

A letter to a past graduate

Dear Margaret,

I am a voice from your future, yet not unlike yourself. I too am a woman, an English graduate, and I attend your Alma Mater. Now it is a hundred years later and things have changed.

In 1881 you began your university life with one other woman who later dropped out, but you continued and became Dalhousie's first woman graduate. How excited you must have been to get your diploma, but I guess those years weren't easy for you. Classes were co-ed, yet there were no residences for you to stay in and other facilities were not open to you. How did you cope with the segregation? Were the men hostile, thinking of you as too intellectual for a woman?

I wonder if any man dared to court you. If so, where would you go and would you need a chaperone? Sure there were no Super Subs, but you might have gone to see the new Sullivan play *The Mikado*. What about sports? I guess you couldn't have had a one woman Tigers Team! Did the news interest you? Were you shocked when U.S. President Garfield was shot? Did the Married Women's Property Act in Britain excite you? Did you mourn the death of Henry W. Longfellow and Charles Darwin?

Finally, after four years of hard work and isolation you were rewarded for your efforts and became a teacher at the Halifax Ladies College, preparing more women for Dalhousie. Do you realize that a mere ten years later 58 women graduated.

In order to remember you, Dalhousie is celebrating 1985! A Women's Centennial Committee

has been established whose mandate is to recognize Dalhousie women and their achievements. Representatives come from all parts of Dalhousie community. Some of these include: The Women's Division of the Alumni, the Dalhousie administration, and the Dalhousie Women's Faculty Organization. The student committee member is DSU Shirreff Hall representative Roslyn Johnson. She hopes that all the students will involve themselves in a "community effort to make it a memorable year". Judith Fingard of the History department, the committee chairperson, urges students and student groups to come forward with ideas and to participate.

The upcoming events include something for everyone's interests. For history buffs, an art show of historical photos will be shown at the Dalhousie Art Gallery. The Women's Division of the Alumni are putting on their annual fashion show, (March 28), with a difference. With the help of the theatre department, historical fashions will also be presented. For art lovers, the music department will put on a special concert involving both the faculty and the students. The theatre department will also be performing. Sports fans can watch special sports events.

A series of lectures on various subjects relating to the theme of women will culminate on March 6, International Women's Day, with special guests such as Iona Campagnola, Maureen McTeer and possibly Margaret Atwood.

In your honour, the Margaret Newcombe scholarship for first year women has been established. A commemorative poster is being



Margaret Newcombe, first woman graduate at Dalhousie, 1885.

made which depicts a striking self-portrait of the painter Panaskeva Clark. Also, Honorary degrees will be given to women achievers at the spring and October convocations.

Margaret, while I appreciate what you started 100 years ago, the "you've come a long way baby" theme is far from true. I invite you to our commemorative year, but I hope you won't be dis-

appointed when you see that the situation of women hasn't changed much since 1885.

Yours sincerely,
Fiona

New Year falls again

By ELIZA POON

THIS YEAR THE CHINESE New Year will fall on Feb. 20. The Dalhousie University and Technical University of Nova Scotia Chinese Students' Association will present a Chinese New Year Banquet.

The Chinese New Year, one of the most important traditional holidays for Chinese people, is marked by many customs. Houses are cleaned, debts are settled, red scrolls on every door contain the words of happiness, luck, peace and prosperity. Firecrackers and the lion dance take place in order to dissipate evil.

The Chinese New Year, of the lunar calendar, usually falls between January and February

on the Gregorian calendar, because an additional month is added for every twelve years. The twelve year cyclical calendar system corresponds to the twelve signs of the Chinese solar system. According to legend, it was first developed by the Jade Emperor (Father of Heaven) when he planned to restore order to the world, he invited all the animals to a summit meeting. Only twelve beasts came, including six mythical and six domestic animals. In order the twelve beasts form a cycle of twelve years; rat, bull, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, ram, monkey, fowl, dog and pig. The coming lunar year will be counted as year of the bull.

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