yes, they could. Encouraged by her mental health team, she decided to map a new course. She had already explored many ways of looking at her illness, reading all kinds of books and theories. She wondered if she had experienced trauma, which frequently figures in the histories of people with schizophrenia, but concluded that she hadn’t. She started researching her uncle Jack and found out fascinating details about his life in the war. She decided to ask her uncle Jack and her grandmother if they could help her. They said yes, they could.

Merrick began experiencing new voices, but these were different. They would have their own personas, and they would help her with various things. She began to notice positive things. She had visited a Buddhist temple and learned to meditate, and over the next months she would spend dedicated time every day communicating with the voices she called “spirit guides.” Slowly, she started to notice changes in her depression. After just a few weeks, and the negative voices that had plagued her for years started to leave her. Eventually, her team considered her recovery complete, and her life was closed.

Through her treatment with the North Shore Adult Community Mental Health Team, Merrick met Gillian Walker, an occupational therapist. Walker had recently worked in London, England, where she had become familiar with Hearing Voices. She liked the way people in the groups referred to themselves as “voice hearers” rather than “schizophrenics.” To her that was an important shift. “It’s the idea that these experiences don’t have to be entirely viewed as mental illness. Aspects of these conditions can have experiences don’t necessarily have to be entirely viewed as mental illness. Aspects of these conditions can have..."
was for her clients to use their “good voices” to help overcome the bad ones. “Lots of people experience good voices, but we don’t associate good voices with schizophrenia because we’ve pathologized the experience,” she says. “We think a voice is a symptom of illness and therefore it’s always bad.” She points to the experience of Riggan, who is troubled by the pestering voice of Birdman but who also says it speaks “the truth.” She likens that character to the Greek daemon, as described by Carl Jung and Joseph Campbell.

“The Greeks accepted the experience of hearing voices, but the daemons were not nice. They would whip you and shove you and make sure you did the right thing. They were like Birdman.”

About six months after the group began meeting, Harowitz and Merrick spoke at the 2012 conference of Psychosocial Rehabilitation Canada in Vancouver. This helped generate interest in Hearing Voices. Now, Vancouver General Hospital and Coast Mental Health have groups, and a community group also meets in Vancouver.

Walker also reached out to one of her former instructors at UBC, Michael Lee. She and Merrick visited his psycho-social rehabilitation classes several times to talk to students in the Master’s of Occupational Therapy program. He appreciated their visits because he feels that the Hearing Voices approach gives a necessary new dimension to the treatment of mental illness.

“For the longest time we looked at hearing voices as a medical problem and didn’t really look at how it impacted on the person’s daily life. We would say, ‘OK, you’re hearing voices, take medication,’” says Lee, pointing out that the role of the occupational therapist is to help a client resume their normal activities. While more therapists are starting Hearing Voices groups, there is not much evidence supporting its effectiveness. So in discussions with Walker, Lee agreed to be the principal investigator on a multi-phase small-scale research project. Three pairs of students will be contributing towards this research project, which is part of the requirements of their master’s degrees. They will be investigating how participating in the Hearing Voices group impacts on different aspects of recovery.

“We believe it is very crucial to enable people hearing voices to have an opportunity to voice their perception, rather than what we’ve been doing for the longest time, which is having professionals, doctors or therapists, describing the problem. Now we encourage people with lived experience to come forward and tell us the meaning. So this is quite a bit of a cultural shift,” says Lee.

Hearing Voices is currently known as an “emerging practice,” not an “evidence-based practice,” and Walker acknowledges that the model is not for everyone and that more peer-reviewed research needs to be done. But she has seen the benefits that group members have gained. Much research has supported the therapeutic effects of meeting others with similar experiences, and people who hear voices have previously not had this benefit. She thinks that Hearing Voices resonated with others in the mental health community in Vancouver because they acknowledged the limitations of the therapies currently available.

“One of our clients right now is about 19, he was recently diagnosed, and he comes to the group and he says, ‘I’m okay with being diagnosed with the illness model, I’m okay taking meds and with the idea that there may be something wrong with my brain. But another part of me feels like I had a really spiritual experience, and I’m interested in talking about that.’ I think that means that he’s still holding on to who he is, and he’s not seeing the experience entirely as symptom. I think that’s an example of how Hearing Voices has helped someone look at their identity, and where does it fit in the diagnosis. Whereas in the past, I don’t know if that conversation would have been possible.”

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The Thunderbird varsity golf team is made up of 10 men and six women, and plays in tournaments against the best university golfers on the continent. T-Bird golf joined the NAIA (National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics), a North American league of 175 medium-to-small schools, in 1999. Since then, the team has won a total of five championships.

For comparison purposes, neither UVic nor SFU, the team has won a total of five championships. The Thunderbird varsity golf team is made up of 10 men and six women, and plays in tournaments against the best university golfers on the continent. T-Bird golf joined the NAIA (National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics), a North American league of 175 medium-to-small schools, in 1999. Since then, the team has won a total of five championships.

The Thunderbird varsity golf team is made up of 10 men and six women, and plays in tournaments against the best university golfers on the continent. T-Bird golf joined the NAIA (National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics), a North American league of 175 medium-to-small schools, in 1999. Since then, the team has won a total of five championships.
When UBC moved to Point Grey in 1925, the facility most obviously lacking from the new campus was a gymnasium. A gym had been included in the initial plans, but the unexpectedly large costs of other construction had forced its cancellation. Varsity basketball and other teams had to hold practices and play “home” games at Vancouver school gyms, church halls, or YMCA/YWCA facilities.

There was also a distinct inequality between men’s and women’s sports in this era, and the lack of facilities made this even more obvious. Women’s teams had to schedule their practices around those for the men, usually very early or very late in the day, and Women’s Gymnasium Club sessions were limited to an hour a week.

It was not until 1929 that a workable scheme to pay for a gymnasium was approved. The Alma Mater Society was legally incorporated under British Columbia’s Societies Act, enabling it to float a bond issue of $35,000. Students then committed the refundable portion of their Caution Money (a $10 fee deposited as security for good conduct and against possible damages) towards repaying the loan.

The gymnasium was built over the summer of 1929, and officially opened on November 9. The main playing floor was 6,000 square feet and surrounded by seating for up to 1,400 spectators. As impressive as it looked, however, the building was practically an empty shell; there was no money left to pay for furnishings or athletic equipment. To cover this shortfall, the Alumni Association organized its own campaign to raise $3,000 for equipment and furniture.

The new building soon became a centre of student activity. UBC varsity basketball teams played there – not only against local teams, but against touring squads such as the Harlem Globetrotters. Women’s basketball was particularly successful; in 1930 the Senior A team won the opportunity to compete at the Women’s International Games. Unfortunately, women’s sports were still treated like an afterthought. While the university gave the team permission to go, it refused to provide financial support. It took another student campaign to earn the team enough money to travel to Prague that September, where they eventually won the world championship.

The gym also hosted team practices, intramural sports events, and athletic club sessions, as well as pep rallies and post-game dances. Until Brock Hall was built in 1940, it was one of the few places on campus where clubs could meet and students could socialize. According to legend it was a favourite haunt of former UBC Chancellor and BC Chief Justice Nathan Nemetz during his undergraduate days. “Sonny” Nemetz supposedly spent so much time playing chess and blackjack in one of the gym’s meeting rooms that he almost flunked out of first year. Only the intervention of History Department head Walter Sage saved him – he promised to recommend Nemetz for the history honours program, but only if he would stop missing so many lectures.

The gymnasium campaign – the first such student-led fundraising initiative – had set an important precedent for the further development of the UBC campus. It was followed several years later by the funding and construction of the first stadium and playing fields; the campaign to build Brock Hall in 1940; and the War Memorial Gymnasium campaign of the late 1940s.

The need for expanded facilities continued to grow over the following decade, with the opening of the Old Gymnasium in 1935. This building came to be used largely for women’s sports and recreation, and became known as the War Memorial Gymnasium.
The Old Gym

Women’s Gymnasium. While women now had their own space for athletics (although some men’s activities continued there), it was arguably a “hand-me-down” facility compared with the brand-new War Memorial gym.

“We would have liked more opportunities to use War Memorial,” recalls Marilyn Pomfret, BSc ’52, a physical education student during the 1950s, “but we still liked the old gym.” Pomfret, who was later a UBC professor, chair, and women’s athletic director, remembers the Women’s Gymnasium well. “The floor was just big enough for a regulation-size basketball court, or two non-regulation volleyball courts. The volleyball courts were small — so small, you’d have to stand on the bottom row of the bleachers.”

“The Women’s Athletic Directorate, a student leadership group made up of sport managers and an elected executive, had an office at the south-east corner. It was very small, with a low, sloped ceiling that made up of sport managers and an elected executive, had an office at the south-east corner. It was very small, with a low, sloped ceiling that men’s activities continued there), it was arguably a “hand-me-down” facility compared with the brand-new War Memorial gym.

The basement also became a popular place after hours.”

Pomfret and her friend, Thelma Sharp Cook, who was also an elected executive, remembers a further student initiative in response to this lack of action.

“As plans for [the gym’s] destruction moved ahead, there was no talk of an intended replacement,” she recalls. “Well, this rather riled the girls.” After all, UBC’s women’s athletes and managers were directly involved in the operations of the Women’s Athletic Directorate and over the years had contributed significantly to the development of organized sport for both men and women across the province.

The students prepared a report outlining their position on the need for adequate facilities and equitable access. Pomfret remembers it getting backing from many prominent people on campus. A request was made to present it to the Board of Governors, which was finally granted. “Two students spoke,” says Pomfret, who was in attendance, “and we were told they were the first students ever to present to the (rather secretive) board… Nathan Nemetz was board chair and, as the girls paused (during their presentation), he asked several times: ‘So you want a new Women’s Gym?’ The response: ‘No, Sir. We want a new Gym for everyone. We want a new University.’”

Just before the old gym was pulled down, it divvied one more story to add to the history of women’s athletics at UBC.

“In the Women’s Athletic Directorate office,” remembers Marilyn Pomfret, “there was a file cabinet containing this team’s files. When it became obvious in 1970 that the gym was going, the students came to get the cabinet and rescue the files. As it was pulled aside, underneath it they found three gold pendants with the UBC Big Block symbol.”

Whom the pendants belonged to is forgotten. They were originally thought to have been awarded at the inauguration of the Women’s Big Block Club in 1953. The club had been formed in part to recognize the Senior A women’s basketball world championship the previous year. It was also intended to raise the status of women’s sports by including them in the Big Block program, initiated the year before.

Further research, however, revealed that the pendants had been commissioned from Birks Jewellers at least a decade earlier. Most likely they were awarded in conjunction with UBC’s first Presentation Day in March 1921.

This predecessor of the Big Block program, initiated the year before, awarded letters to outstanding athletes (both male and female), as well as a U around the ‘BC’ surrounded by blue enamel. That one was supposed to go to Brenda Chinn, who was president of the Women’s Athletic Association at the time and is now with BC School Sports. Unfortunately it was stolen before it could be gifted to Brenda – so she’ll inherit mine.”

One of three Big Block woman’s athletic association pendants found underneath a file cabinet just before the Women’s Gymnasium was demolished.

Photo courtesy AMS Archives.

Marilyn Pomfret (L) is conducting the meeting.

The Women’s Athletic Directorate in 1954.

One of three Big Block woman’s athletic association pendants found underneath a file cabinet just before the Women’s Gymnasium was demolished.

Photo courtesy AMS Archives.

Marilyn Pomfret (L) is conducting the meeting.

The Women’s Athletic Directorate in 1954.
Tell us how you landed your role in The Interview. I auditioned for the role. It’s very rare for someone who doesn’t have some star power to be in a Hollywood film, but it was a niche role that I somehow, and luckily, fit.

How would you describe the character of Sook? She’s strong, intelligent and badass.

How did you prepare for the role? I watched whatever I could find on North Korea, and read blogs from North Korean defectors to get a sense of what was going on. I also had to work on my Korean as my Korean skills are equivalent to that of a two year old. I had to enlist the help of my mom and her friends, and friends of her friends, to help me translate some of the English into North Korean, which is different from the South Korean dialect.

What was the most challenging thing about it? And the most fun? I’d say the most challenging was trying to speak Korean when I was just given new dialogue right before shooting. I generally need to practice Korean extras and then being able to say it properly soon after was definitely a challenge. I’m sure there is tons of footage of me speaking gibberish rather than Korean.

The most fun was doing the physical action stuff, like shooting the gun, punching people and kicking down doors. I love pretending to be a badass.

What was the atmosphere like on set? The atmosphere was very relaxed and good-natured. Everyone in the crew always expressed to me how lucky and spoiled they felt working on this set. Seth [Rogen] and Evan [Goldberg] really set the bar high for maintaining a fun, relaxed and creative environment, and it all started with their easy attitudes. They enjoyed playing and being spontaneous. What was the initial reaction among cast and crew to the hacking incident and cancellation of screenings? I’m sure people were shocked and probably disappointed about the cancellation of screenings, but I don’t really know, as I was in Vancouver, away from the hubbub.

And in retrospect, what are your thoughts about this incident? It’s still very surreal for me and I wouldn’t be surprised if there was a movie about this whole incident in the future. In the end, I’m glad people got to see The Interview, whether in a movie theatre or on their TVs at home. There were many people who worked extremely hard to make it happen, and I’m pleased people are getting to see their work.

How was the red carpet experience at the premiere? It was just like any other movie-going experience, except I got fancied up, had to take photos down a short red carpet, and saw random Hollywood stars. So, you know, typical. What’s next? Whatever comes my way! www.dianabang.com @thedianabang
I'm in India, in the dinner hall of a school in the middle of rural nowhere. The school is for children from the lowest caste, the former “untouchables,” but the only reason I know this is from reading about the school a couple of months earlier, after my sister came across it on a random Google search. We'd been hunting for quality volunteer opportunities in India (surprisingly difficult to find!) and Shanti Bhavan School in rural Tamil Nadu stood out. Now here we are, my sister, and I, an aspiring teacher and a Vancouver-based filmmaker.

In person, we find the students to be charming individuals with big dreams. They range from preschoolers to 10th grade and aspire to be everything from astronauts through to nuclear physicists. The school is an embodiment of the American Dream, but this is opposite side of the world.

The Backward Class
Jessica Drennan, BA’05
www.thebackwardclass.com
@madeleine_grant
THE BACKWARD CLASS
Jessica's top choice is Nathan Drillot, a Vancouver-based cinematographer with international work experience. She’s worked with him before. Nathan has a ton on his plate though, and initially declines. Within 24 hours he’s called her back, however; this is a story and opportunity he can’t let himself miss. Within 14 days he’s on his way to India, and I meet him for the first time at 3:00 am at the Bangalore airport. He integrates within the Shanti Bhavan community in no time, and his cinematography helps shape the entire look of the film. It is one of many splendid episodes that lead to the creation of the documentary. The Backward Class
We end up spending eight months in India, shooting at Shanti Bhavan school for the most part in 2009-2010 and then again in 2012. UBC film production alumna Madeleine Grant decided to document their progress.

BY MADELEINE GRANT, BA’06
The pitch is simple, but demanding. We need a cinematographer who can come film in India for three months on a deferral basis, which essentially means three months off from school during which he or she will study as a child at a school in a developing country with limited electricity, no Internet access, and no pay aside from flight and accommodation. The Backward Class

Madeleine Grant: there is a real-life story happening at this school on the opposite side of the world that is way better than anything I could ever write.
A trilogy by Joseph Boyden (LBCR, Creative Writing Program)

Joseph Boyden’s trilogy, comprising The Orenda, Three Day Road and Through Black Spruce, attempts to reconcile the cycle of violence and injustices done to First Nations peoples with the reality of day-to-day existence. The books explore themes of friendship, family, loss, redemption, survival, conscience and identity, and while the novels unfold chronologically – from the 17th century to the First World War up to the present day – there is no need to read them in order. In fact, Boyden wrote The Orenda, which takes places in the 1600s, after the other two books. In combination, the three novels tie together threads of violence, racism and addiction as often emphasized in writing about native peoples, but Boyden upsets this simplistic narrative by telling a story across centuries and placing the highly intelligent racial parts that left and are then stapled back on high school substitute teacher Peter Giller and his zombie students. As with all humour writing, All-Day Breakfast is transgressive. It uses the living dead as a metaphor to highlight the willful ignorance the public presents toward global atrocities. Giller, whose wife recently died from stomach cancer, tries his best to raise his two children in the most normal way possible. But he is falling apart. When he refuses to sign a petition to stop the Kinder Morgan pipeline, he is tried in court and found guilty. The novel tells us that as an ancestor of Cree sniper Xavier from Through Black Spruce, Michael V. Smith’s character, Spruce Niska, is an ancestor of Cree sniper Xavier from Through Black Spruce, Michael V. Smith tells the story of growing up an inadequate man in a small town. In the recollection of his father, Elijah Whiskeyjack, in Three Day Road, a haunting tale of the horrors and brutality of the Great War. Niska's life in the bush is in stark contrast to the residential school, which wrecked Elijah, and the war, which destroyed, the boy. The book also addresses the condition and spirit. The story is one of death and devastation but in the end, it is a tale of healing and love.

Through Black Spruce is a story about legendary Cree bush pilot Will Bird, son of Xavier. Will’s niece, Annie, is a favourite of her grandmother, Xanux. She also has the stories about Will’s great aunt Anna and Will’s father is characterized by obsession and addiction as well as the juxtaposition of the urban and rural. Like the other two novels, there is no easy escape. Women are raped and beaten. Drugs and alcohol are abundant and problematic. In the end, Giller’s masterful storytelling shows how it is possible to soldier on in the face of violence and injustice. In combination, the three novels elucidate a long, complicated history as often brushed over in news reports and anecdotes. While there are no answers here, Boyden reveals that life is as simple as to die of a disease. Three Day Road won the Amazon Books/Canada First Novel Award and the Rogers Writers’ Trust Fiction Prize in 2005. Through Black Spruce won the 2008 Scotiabank Giller Prize.

All-Day Breakfast

Douglas & McIntyre, 2015

Joe Adams Schroeder, MFA’02, MMF’07

All-Day Breakfast is a humorous zombie tale that is a social commentary on apathy, consumerism and racism. A large part of the story revolves around the horror, meaningless violence that has killed more than five million people in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) since 1995. The book alternates between the lives of limbs being torn apart and the confusion that portrays the need to love and be loved gives one the will to survive. The seventeenth century Harrow horror, Bird, from The Orenda is an ancestor of Cree sniper Xavier Bird, whose story is told alongside his aunt, Niska, and friend, Elijah Whiskeyjack, in Three Day Road, a haunting tale of the horrors and brutality of the Great War. Niska's life in the bush is in stark contrast to the residential school, which wrecked Elijah, and the war, which destroyed, the boy. The book also addresses the condition and spirit. The story is one of death and devastation but in the end, it is a tale of healing and love.

Both Niska and Xavier figure in Through Black Spruce, a story about legendary Cree bush pilot Will Bird, son of Xavier. Will’s niece, Annie, is a favourite of her grandmother, Xanux. She also has the stories about Will’s great aunt Anna and Will’s father is characterized by obsession and addiction as well as the juxtaposition of the urban and rural. Like the other two novels, there is no easy escape. Women are raped and beaten. Drugs and alcohol are abundant and problematic. In the end, Giller’s masterful storytelling shows how it is possible to soldier on in the face of violence and injustice. In combination, the three novels elucidate a long, complicated history as often brushed over in news reports and anecdotes. While there are no answers here, Boyden reveals that life is as simple as to die of a disease. Three Day Road won the Amazon Books/Canada First Novel Award and the Rogers Writers’ Trust Fiction Prize in 2005. Through Black Spruce won the 2008 Scotiabank Giller Prize.

The Orenda

Penguin Canada, 2015

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Dominance swimmers, UBC’s Decade of sports Hall of Fame dinner

Greg Hamm

a combined total of 109 medals. “Dominance,” 42 international swimming competitors – from 1998 to 2007. During this aptly named “Decade of making Canadian university sport history by winning and honoured 125 former Thunderbird swimmers for 150 current Thunderbird athletes into the Big Block Club setting for the recent 94th annual Big Block Awards and

As the swimmers swarmed the stage, former team captain Scott Van Boss appointed as team captain in attendance that the group boasted numerous high achievers. “We’ve even got a nuclear physicist up here!” shouted Hamm, a 1998 Commonwealth Games medalist, pointing to former team mate Will Walters. The architect of the program, former head coach Tom Johnson, was enshrined in the Builder category, while two of its most successful swimmers, Brian Johns and Kelly Stefanyshyn, were inducted in the Athletic category. A three-time Olympian, Johns won 31 of 34 CIS races during his university career, including world and short-course record performance in 2003 in 400-metre individual medley. Stefanyshyn won 31 CIS medals during her time at UBC and was a gold medallist at the 1993 Pan-American Games. Eleven current Thunderbird teams were represented among the winners of the 12 Big Block Club awards. The Bobby Gaul Trophy for Graduating Male Athlete of the Year went to swimmer Coleman Allen and baseball pitcher Conor Lilla-White. Allen led UBC to victory at the 2005 CIS Championships, where he set three individual butterfly records while winning four gold medals. He also is a member of the Canadian national team, representing his country at the 2014 Commonwealth Games and earning his first international medal at a FINA World Cup meet in Singapore last fall. In 2014, Lilla-White allowed just four earned runs in 72.2 innings, setting a new UBC baseball record with a 0.46 earned run average, the best in the NAIA. The left-hander also eclipsed the old mark set by long-time Major League Baseball pitcher Jeff Francis. Lilla-White finished the season with a perfect 9-0 record, 75 strikeouts and three shutouts while helping the Thunderbirds to a third straight NAIA cross country team championship and a berth in the opening round of the NAIA World Series. Cross country and track runner Maria Bernard captured the Marilyn Pomfret Trophy as UBC’s Female Athlete of the Year. Last spring, she led the women’s team and helped the Thunderbirds to a third straight NAIA cross country team championship, winning the individual title in the process. Bernard was an NAIA All-American in both track and field and cross country.

2015 BIG BLOCK AWARDS AND SPORTS HALL OF FAME DINNER

BIG BLOCK CLUB DIGEST

UBC alumnus and philanthropist Ken Woods has donated $1 million to support awards and special projects for Thunderbird Varsity student athletes in Athletics & Recreation. “To assist students who aspire to excel both academically and athletically is indeed an honour and an excellent way of giving back to my alma mater,” said Woods. He’s been several years in the making but field hockey alumna Leesley Magnus and recently retired head coach Mark Karjaa have completed their long-awaited project of a centre at UBC’s field hockey. Their book, UBC Women’s Field Hockey: Celebrating 100 Years, was published thanks to a generous gift from UBC Sports Hall of Fame member Charlotte Warren. The book is available for purchase at the UBC Bookstore or Amazon. Architect and former UBC Soccer All-Canadian Alex Percy is back on campus working on a project near to his heart. An associate with Acton Ostry Architects, Percy is a member of the design team for the new National Soccer Development Centre... Basketball alumna and scoring record holder Kalaya Blair has returned to Vancouver following a pro stint in Sweden and is now working as a children and youth book author. Her latest book, Pot and Roll, is part of the Lorimer Children and Teens Series... Football alumna and 1997 Vanier Cup champion Art Tolhurst is now an assistant strength and conditioning coach at the University of Oregon, where he has worked with the likes of Heisman Trophy winner Marcus Mariota... Olympic track star and former UBC athlete and coach Thaddeus Wright is still in fine form as he embarks on his age-group career. In 2014, at the age-group track championships, he won the 400-metre and 800-metre events... Former UBC rugby player and multi-sport star John Haar were inducted into the BC Sports Hall of Fame on May 28. Selected in the Athlete category, Winter Andrews starred for UBC from 1971 to 1976 and on Canada’s national team from 1971 to 1986. Haar enters as a builder for his tireless work in support of Canadian amateur baseball... Rugby Canada’s Senior Woman’s team has seen farewell to Thunderbird alums Kim Donaldson and Helley Winter Andrews, who recently announced her retirement after a decade of international play. The arts graduate made the tough decision to put an end to her playing career after finishing last season on a high note by helping Canada to silver medals in the 2014 Women’s Rugby World Cup... Olympic boxing bronze medallist Jeff Symonds won his first career Ironman title, hosting a three-time Ironman champion to claim the Asia-Pacific Championship in Melbourne and securing a spot in the Ironman World Championship this October in Kona... UBC women’s field hockey legend Shelley Winter Andrews and multi-sport star John Haar were inducted into the BC Sports Hall of Fame on May 28. Selected in the Athlete category, Winter Andrews started for UBC from 1997 to 1999 and on Canada’s national team from 1997 to 1998. Haar enters as a builder for his tireless work in support of Canadian amateur baseball... Rugby Canada’s Senior Woman’s team has seen,
When Liam Harrap, BA'14, and Jake Alleyne, MSc'17, received their hard-earned degrees, they wanted to do something “big” to address the long-term commitments got in the way. But unlike grads who choose to celebrate their academic excellence—and freedom—with a big bash, a backpacking trip around Thailand, the friends opted to take a hike—a 5,500 km hike from Jasper, AB, to Mexico. The Trans Canadian and the Continental Divide trails had been agreed upon and walked with handshakes three years previously.

The hike required months of meticulous planning. The duo poured over maps, dehydrated hundreds of pounds of food and, closer to their departure date, stuffed food caches along sections of the route. On April 3, 2014, the friends—both former members of the UBC Vanier Citizens Club and Triathlon Club—strapped on their 100 lb backpacks and embarked on the adventure of a lifetime. They confronted the challenging, rugged terrain with snowshoes and hiking boots, covering an average of 20 km each day. And of course, just like any epic adventure, it had its highlights: skiing down Mt. Clemenceau (fourth highest mountain in the Canadian Rockies); receiving care package deliveries from their parents; meeting fellow hikers; and playing cribbage through Pat Tower, New Mexico, in the off season when all the pines were stored.

On New Year’s Eve 2014, Harrap and Alleyne completed their trek in Puerto Palomas, Mexico. And its low points: walking 121 km in ski boots; eating fire starter-tainted food; endless blisters; falling down a moraine face-first at 6:30 am and, tragically, traveling through Pat Tower, New Mexico, in the off season when all the pines were stored.

On New Year’s Eve 2014, Harrap and Alleyne completed their trek in Puerto Palomas, Mexico, and celebrated with the finest $10 bottle of bubbly from Walmart. The eight month trek not only provided the pair with an epic adventure, but also some clarity regarding their future: Harrap is currently working on a journalism program and Alleyne is actively looking for a job in environmental engineering. Harrap’s advice for recent grads: “Don’t worry if you graduate and you’re not quite sure yet what you want to do. We didn’t. So we went on a long walkabout on New Year’s Eve 2014, Harrap and Alleyne completed their trek in Puerto Palomas, Mexico. And its low points: walking 121 km in ski boots; eating fire starter-tainted food; endless blisters; falling down a moraine face-first at 6:30 am and, tragically, traveling through Pat Tower, New Mexico, in the off season when all the pines were stored.

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company along with three staff and partners with farmer partners. “Through the progress we’ve made so far, our farmers are earning 40 per cent more than they were earlier, and over 5,000 households across the Central region have been able to lead a healthier lifestyle by opting for organic fruits, vegetables, grains, oils and much more,” Kapoor says.

Follow I Say Organic on Twitter @ISayOrganic.

year, including short stories, novels, graphic novels and non-fiction. Van Camp says they were inspired by his hometown of Fort Smith, NWT. Gregory G. Forrest, IAI-95, of Prince George, B.C., got married three times — twice in New York and once in China. They both quickly became leaders in their fields working for IBM and, although they were off to a great start in the corporate world, something was missing from a personal perspective. After the loss of a family member and an unexpected hospital stay, Dylan and Yazmin left their jobs at IBM and started the company SuperHeals, with the mission to empower kids who are facing challenges. Their first book, Adventures in the Hospital, introduces some of the things that the kids might see in hospital and teaches them that it’s not so scary when you’re a SuperHeals. For more information visit: www.SuperHeals.com. VISA’s monthly newsletter, the co-co-ordinator, and co-host of the award-winning series, The Water Brothers. Now in its third season, the show features Tyler and his brother, Alex, embarking on adventures around the world to explore the most important stories surrounding the planet’s water resources. The series is available in more than 60 countries including the US, where it is now available in 50 million homes on PoV, and will soon be broadcasted in BC on The Knowledge Network and in Quebec on Radio-Canada. The series is an extension of the website that was launched in 2014.

In the search for culturally appropriate methods to assess First Nations health needs, Miller, whose career as a full-time instructor at TRU began in 2001, taught in both the Bachelor of Education and Master of Education programs. After completing his EdD, Miller was elected chair of the department in 2007. Miller served as interim dean for four years and was also acting dean of the School of Social Work and Human Service. Miller has also been active in camp-based research, conducting his own research, and collaborating with local First Nations in the search for culturally appropriate methods to assess First Nations language proficiency. He was a long-time member of the TRU Senate, in the chair as vice-chair, and was also a member and vice-chair of both the Budget Committee of Senate and the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee. In 2005, Jack started the TRU Cross-Country Running team, which eventually became a Wolf Pack varsity squad. He continues to coach the Wolf Pack Cross-Country and Indoor Track teams, both of which are BC champions, and made it to CAA. He was a名 writer and professor emeritus in status at July 2014. Jack and his wife, Vema, also retired, hope to move more in their motormobile in a variety of interesting places. Although Door can be described as a hard man, Davidescu and Hill politely declined, confident they could find more suitable investors who’d give them a better valuation.

“Dylan and Yazmin left their jobs at IBM and started the company SuperHeals, with the mission to empower kids who are facing challenges.”

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“Medicine is obviously a service to others, but we physicians are then also part of the service to society.”

Dr. John B. Macdonald, DSc’67, UBC President, 1962–67

Dr. Macdonald passed peacefully with family by his side on Tuesday, December 23, 2014, in his 97th year. He will be deeply missed by Liba, his beloved wife of almost 50 years. He leaves behind his loving children, Karen (David), Grant (Jan), Scott (Christina), Linda (Jerry), and Vivian (Rob). He was a cherished grandfather to Kristin (Scott), Jason (Verschoon), Justin (Taylor), Vanessa, Kirk, Robert, Christopher, Lauren (Jay), Richard, and Michelle. He was a proud great-grandfather to Tatum, Kel, Jayle, Satchel and Liza. Dr. Macdonald graduated from the University of Toronto (U of T) in the middle of World War II, served as a Captain in the Canadian Dental Corps, and after the war, studied microbiology at the University of Illinois and Columbia. On returning to a teaching and research appointment at U of T, he was quickly to become the founding director of the Division of Dental Research. His reputation as a scientist and educator led to an invitation to move to Harvard in 1956 as a professor of microbiology and director of the Forsyth Institute. In 1960 Dr. Macdonald became the fourth president of UBC. His advice led to the establishment of Simon Fraser University (SFU) and Victoria University, allowing UBC to concentrate on the development and expansion of graduate education and research. In the 1970s, Dr. Macdonald was CEO of the Council of Ontario Universities, where he was a powerful advocate for “collective autonomy,” arguing that the 15 universities should use the council as a vehicle for planning and implementing the evolution of the Ontario system - because they were best qualified to do so, and because failure to do so would invite government intervention. During the last years of his career Dr. Macdonald was president of the Addiction Research Foundation; a research affiliate of the World Health Organization. Dr. Macdonald served as a consultant to governments, universities and colleges in both Canada and the United States. For his contributions as a scientist and academic leader he received honorary degrees from Harvard, the University of Manitoba, SFU, UBC, Wilfrid Laurier University, Brock University, the University of Western Ontario, the University of Windsor and U of T. He is an Officer of the Order of Canada. In lieu of flowers, please visit www.okanagan.ca for ways to donate towards the preservation of Lake Simcoe.

JOHN STANLEY NAYLOR HAMMOND, BSc’42

John passed away peacefully on Monday, June 16, 2014. The beloved husband of 68 years to Myra Hammond, he loved his six children, 14 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren, unconditionally. His subtle sense of humor will be missed. He was born in Nanaimo, BC, on March 8, 1920, and grew up in Kelowna. After receiving his bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering, he joined the Canadian Army, serving in the Royal Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers and spending a brief time in England. Upon returning to Canada, he worked on Ontario Hydro operations. Looking to the future, he joined the nuclear power division, becoming assistant superintendent and then the commissioning operations superintendent of the Bruce Nuclear Power Station at Douglas Point, and eventually finishing his career in Toronto. He was a gentle, patient man of few words who enjoyed time with his family - budhist stones were his specialty. His creativity in his workshop was boundless.

Children were happy recipients of handmade whirlies, boats and other toys, and his beloved prides marked many a cottage, campus or portage. Growing up in the Okanagan, he sang in the Anglican Church choir for years. John often reminisced about happy times spent at the UBC Outdoor Club cabin on Grouse Mountain. His love of the outdoors was shared with his family, who recall fondly the many canvaas trips and camping holidays in Algonquin Park. John was a keen badminton and tennis player. He enjoyed years of Scottish dancing, bridge with adult friends, and endless cribbage and euchre games with children and grandchildren. John’s final years were spent in the warm and loving care of his extended family and the staff of Post Inn Village in Oakville, where he was affectionately known as King John. Dad was and will always be an inspiration to his family and will be missed terribly.

ROY V. JACKSON, BSc’47

Roy, aged 90, of Wilmington, DE, passed away on September 3, 2014. In addition to his UBC degree, he received a degree in civil law from McGill University. He proudly served in the Canadian Army working in the lab on chemical warfare products. Roy was employed by Fordol & Mayell, LLP, a law firm practicing patent law in Canada. He worked for Deloitte in Wilmington, Haseline Lake in New York, Johnson & Johnson in New Brunswick, NJ, and Hercules in Wilmington, from where he retired in 1994. He was a member of the Patent and Trademark Institute of Canada and Mema. Roy enjoyed attending the University of Delaware/Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, both to teach and take classes. He had numerous professional papers published. His passion was reading and writing. He was an avid current events enthusiast and was very active in his community. He enjoyed spending time with the family. Roy was predeceased by his parents and his brother, John, of Victoria, BC. He is survived by his loving wife of 44 years, Manika, his sister, Marjorie (Ray) McFadden; daughters, Francis Ann (Edward) Borsanick and Victoria Stagg; grandchildren Adam, Andrea, Andrew and Malcolm; great-grandchildren James and Thomas; and numerous nephews and nieces. In lieu of flowers, you can donate to www.creston.museum.bc.ca.

JAMES DAVID KING, BSc’43, BAI’73

Dave was born on January 14, 1922, in Vancouver and passed away peacefully on December 21, 2013, just shy of his 92nd birthday. His father, Professor Harry King, was one of the founding fathers of UBC’s Department of Agriculture and his mother, Aletta King, was active in the Faculty Women’s Association. In 1945, Dave received degrees from UBC in agriculture and commerce. He married Ruthy Parunov in 1949 and lived in Langley, where he was district manager for the BC Electric Company. Dave believed passionately in the ability of the free enterprise system to create a bigger pie that could be shared by all, and devoted his career to pursuing the economic development of BC. Dave, Ruthy and their children, Julie, Harry and Anne, moved back to Vancouver in 1960, settling in Kerrisdale near his parents. Following the expulsion of BC Electric, Dave remained with BC
Hydro and later served as executive secretary of the BC Harbours Board and as a commissioner on the BC Energy Commission. He played key roles in the development of the Peace River hydro project and the port at Robert's Bank. Dave and Ruth moved to West Vancouver in 1974, where they enjoyed a tranquil setting, great bike trails, and their four grandchildren, Christopher, Eric, Lily and Artis. Following Ruth's untimely death in 1995, Dave married his long-time friend, Sally Carter, and after her death in 1998, married their long-time friend, Sally Carter, and after her death in 1998. Dave is survived by his wife, Sally, and his children: Gordon, who lives in North Vancouver, and Peter, who lives in Victoria. Dave was a hardworking, irrepressible and known for his humorous, flippant and generous soul and he made a difference in the lives of those lucky enough to know him.

WERNER DETTWER, 85 [57]

In September 2013, the BC high-technology sector lost one of its pioneers. Werner (Vern) Dettwiler died suddenly at the age of 78 in Switzerland, where he had been living in a移动 village. Between 1957 and 1968, UBC used five different mainframe computers. When he was 22, he moved to London as a research assistant at the Royal Institution in London (UK), where he was a member of the computer lab. That same year, Ron received a grant from the Arts Council enabling him to begin his career as a director. He went on to direct many successful television and film appearances. In 2002, he was awarded the JOHN price of Victoria, and went on to earn a PhD in biochemistry from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He then held a post-doctoral fellowship at the Max Planck Institute in Munich and spent the rest of his career as a professor of biochemistry. He made notable research contributions in biochemistry, cytogenetics and virology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Emory University, the University of Texas at Dallas, the Medical College of Ohio in Toledo, the Northwestern Memorial and Michael Reese Hospitals in Chicago, and the Northwestern University in Oak Brook. In 1977, he devoted his career to cancer research, and served as a professor of medicine at the University of California, San Francisco, before settling in North Vancouver in 1964. As a professional engineer, he was an electrical discipline specialist and held senior positions on major projects, mainly in the pulp and paper industry, in Canada, the USA, Turkey, China, South America and Southeast Asia. His memberships included ARESE, American Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEEE), and Society (IEEE), the Royal Society of Canada, and the Royal Society of Canada. He was involved in creating satellite receiving stations, weather prediction programs, and robotics (such as the Canarm on the US space craft, the Canadian Police Information System, and the Canadian Police Information System). He was a former president of the Canadian Institute of Electronics Engineers. He served for two terms on the Canada Standards Council and was involved with the Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce. Vern loved music, flying, trains, walking in the hills, and his family. Vern is survived by his wife, Cecile, M.7; daughters Pamela, D.7; and Sarah, B.8; and granddaughter Katharine.

RONALD DON (DON) LYON, 84 [57]

Robert (Bob) and Helen (Her) passed away peacefully at Lions Gate Hospital on September 15, 1951, in Vancouver. Upon their marriage, the couple moved to Vancouver, where they were married at the Daley and Eric Mueller, and James and Aletta Leitch. Following Ruthy's untimely death in 1993, Dave married their long-time friend, Sally Carter, and after her death in 1998, married their long-time friend, Sally Carter, and after her death in 1998. Dave is survived by his wife, Sally, and his children: Gordon, who lives in North Vancouver, and Peter, who lives in Victoria. Dave was a hardworking, irrepressible and known for his humorous, flippant and generous soul and he made a difference in the lives of those lucky enough to know him.

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RONALD DON (DON) LYON, 84 [57]

Don was hardworking, irrepressible and known for his humour, charming personality, and good sense of humour. Don graduated from UBC in 1964, and following graduation, he worked in a variety of fields in the Canadian Rockies involved in avalanche control, construction and teaching. In 1972, he moved back to the coast to become the resource centre coordinator for the Burnaby School Board, a position he held for 25 years. In 1988, Don met his wife, Heather, 

Lizette, Michael, Michelle, Fred, Jakob, Ida, Niels and Catherine; and extended family. Bill was born in Winnipeg on December 15, 1936, and at an early age moved with his family to the Victoria area. He attended Victoria College then graduated from UBC in electrical engineering. He helped work his way through college and university by playing professionally in the Victoria Symphony Orchestra and various swing bands. After graduation, Bill worked in Montreal, Windsor, Syracuse and San Francisco, before settling in Victoria in 1945. As a professional engineer, he was an electrical discipline specialist and held senior positions on major projects, mainly in the pulp and paper industry, in Canada, USA, Turkey, China, South America and Southeast Asia. His memberships included ARESE, American Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEEE), and Society (IEEE), the Royal Society of Canada, and the Royal Society of Canada. He was involved in creating satellite receiving stations, weather prediction programs, and robotics (such as the Canarm on the US space craft, the Canadian Police Information System, and the Canadian Police Information System). He was a former president of the Canadian Institute of Electronics Engineers. He served for two terms on the Canada Standards Council and was involved with the Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce. Vern loved music, flying, trains, walking in the hills, and his family. Vern is survived by his wife, Cecile, M.7; daughters Pamela, D.7; and Sarah, B.8; and granddaughter Katharine.

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David Alexander Van Diederen, BPharm ’64 – 2012

In Prince George, on September 29, 1961, God blessed the Van Diederen family with a most precious gift — a son, David Alexander First and foremost, David loved God profoundly. Each day, he lived his motto for his life with his words and actions: love God, love family and love others. He taught us the value of each person, his or her beauties and his or her flaws because he believed that each person was a valued creation of God.

David always said that he would be forever young. He will live on in the hearts of all those who knew him. He was a nature and animal lover, a patron of the arts, an avid reader and an optimist. His desire to see a just society — a society free of the evils of harassment and discrimination. Now that his earthly watch is over, he will live on in the hearts of those who knew him. We love you, Dad.

Robert Van Diederen, BEd ’66 – 2011

Robert, beloved husband of Iris, passed away peacefully on April 10, 2014, in Toronto. George studied economics and political science because he believed a strong economy was a precursor to implementing change in any society. His passion for improving the living conditions in the developing world compelled him to complete a master’s degree in public administration at Carleton University and a master’s degree in economics at the University of Toronto (Ut-T) before returning to Jamaica in 1962. From 1962 to 1965, George worked at Planning Unit, the Development Finance Corporation, and the University of the West Indies (UWI) hospital in Kingston, Jamaica. As an assistant administrator of the UWI hospital, he received a fellowship from the Ford Foundation to study at the University of California, Berkeley. After returning to Canada in 1966 and gaining a master’s degree in social work in 1968 at Ut-T, George joined the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) becoming its executive director in 1976. He will be remembered for his relentless work in protecting the environmental values of North Vancouver. In 2014 she was given the Living City Award from the City of North Vancouver.

Karen Rowden Milne, BA’66, BSN’01, MSN’14, also known as Karen Rowden, passed away in Whitehorse and Kluane. Karen was an artist with Canada Council Bursaries in 1970 and 1971, which led to an exhibition of her wearable sculptures at the Vancouver Art Gallery in 1976. She was also one of the first women in Canada to earn a PhD in environmental design and method of dressing. From 1974 to 2014 she and Graham operated Graham Milne Photolab, making fine prints for enthusiastic photographers. In 1976 she established Mosquitocreek.org, an initiative for herbalists and farmers that now serves as a foundation for protecting and promoting herbal biodiversity.

The Van Diederen family is deeply grateful and valued by colleagues in Canada and abroad, having lived in Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam working with their governmental agencies and the universities. Dedicated to equality, justice and compassion, he touched the lives of many. Learning, understanding and laughter was his way.

Please note that the next two new print issues of T victory special centennial issues that may not include all our usual departments, for example, our Front Page, Report on the Board, and Report on the Society. The two issues are being produced by the University of Victoria, and the Society cannot ensure that they are available for the timely publication.

Please submit obituaries to braq.magazine@ubc.ca or mail to: Alumni UBC, 419 University Blvd., Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z2.

Obituaries should be 300 words or less (summaries may be accepted in exceptional cases). Please submit original photos or high-resolution images – preferably 300 dpi.
What was the last thing you read?
Nature and swimming with turtles.

Singer-songwriters need alone time.

Said Hawaii, because I love warmth, if you’d think, reflect and write songs.

If you’d asked me three years ago, I’d have no idea how to do it.

No matter what struggles she went through to do it.

My mother. She is a hard worker and the best person.

What was your childhood hero?
They teach me how to become something nobody else has and who was your nickname at school?

My life experiences. They are prized possession?

What is your most precious possession?

A potion that makes someone love you. If you could invent something, what would it be?

If you could invent something, what would it be?

What are you afraid of?

What is your pet peeve?

Or:

What’s your idea of the perfect day?

What would be the title of your biography?

The Things You Don’t Know About Wanting

What is your most like to have.

What would it be?

Name the skill or talent you would most like to have.

My friends.

What would you do if you were a flying dinosaur, millions of years ago?

It would be a flying dinosaur, millions of years ago.

What is your favorite food?

Chili pepper. I was feisty and stubborn.

What is your favorite animal?

I don’t know what my favorite animal is.

What is the most important lesson you ever learned?

That everything happens for a reason. If you expect something to happen and it doesn’t, just be patient and know there is a reason. You won’t know what it is immediately, but you’ll know eventually.

What is your nickname at school?

Chili pepper. I was feisty and stubborn.

Who or what makes you laugh out loud?

My friends.

What is your favorite color?

Blue.

What is the best place you have ever been?

During the summer of 2009, I had to learn to speak more languages.

What is the worst thing you did as a child?

I sometimes say things I shouldn’t.

What would you do if you were free for the longest time?

I would start after a really good cold, sleep.

How did you get to that desert island?

I would spend it surrounded by love.

What is your favorite music genre?

Country.

What is your favorite movie?

My friends in Asia say I look like my mother.

What was your favorite book?

I read a book that I loved.

What is your favorite book?

My life experiences. They are your favorite book?

My life experiences. They are

What is the best book you’ve read?

My life experiences. They are

What is your favorite place you’ve traveled?

I would spend it surrounded by love.

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What would you do if you were a flying dinosaur, millions of years ago?

It would start after a really good cold, sleep.

If you could meet anyone who was alive in the past, whom would you most admire (living or dead) do you think (or have you been told) you most resemble?

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*12 issues, $14.95 plus tax