

Valedictory

By AUBREY KIRKPATRICK

Fellow graduates, distinguished guests, members of the faculty and administration, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon and welcome to today's ceremonies.

Before I continue, I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow graduates for bestowing the honour of Valedictorian upon me. I thank you all with all sincerity for this privilege.

When I first started the momentous task of writing this speech the first thing I did was to go to the dictionary and find the definition of the valedictorian. I found this to mean: "A bidding farewell to fellow graduating students at a graduation ceremony." As I continued to research for the speech I discovered two ways to deliver a farewell address. One, was to deliver nothing but good remarks about our university, the other was to criticize it for its failures over the past four or five years. Upon reflection, I discovered that it all depended on whether I received my degree before or after the speech. Although I received my degree, I do not intend to follow either method, instead I have chosen to speak on two topics. The first topic is entitled the importance of the university community and the second I like to call One Small Step for Man, One Giant Leap for Mankind.

UNB has offered us a quality education with a collection of top programs, professions, and facilities. Its level of higher education is comparable right across Canada. There is one element, however, that puts our school on top and that is its university community. The learning process did not end when we left the classroom, in fact it is outside of the classroom where we have learned some very important lessons about life. How many times have we heard the expression; "Wait until you get out in the real world." I challenge those who offer that expression with; "this is the real world only smaller." Many of the situations and problems we have faced are unique only to university life while others are similar to those found outside of the university experience.

Before we came to university we wish we had known...that it did not matter how late we scheduled our first class we would still sleep through it, that we could know everything and still fail a test, that we would become one of those people our parents warned us about, and that most of our education would be obtained outside of the classroom.

We have learned how to manage our personal finances by living on \$5000 for eight months. After paying tuition, rent and bills, it hardly left enough money for a case of our favorite beverage. But thanks to Kraft dinner and hot dogs, the student specialties, we survived.

We have had the opportunity to participate in student politics and government, clubs and societies have shown us how to get things accomplished through cooperation. Some have been lucky enough to experience the role of student leaders and have handled the responsibilities of both academic and extra-curricular activities.

Some have had the opportunity to participate on some of Canada's finest athletic teams. Through hard work and dedication, they have experienced the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat.

Remember back to your first year and your first time through registration. This is where we first encountered bureaucratic red tape. After being in the stands for two hours reading your information kit, twice like a good frosh, you decide to venture to the floor of the Aitken Centre thinking you will walk right in. After waiting in line for a half hour, you get to the door, only to have a campus policeman say, "who is your beneficiary and you forgot the date and your signature on your registration form." This throws you right off and its back to the stands, and like a dumb frosh you got back in line and waited another half hour. After you finally make it to the floor, you find that every section you planned to take is full and it's at this point you figure you will never get a degree, because if registration is this hard the courses must be harder.

Yet here we are today, we have turned many problems into solutions and have conquered those obstacles that seemed insurmountable. Our university community has offered us unique challenges and learning experiences that have and will prove to be invaluable to all of us.

I view today's ceremonies as one small step for man and one giant leap for mankind. For most of us this will be the last time we will attend school. We will be starting our careers and on the road to future success. We will begin playing an integral role in society. We are bringing fresh new ideas and outlooks with us, as we travel to our new homes around the world.

Graduates, I want to share with you how I view our future role in society. I want our class to make a difference, I would like to see our contributions make the world a better place. We must stand for what we believe in and work to ensure peace will be everlasting. We must continue our efforts to help our fellow man, as we did this year when a fellow student undertook a hunger strike to raise money to ease the famine in Ethiopia. We must give of ourselves, our time, our knowledge and our energy, as we are all part of God's family. To borrow the chorus from a very familiar song;

*We are the world, we are the children
We are the ones who make a brighter day
So let's start giving
There's a choice we're making
We're saving our own lives
It's true we'll make a better day
Just you and me.*

Fellow graduates today is a tremendous occasion, do not under-estimate your accomplishment of graduation, be proud of your triumph. To all our parents, thank you for your love and support, we could not have done it without you.

In closing, I can only wish each and every graduate all the success in the world and that happiness be with you always.

To the graduating class of 1985, I bid you farewell, good luck and God bless.

Thank you.



Dear Graduate:

Congratulations on achieving another milestone in your career. UNB has done a lot for all of us and in the days to come when your metal is tested, you will find that your sojourn at UNB has been time well spent.

Graduation is a time of mixed feelings for all of us in the Fredericton area. We have come to know many graduates during their student years as neighbours and friends and we shall miss you in the days to come. We hope however that the strong ties you have established with our provincial university will bring you back many times for reunions at Encaenia.

Until we meet again, good luck and remember that you are among friends in all parts of the world where our growing number of graduates can be found.

Sincerely,

Robert Howie
J. Robert Howie,
M.P. for York-Sunbury



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Dear Class of '85:

I am pleased to have this opportunity to express my congratulations to you on your graduation from UNB. We have enjoyed your company and we shall miss you.

In wishing you well I should also like to express my gratitude to you. Among my most satisfying and memorable experiences during these past five years have been the ones (alas, fewer in number than I would have wished) I shared with you. From sporting events to residence house dinners; from the Red 'n Black to the countless individual encounters; you have given me much pleasure.

For two hundred years this institution has attempted to give its graduates the skills and knowledge and perspectives for successful careers and successful lives. Our record, based upon the achievements of our graduates, is a source of pride and of confidence. I am convinced, knowing you in the way I do, that the Class of '85 will carry this tradition of accomplishment forward into our third century.

Be sure to keep in touch.

Best wishes:

James Downey
James Downey
President