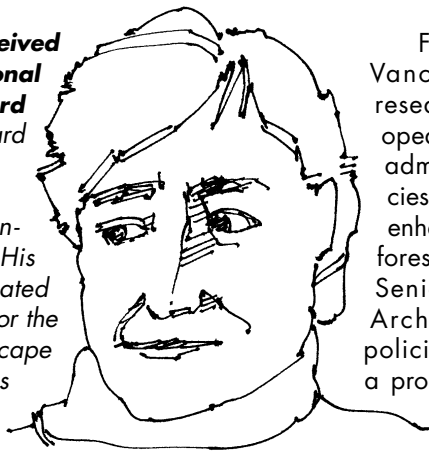


A Conversation with Alan Duncan

Alan Duncan received the BCSLA Exceptional Contribution Award for 2001. This award was given for his efforts in the design, planning and management of place. His work has demonstrated innovation, respect for the profession of Landscape Architecture and has made a lasting contribution to the profession's relationship with local government and the public.



Alan Duncan
Drawn by Cameron Murray

Sitelines met with Alan to discuss his award, his career and accomplishments — so far.

Since the start of his career Alan has been cutting trail. Early on Alan was engaged by the City of Edmonton to prepare policy for a Civic Art program. This was new territory for planners, fifteen years ago; yet essentially a landscape architectural approach, integrating art and cityscape, space and form. Later, Alan received his masters degree in planning at UBC and since then has continued to lead the community through many initiatives. His work follows an approach similar to that of Fredrick Olmsted, combining design with physical planning.

For the City of Vancouver Alan researched, developed, refined and administered policies to protect and enhance the urban forest as the City's Senior Landscape Architect. These policies resulted in a program for regulating trees on private property, which in turn provided public education around sustain-

ing an urban forest and creating general awareness of environmental design principles. Though controversial, the tree bylaw has been a success in establishing a middle ground in the issues of retaining an urban forest. The replacement tree requirement provides a future foundation for an urban forest and presents policy as a creative vehicle for environmental change.

The bylaw was a response to a tree-cutting crisis that accompanied the arrival of monster houses. Out of the monster house issue came a 'Housing Renovation Centre' that was initiated and developed by Alan. The Centre facilitated the renovation of houses by providing detailed advice on Zoning and

Building By-law issues. The result is a less cumbersome process by which minor variations and non-conformities are relaxed and expedited to allow projects to remain on track without unnecessary delays.

As Greenways Planner, Alan planned and implemented city-wide and neighbourhood greenways, including the development of the Trans Canada Trail, as part of an interdepartmental team. During the development of the Ridgeway, several landscape architects were invited to participate in a collaborative design charette as a liberating starting point in the process. Community workshops followed with a focus on walkability, safety, cycling improvements, a green environment and a role for artists. All of these elements worked together to control the car.

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A Conversation
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BCSLA

sitelines

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The editorial deadline is the 8th and advertising deadline is the 16th day of the intervening months. Advertising rate information is available on request.

Inquiries regarding editorial, advertising or other issues should be addressed to the Sitelines Editor, c/o The BCSLA at the above address.

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The purpose of Sitelines is to provide an open forum for the exchange of ideas and information pertaining to the profession of Landscape Architecture. Individual opinions expressed are those of the writers and not necessarily those of the BCSLA.

Another of Alan's initiatives is the Wellness Walkway in Mount Pleasant between Main Street, 16th and Kingsway which may be the first of its kind anywhere. It grew from a beautification proposal made by the Edith Cavell Hospital and expanded to increase and enhance accessibility to walking routes in the neighbourhood for people with physical challenges. It involves streetscape improvements such as wider sidewalks to facilitate walker-assisted pedestrians and those in wheel chairs safe access to the public spaces in the neighbourhood. Providing benches and fragrant trees along the route makes a pleasant outing for residents of the neighbourhood with limited physical abilities. Alan continues to develop strategy to attract the appropriate partnerships and donations for continued implementation of this project.

Alan has a long association with Public Dreams. While in Edmonton, Alan met Paula Jardine who described her creations as 'a journey through a familiar landscape seen through new eyes'. During the International University Games in 1983, Public Dreams created a civic celebration committee. 'New Reflections' was an example of how a space — Rice Howard Way — became a place. Street performance, dancers in windows, and climbers rappelling from parkades all became part of the choreography of the rebirth of nature, with celestial choirs. The audience consisted of happy people and inspired bureaucrats.

People began to reconnect with the modern downtown with its' glass reflections. Activities have continued in this square since the festival events.

Vancouver's centennial was celebrated with Expo 86 and Public Dreams created parades every day. The Parade of Lost Souls has sparked more performances across the city, such as the Lantern Festivals at Granville Island and the Roundhouse. In other municipalities Alan continues to advise on the formation of Public Art policies.

Recently Alan was Planner for Southeast False Creek (SeFc). The City has declared that SeFc will be a sustainably developed site. The SeFc policy document has been well received but challenges remain such as the contaminated soil, and the debate between parkland and sustainable development. The Olympics may provide an impetus for innovation.

As an educator, Alan has taught and assisted with numerous studios, workshops and courses at UBC. He continues to be a sessional instructor in the Landscape Architecture program.

Currently Alan is in Rezoning, where he says there is much room for creative policy application and problem solving. Public benefit is negotiated at this stage as a precursor to development planning. It's grass roots planning and a change from facilitation. For example, the Cordova Gap lands present new possibilities for cafes and roof gardens.

Congratulations Alan! ☑

LOOK WHO'S BOARD WALKING!
see page 9 for details

b c s l a



S E R V I C E



My Life As A Landscape Architect

By Eunice Campbell Purdy

It seems the time has arrived for me to turn in my stamp and officially declare myself retired. Sensible? At 84 I know I no longer want an active practice, but I do feel a certain reluctance to take this step — probably because the title of Landscape Architect has been for most of my life an important part of my identity. There! I've said it — now to answer the request to write a review of this identity for over sixty years of its being.

I had been painting in watercolor since I was a small child and family outings and vacations were always to wild mountain areas where my dad could fish and my mother and I could hunt for wildflowers. When I found a major in landscape architecture listed in the Smith College catalogue, I knew right away that this was IT — my two great loves, art and nature combined. The outline of my life plan was formulated at that very moment. I could hardly wait for junior year when the courses in landscape and architectural design began.

It was academic joy from a BA from Smith through a BLA at the graduate school in Cambridge, Mass. At the Cambridge School

our small group of devoted women were guided by professors from Harvard as well as from prestigious Boston firms. In retrospect it was a very privileged academic experience. We joined with the Harvard students in a summer project designing a theoretical town on the site of Walden, Thoreau's experiment in living.

All students at the Cambridge School were required to take one year of architectural design in preparation for a degree in either architecture or landscape architecture. This was a meaningful requirement especially since one of our main design projects as landscape students was to lay out an entire college campus with not only site and grading plans but also the design of all the buildings.

Our proximity to Harvard was advantageous in many ways. We were able to hear Frank Lloyd Wright when he told the students they should leave school and go to work. We were shown how to create garden sculptures from burned stumps by that British luminary Christopher Tunnard. Dan Kiley, the renowned modernist, dropped by occasionally, and I even did some work for him.

I decided to study more architecture and enrolled in the rigorous program at M.I.T. In addition to the excitement of the drafting room culture dominated by the differences in design philosophy between the M.I.T. approach

and the Harvard school, friendships developed which have lasted a lifetime. When I was in fourth year design, December seventh happened, precipitating World War Two. It seemed inappropriate to stay in school, and I applied to the civil service for a war job.

This involved working at Princeton University with some of my M.I.T. associates under the National Defence Research Council. The drawings we made were all under the very secret label and were basically graphic forms of data developed by the mathematicians and physicists. Once in a while we were given a fun job such as measuring the machinery in a mobile unit, or designing a small building or cabinet. A highlight of the Princeton experience was seeing Albert Einstein several times since our drafting room was in the laboratory building near where he worked.

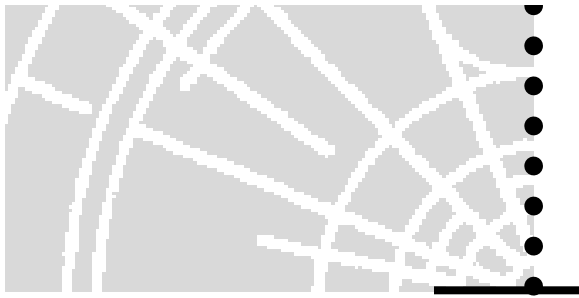
1944 saw a major change in my life. I married the man of my dreams and moved to Yellowknife. My parents' friends and relatives assured them I would soon return to Boston but nothing was farther from my thoughts. Armed with some of the symbols of my life (watercolor paper and my faithful T square) I was ready for the new experience. There was not much work in landscape architecture at the mine where we lived but I did small amounts of drafting for the regional land surveyor.

The landscape of the area around the mines as well as that of

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*Eunice Campbell Purdy
BCSLA — Life Member*



My Life

... continued from page 3

the town and into the bush was far different from that of the East coast although there were certain similarities in rock structure. The main feature of the Yellowknife landscape was the rock of the Precambrian shield with its prominent glacial scratches. Characteristic growth was dwarf Spruce and Birch trees, about twelve feet high. Bearberry, the principal ground cover, provided food for the animals and birds. Caribou herds on their annual pilgrimage were a spectacle as they pounded past our home on ice covered Great Slave Lake. Birds were also plentiful — ptarmigan, swans, sea gulls and Canada geese. There was no shortage of sights under the cold blue sky and crisp cold air of the subarctic. The blues of the skies were unforgettable. These conditions were exciting for painting and I tried my best to commit the spirit of the place to paint and paper.

When our second son was about eight months old we moved to Trail, B.C. The landscape there was dominated by the Columbia River and the bare mountains rising from the valley. The smelter activity which was responsible for denuding the foliage has since been ameliorated so that the hillsides are now quite green and lovely. Despite the smoke and greenlessness of the area during the 1950's, I was delighted with

the landscape possibilities. Roses, lawns, even fruit trees could be grown in this climate so warm and temperate in comparison to the cold we had just left. As an artist I noticed the softer, paler colours of the sky and land.

Soon my role as a mother overcame my professional ambitions and I returned to the loving task of homemaker with my two sons, little daughter and husband. Landscape design didn't weigh very heavily on people's needs at this time and place, but I did design a few houses. Of course it is always a thrill to see pencil and paper become concrete and timber.

Enter the BCSLA. Following the advice of a young Vancouver architect, I made contact with the newly formed Society, and was invited to attend a meeting at the coast. My trip to Vancouver led to meeting John Neil, Phil Tattersfield and Clive Justice. It had been twenty-five years since I had met another landscape architect. You can imagine how I felt! I think my husband was resigned to my joining the BC society after the three mentioned members stopped to visit us at our cabin at Christina Lake. The children were quite in awe of this little group. Clive with his broad hat and high boots set a glamorous tone and helped make the visit unforgettable.

In 1965 Cominco moved Neil to Spokane, Washington to take charge of geological matters in the U.S. We couldn't find a house that had all the characteristics which we thought we needed so I designed one which we built. This was a house on a hillside with a northeast exposure and a wonderful view. Having my own house was a distinct advantage. I could

experiment with materials, methods and dimensions. My children played a part in the garden development process with the result that an eight-year plan shrank to five years.

My roles continued to swing between architecture and landscape. We oversaw the construction of a small house for my mother on a lot near ours, and we built the garden together. She was so keen (at age 85) to start the garden that she insisted we get out in February in the snow to begin the rock clearing and bed development. I was then asked to design an office for McCulloch Saw on a site in Spokane. There was minimal scope for those distinguishing touches to the design we all love to make, but I managed some within the limits of the prestressed tilt-up structure. The site planning and land grading were handled with berms and rock walls made from local stone. When the time for the planting arrived I was told we had a budget of \$300. So off to the nursery to invest this treasure. But despite our misgivings, the trees that were planted now make a handsome framework for the building.


There was much opportunity to use my landscape knowledge through the garden clubs. One of the most interesting things I was asked to do was to plan garden tours. This opened splendid examples of garden variety and interest to the public. The Federated Garden Clubs at this time were sponsoring a country wide lecture series. I lectured on the history of landscape architecture over a two year period and shortly afterwards did a TV series on related subjects for which Federated received an award.

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My Life

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About this time Neil left corporate life and established a private practice which soon took him all over the world. I was also free to travel. This was a wonderful time in my life for I have always loved to visit new places. Neil had clients in Britain and Ireland and good fortune enabled me to go along and paint on several of these journeys. I visited and photographed public parks and famous landmarks as well as some private estates. Thus I was able to enjoy the pleasures of travel, while capturing the photographic slide records which I later used in class presentations.

As our travels moved on to Australia, I thoroughly enjoyed sight seeing around Melbourne. Thanks to the sound advice of John Neil who was familiar with the area, I met the author of 'The Endless House'. This architect toured us around his projects which were ingeniously crafted from found materials, such as hand made bricks from local mud and straw, timbers discarded from dismantled bridges etc. This was an Arts and Crafts movement, Australian style.

Shortly after our trip to Australia Neil became very ill and later that summer died. Our elder son Alan declared brightly that it was time I began my career as a Landscape Architect (I was 60 at the time). Despite my reservations I set up the mechanics of a practice and began a teaching job at Spokane Community College. My course was in landscape design and over a period of about six years I taught design, irrigation and drafting as well. As those who have experienced teaching know, there are many joys and opportunities in this pursuit. I especially felt rewarded

when some of the students decided to continue their studies at university and completed their degrees in Landscape Architecture.

During these years I began to feel like a real Landscape Architect. I was teaching and at the same time developing a small private practice. Among the larger projects was a landscape plan for a residential complex and projects on two college campuses. I also entered a competition for the design of an underground house. There were several Landscape Architects in Spokane at that time and it was wonderful to share some of their experience and knowledge.

New delightful country soon came into view as my son Alan bought a 44-foot trawler and invited us to go with him and his family on a series of wonderful trips along the north coast of British Columbia and into the inlets penetrating the coastal mountains. We visited uninhabited islands, picnicked on beautiful sandy beaches and walked through jungle like rain forests. I was enchanted to see waters of turquoise blue, thick fern drenched forests, silent wolf tracked sands and wonderful sunsets over the water. Some of the paintings resulting from these cruises became the nucleus of a show at the Smithers art gallery. It was a wonderful event with a gala reception, live music and a real party atmosphere.

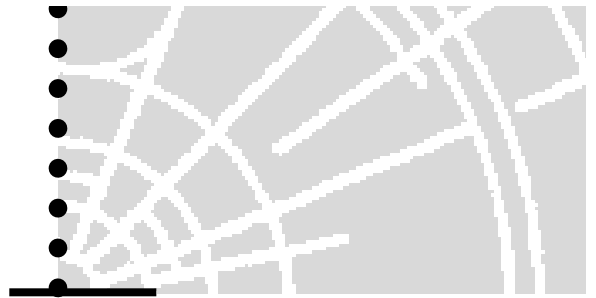
As my second husband Phil was entering a period of failing health, we decided to leave Spokane, in spite of the close associations there. We moved to the Okanagan Valley to be near my daughter. Suddenly I was alone again and relying on my special love of design to help me

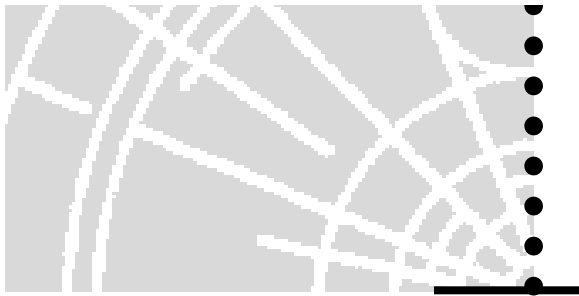
start another new life. Between the design work and the unravelling of thirty-four years of life in Spokane, time passed, and with the help of my children I was able to make new friends and explore the new surroundings. Over time I became quite busy with a group of new friends who were like minded painters, and I became an active member of the Federation of Canadian Artists. A short time after arriving in Penticton I became involved with a movement to save some valuable waterfront land from private development. This has been an on going crusade and an issue that I imagine will continue for some time to come, and I expect to contribute as much of my time and energy as I can.

This account would not be complete without some form of summary of my life as a Landscape Architect. On the whole I believe the value of our environment and the ways it can be treated and affected by professional work is increasing in the eyes of the public. This means, in my opinion, that education of the public through the development of public parks in cities, the exclusion of wilderness areas from major building development and the general trend to spend leisure time in outdoor pursuits has tended to spread the ideals of Landscape Architecture. Of course the increase in the numbers of practicing professionals with the resulting excellent public and private work are improving the built environment to a large extent.

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memoir

My Life

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The establishment of standards of materials and practice has affected the profession in a positive way. And the spread of gardening lore through popular magazines and garden clubs has helped make gardening America's number one hobby. It all creates credibility and status for the profession.

Have I seen progress in the status of women in the profession? Yes indeed I have. There has been considerable improvement in this area from the Thirties and Forties when we women could not study

Landscape Architecture at the leading institution in the east. The Cambridge School came into being through tutoring several women in architectural design because there was no way in those early days that women could otherwise gain this knowledge. Now women register equally with men in order to study Architecture and Landscape Architecture. When I was studying at M.I.T. I was one of five women in all five years of architectural design classes, but that is different now. Strangely, I never felt incompetent or inferior, and was not made to feel so by most of the men in the field. My one brush with this type of prejudice came from a carpenter who informed me when I gave him a sketch of outdoor stairs he was to build "I don't need no lady architect to tell me what to do."

Now the profession of Landscape Architecture has expanded into the arenas of environmental work and seems to be combining with city and regional planning in an interesting way. This integration and overlapping of various professional fields seems to me to be a very good thing. Hopefully it will result in more understanding among professionals and lay people and the end product will be a more beautiful and functional environment for everybody. When speaking of the overlapping of professions, I think that this truth becomes evident: principles of good design are applicable to every art form whether it is painting, sculpture, architecture or landscape architecture, and the more these principles are adhered to, the better the design. ☒



memoir

Green Roofs: A Sustainable Option for Greening Our Cities

*By John Irwin, Coordinator of
the Southeast False Creek
Working Group*

On March 5, 2002 I attended a very informative and inspiring workshop on green roofs hosted by Environment Canada. Developers, architects and landscape architects,

contractors, academics, planners, engineers, environmental and other government agency representatives, and non-governmental organizations interested in sustainable community development attended the one-day workshop. Many workshop participants returned the following day to enjoy, a thankfully dry, walking tour of Vancouver's green roofs.

Green roofs, we learned, are already well established here in Vancouver. The Waterfront Hotel, the Vancouver Public Library, and the Provincial Courthouse at Robson Square have green roofs.

However, even with all these green roofs around us, we discovered that our knowledge of green roofs is not sufficient.

A green roof is a roof designed, or redesigned, to carry plant life and vegetation. The benefits of green roofs are multiple. They increase bio-mass and bird habitat in our cities, help to reduce airborne pollutants, improve the micro-climate, store and delay stormwater runoff, provide opportunities for urban agriculture and therapeutic gardening, reduce heating and cooling requirements

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LEARNING GREEN GROUNDS

Green Roofs

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for buildings, and they can aid in the reduction of the urban heat island effect. There are, generally, two types of green roofs:

1) Extensive green roofs: an inaccessible roof with a thin layer of soil or growing medium planted with hardy plants that require little or no irrigation; and **2) Intensive green roofs:** an accessible roof with deep soil planters, and irrigation that provides opportunities for park-like plantings of trees and shrubs, urban agriculture and therapeutic gardens.

The workshop was held to explore what research is required in order to implement green roofs throughout the Greater Vancouver Regional District. The morning section of the workshop included several interesting presentations on green roofs. Landscape architect Cornelia Oberlander, for instance, gave a presentation based on her more than twenty years of experience in designing and implementing green roofs. Cornelia stressed the necessity of collaboration between the landscape architect, the structural engineer, and the architect to successfully develop green roofs. She also pointed out the importance of fighting for your ideas. She ended her presentation by saying: "I fight for ideas." Anyone who has walked through, or had their lunch, in the park-like green roof at the Provincial Courthouse at Robson Square is grateful for Cornelia's vision, and ability to fight for great ideas!

The afternoon session consisted of three breakout groups that got down to work on: environmental and public health considerations, technical and site design considerations, and policy and economic considerations. The group that I

volunteered as note-taker for dealt with environmental and public health considerations. We heard about Germany, which has no net stormwater flows from their development sites, and imposes fines for flows. We recommended that the German programs and experience should be researched to determine what policies and strategies are applicable to the Vancouver region, the local climate, and our political jurisdictions. Portland and Seattle also have a lot of experience in developing green roofs, and we suggested that we research what they have learned about green roofs rather than re-inventing the wheel. We also suggested that we put in place monitoring programs on some of the green roofs in Vancouver.

On March 6, a smaller group of participants enjoyed a walking tour of three rooftop gardens. We saw the herbs, roses, and miniature apple trees growing on the green roof on the Waterfront Hotel. The chef of the hotel explained how he uses the rosemary in his dishes. This garden is a vibrant example of how a green roof can provide high value agricultural products in the centre of a high-density urban area. Volunteer master gardeners tend the garden. We also enjoyed a tour of the inaccessible, extensive green roof of the Vancouver Public Library. It is planted with ornamental grass and kinnickinnick in a pattern that replicates the flow of the Fraser River.

The walking tour ended with Cornelia Oberlander explaining her work on Robson Square. Apparently, the courthouse originally had Californian orange trees in the atrium. Unfortunately, the Chief Justice at the time insisted


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Cornelia Oberlander

Photo by John Irwin

that all the oranges be picked as soon as they appeared and this killed the fruit trees.

The green roofs workshop and walking tour was a great learning experience. It has inspired the participants to forge partnerships and outline a research program for green roofs in our region. The Southeast False Creek Working Group will collaborate with our members and partners to continue to fight for green roofs in the sustainable community being developed in our area. If you would like to get involved contact our outreach coordinator Sikee Liu at: 604-876-6865, or sefcwg@vcn.bc.ca 

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The BCSLA would like to thank the sponsors for their support of our Annual General Meeting event.



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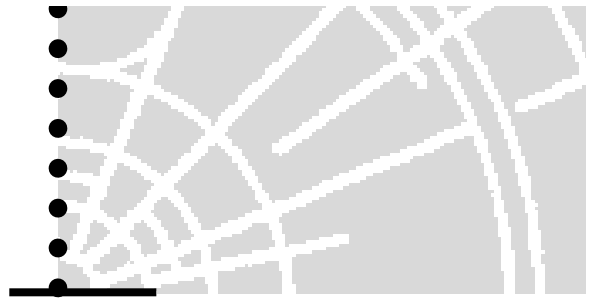


Vancouver Irrigation Supply Ltd.

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Departing Directors

Thank you to Jay Lazzarin, Tim O'Brien and David Wright who have just completed their terms as BCSLA Directors. **Jay** was very active researching insurance issues. He also worked hard on preliminary meeting arrangements for a Victoria meeting with government representatives and BCSLA Members who live on Vancouver Island. BCSLA was lucky to have **Tim** work on the BCSLA Schedules and Guidelines. Tim was instrumental in the successful implementation of the updated BCSLA Schedules.

David Wright served as a CE Committee Co-Chair and also worked on the Communications Committee.

Another thanks to **Patricia Campbell** who has concluded her term as President, Past President and CSLA Rep. In addition to working and her duties to the Board, Pat was kept busy by representing the BCSLA at the AIBC Energy and Environment Committee.

More thanks to **Andrew Wilson** who wore many hats. He was BCSLA President and BCSLA Representative to CSLA. Andrew

was also the driving force behind the successful 1999 CSLA Congress. He was also active working on the BCSLA Bylaws, Code of Ethics and Sitelines.

Welcome to President Elect, Will McKenna and Directors Joe Fry, Lindsay Gowler and David Rose. Lindsay Gowler was named by the BCSLA Board of Directors to serve as a Director as Richard Findlay decided to withdraw his name. ☒



board
walking

noticeboard

JOB OPPORTUNITY

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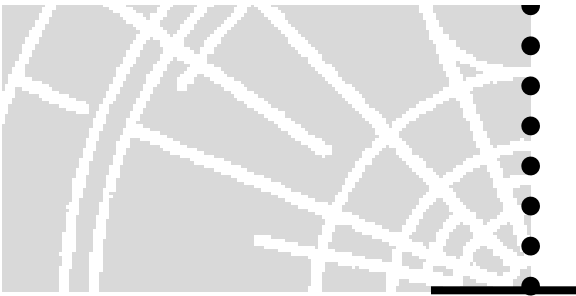
BCSLA Board of Examiners

The next sitting of the **BCSLA Board of Examiners** has been **postponed** due to changes in the way the Ministry of Advanced Education processes appointments to provincial boards, agencies and commissions.

Details of the next sitting will be available in the fall 2002.

Public Sector Committee

The BCSLA Public Sector Committee meets quarterly. The next meeting will be **Wednesday, May 15 at 6:00 pm** in "The Strathcona Room" (lower level), Vancouver City Hall.



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BCSLA 2002 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- April 20 – 28** Landscape Architecture Week (Canada and USA)
- April 23** BCSLA Board/Fellows Meeting
Vancouver, BC
- May 11** CSLA Board of Governors Meeting
Halifax, NS
- May 26 – 29** Canadian Institute of Planners/Planning Institute of BC
Annual General Meeting
Vancouver, BC
- June 6 – 9** Van Dusen Garden Show
Vancouver, BC
- June 10 – 12** LARE Candidate Sitting
UBC — Vancouver, BC
- August** June LARE Results
- September** BCSLA Membership Committee Meeting
Vancouver, BC
- September 12 – 15** CLARB Annual General Meeting
New Orleans, LA
- September 18 – 19** CanWest Hort Show
Vancouver, BC
- September 23 – 27** Union of BC Municipalities Annual General Meeting
Whistler, BC
- October 10** LARE Candidate Orders
- October 19 – 22** American Society of Landscape Architects Annual General Meeting
San Luis Obispo, CA
- October 25** BCSLA Board of Examiners (date tentative)
UBC — Vancouver, BC
- November** CSLA Juror Nominations
- November** BCSLA Community Service Awards Nominations (deadline TBA)
- November** BCSLA Contribution Award Nominations (deadline TBA)



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