

U.B.C. CONVOCATION  
Law Graduates, May 20, 2015  
Speech of Constance D. Isherwood

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Mr. President, Honoured Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.  
It is a great honour for me to receive this Doctor of Law degree at the University where I graduated 64 years ago. I think of the year 1948 when I first came here. There was energy in the air. The War was over, servicemen and women were returning to studies to catch up for lost years. Hopes were high, Romance was in the air!

Our classes were held in the Army huts. When I think of our professors, it is like a trip down memory lane. Dean George Curtis, Pappy Read, McIntyre, Westlake, Bellom, Gilbert Kennedy, Fred Carrothers, Ray Herbert. Names you may not know, but the old-timers will remember.

Speaking of old, Many people ask me if I am still practising? Sometimes I answer with the old cliché "if you keep practising you eventually get the hang of it". But there is nothing wrong with getting old. You just have to keep going and keep breathing.

I am reminded of the comedian George Burns. He lived to be a good age. In fact when he was in his nineties, he booked the Palladium in London, so that he could perform there on his 100th birthday. That's optimism. Anyway, George Burns used to say "I'm so old that when I was a lad, the Dead Sea was only sick!"

You have a great journey before you., and there is one significant thing you can remember about this year of your graduation. It is the 800th anniversary of the signing of the Magna Carta. At the time, it was a document to satisfy the Barons, and King John had to submit. During the years since then, it has become the symbol of the foundation of the Doctrine of Human Rights. A symbol that no one is above the law. Not the Sovereign, nor the Church, not corporations, organizations, trade unions, not Parliament. It has been so for 800 years, and we look to you to see that the spirit of Magna Carta continues to prevail.

I wish you all well. There will be many people to see, places to go, mountains to climb. Be conscientious and enjoy it. As much as you can, be approachable. Let your clients feel that they can come and talk things over with you. They will appreciate it. You will be rewarded.

Again, my Best Wishes to you, and my sincere thanks to the University for this great honour.

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