

Homecoming: a Dal tradition?

BY KAVERI GUPTA

As you may or may not know, Homecoming was held at Dalhousie this past weekend. At most universities, it is the university itself that takes responsibility for organizing Homecoming. However, because of its varying structure of events over the past several years, Homecoming isn't a well-known event on campus. This year, the Dalhousie Student Union (DSU) took responsibility for organizing Homecoming Weekend in hopes of starting a tradition at Dalhousie.

The DSU's main goal was to get a regular series of events going on so that every year Homecoming is one of the main events as it is in other universities. They also hope that these events will build spirit and bring everyone together for a few days.

Although the event was sparsely attended in comparison to other universities, James Dann, Vice President Community Affairs on the DSU, said that this year was only a starting point and that it will take time to build it up. Next year, improvements include a different scheduling of events so that people will be able to move smoothly from one event to another.

Organization from the DSU was done by Dann; Scott MacIntyre, Director of Campus Activities; Lilli Ju, DSU VP Executive; and, Curtis Cartmill, VP Communications. Other organizers were the Alumni Affairs Office, Department of Athletics, and the Student Alumni Association.

If you want information on your non-profit or student organisation published in the Gazette's Dalendar, write up a short PSA and drop it by the Gazette offices, in room 312 of the SUB.

Dal residence at a glance

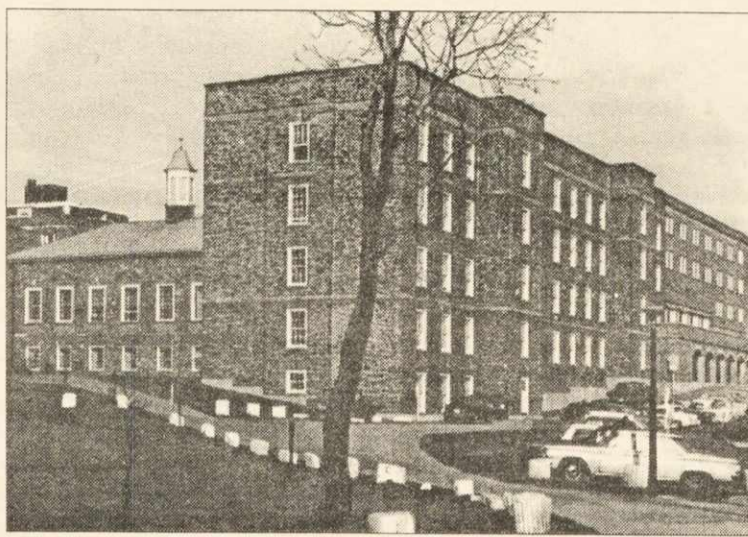
BY KAVERI GUPTA

As a first year, off-campus student, I wasn't too knowledgeable about the activities and structure of residence at Dalhousie. My first look at it was a whirlwind tour of Howe Hall with president John Killam. And although I still can't find my way around, I am more informed about residence life.

The three residences at Dalhousie — Howe, Shirreff, and Eliza Ritchie — hold various activities for their inhabitants. These include movie nights, floor crawls, intramural sports, and bus tours to out-of-town bars.

The halls also hold events to raise money for charity. Donations have gone to such organizations as the IWK Hospital, The United Way, UNICEF, and the Terry Fox Foundation.

Individually, Killam hopes to improve the perception of residence to the general public, get plans together for their Capital Project, and strengthen ties with the Dalhousie Student Union



Howe Hall residence

(DSU).

Katherine Hannah, Shirreff Hall President, hopes to update the Constitution and make improvements within the hall. Hannah also feels that relations between off-campus and on-campus students could be better.

Mike Webster, Eliza Ritchie President, hopes to raise more money for charity and become

closer to the administration.

Of course, life isn't always rosy. The presidents admit that occasionally there are problems with the administration or conflicts between residents, but that these incidents are inevitable.

Residence life, due to its constant activity and "neighbourly" living conditions, lends itself to the formation of a close-knit so-

ciety. Among other things, this allows the residents to pass around ideas on various topics quite casually. And, since the residences often represent a large, united voice, they often have significant political pull when it comes to campus issues, such as the recent DSU elections.

Approximately 1100 people live in residence at Dalhousie — 524 at Howe, 450 at Shirreff, and 84 at Eliza. Of the five houses at Howe, only Cameron and Studley remain all male. Shirreff has maintained its all-female status and Eliza is the original co-ed residence.

Each hall has a Residence Council. It consists of the Hall President, Vice President, Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary, Food and Environment Chair, DSU Representative, and a president from each of the houses within the hall (Eliza Ritchie is too small to be divided into houses). Also, each hall has a Residence Coordinator and several Residence Assistants.

Your money and the DSU

BY SHELLEY ROBINSON

A lot of money — a lot of your money — passes through the hands of Dalhousie Student Union (DSU) Treasurer Bret Leech, most of it very quickly.

As a full-time student at Dalhousie, or a part-time student with a minimum of three credits, you contribute \$132 of your tuition as student union fees.

Where does it all go? Don't bother checking *Dal: The Book*, it doesn't even add up to \$132, thanks to the exemption of the (at that point) still undecided Gazette levy. Last year's budget, if you could get a copy, was also wrong (are omissions considered typos?) in a number of places. Don't worry, I was assured that it didn't make a difference.

First, some basic tenets of DSU

accounting. The DSU doesn't make a profit, which is not to say that it doesn't make money. As a not-for-profit organization, any money left over is called an excess of revenues over expenses (EROE), and operates just like profit would. Last year, the DSU posted an EROE of \$124,000, which, after a government appropriation of \$66,000 for GST expenses (read: tax), left \$58,000. That's still a lot of cabbage.

This year's budget predicts an EROE of \$4,500. A conservative estimate by any means, based on a budget written last March. The ideal, as expressed in the summary of the audited financial statements, printed in *the Gazette* over a month ago, is around \$50,000. An increase by more than a factor of ten.

Using modified fund accounting — a split between a pooling of collective resources and earmarking certain funds for certain projects — only \$51.15 of your student union fees actually goes to the DSU. The rest is divided up between the Student Health Plan Insurance and the various groups provided for in levies.

This \$51.15 that you contrib-

ute comes from the General Income for Operation (\$41.15) and the Capital Payback for the Student Union Building (\$10). This money goes to a general pot with money made from on-site DSU businesses like the Grawood and Campus Copy, and it pays for things like Student Advocacy Services and the shuttlebus.

The rest is the fund part of modified fund accounting — the Student Health Plan Insurance given in its entirety (\$51) to an outside contract, the levies including CKDU, the yearbook, South African Trust Fund, the Women's Centre, World University Service Council (WUSC), the accessibility fund, Nova Scotia Public Interest Research Group (NSPIRG), Students Union of Nova Scotia (SUNS), and with the recent referendum, the Gazette.

The fees are in a constant state of flux. Last year, the contribution of \$15 to the capital campaign was dropped. The campaign had gone on longer than its proposed five year commitment and unlike the \$25 capital campaign contribution starting next year — which will

go directly to the university — the money went to the DSU itself. This necessitated a cut of \$150,000 to general DSU operations this year.

Changes to watch for are the re-inclusion of a course evaluation levy (\$1) after a one year hiatus; the potential for dropping the SUNS fee (\$2.60) — this is currently being brought to council; the addition of the \$25 to establish the Capital Ideas Campaign; the investigation into making the Student Health Plan Insurance optional; and, with the inability to achieve a binding referendum last year, either a referendum or a council decision on the fate of the yearbook, *Pharos*, which is currently supported by a \$5 levy. The DSU additionally supplements *Pharos*, to the tune of \$23,975 last year.

The bottom line here is that this article is only how much? not, how come so much? It's also worth mentioning that the reason the DSU is responsible for all things financial is because the university itself recognizes the DSU President, Dave Cox, as the only representative of the student body. If the DSU decided tomorrow to shut down the Women's Centre, theoretically, that's what would happen.

Remember, your money is only your money when you watch where it goes.

SHADOW BOXING

- You contribute a \$132 a year to the student activities
- Of this, \$51.15 goes to the DSU
- Last year, the DSU had a net surplus of \$58,000

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