



## ON THE FRONT COVER

WILLIAM M. EVERETT, Q.C.,  
NEW PRESIDENT OF THE LSBC

*By Peter Keighley, Q.C., and Thomas S. Woods*

At perhaps one of the most important junctures in the long history of the Law Society of B.C. (the "LSBC"), the presidency has been placed in the steady and capable hands of Bill Everett. Lawyers and members of the public at large (in whose interest the LSBC governs the legal profession) have every reason to be confident that, whatever the coming year may throw in his way, Bill will exercise his mandate as president in a manner that will be a credit to the important position he now occupies.

Bill's path to high office has been direct and his progress swift.

He was born in Winnipeg in 1947. He attended school there (St. John's Ravenscourt) and took his first degree—a B.A. in political science and economics—at the University of Manitoba. Strangely, in 1968 he gave up the blackflies and towering snowbanks of Winnipeg for the more salubrious environs of Vancouver, enrolling as a student in the Faculty of Law at UBC. Those were the heady days of student demonstrations, love-ins and campus visits by counterculture icons like Jerry Rubin. Bill, though a bit shaggy, in keeping with the fashion of the times, showed little interest in joining The Revolution and chose, rather, to get on with his apprenticeship to lawyering. He thus graduated with his LL.B. in 1971, with no '60s baggage to retard his forward momentum.

Bill articulated thereafter at the Russell & DuMoulin firm (as it then was). His principal was Bo Fodchuk, but being a litigator by instinct, he found that he gravitated naturally to mentors of the likes of Allan McEachern, John Steeves and Wilf Heffernan. Bill had the great good fortune of junioring all three and so

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began a career in civil litigation that has grown and diversified in more than 30 years at the bar. His first gowned court appearance, which happened very shortly after his call, was as Wilf Heffernan's junior in an appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada. After Wilf completed his submissions, Fauteux C.J.C. kindly asked Bill whether he had anything to add. Bill was pleased to confine *his* submission to a single sentence, associating himself with what his learned leader had had to say. This drew from Heffernan a stage whisper—"Well, that ought to clinch it!"—that was heard by all present and caused much merriment all around. Bill has, needless to say, been back to Ottawa since that auspicious beginning and, sitting in first desk, has clinched a further case or two for grateful clients.

Soon after his call, Bill moved to Lawson Lundell Lawson & McIntosh (as it then was). The firm hired him on Bill's inflexible condition that he be required to do no matrimonial work (for which he says he is temperamentally ill-suited). Lawson Lundell (as it now is) has lived up to its promise, and, for that and other good reasons, Bill remains a partner to the present day. Early formative experiences in the firm's litigation practice involved Bill serving as a junior to Hugh Legg and Reg Gibbs on a wide range of commercial cases, many of which focused on forestry and construction subject matters. These involved appearances at all levels of court. Over the years, with those good (though demanding) models to follow, Bill built a large and varied practice of his own, and he now plays the mentoring role for junior and intermediate litigation lawyers at Lawson Lundell that Legg and Gibbs J.J.A. played for him when they were in practice. Bill is a "detail guy", well known for his meticulous preparation and for his attention to documentary evidence—strengths not seen in every member of the bar with his seniority. Judges and clients know that they can trust his command of what are often complex fact patterns, just as they know they can trust him to urge the application of the correct legal principles to those facts.

Bill married his wife, Suzanne, in 1977, and they have two grown children. Darcy is a fourth-year economics major at Queen's University who will graduate this year with an honours B.A.; Liam is a first-year arts student at the University of Calgary. Both have expressed a tentative interest in pursuing legal careers, although their plans are by no means firm. Bill and Suzanne are justifiably proud of a daughter and son who appear to be destined for great things.

Raising two active children kept Bill and Suzanne pretty busy for many years. They have done their share of driving to and from lessons and games, and they have earned their stripes on many rain-soaked soccer pitches and at numerous basketball games and other school events. Nurturing and assisting Darcy and Liam in their development was a priority for Bill and Suzanne during the children's formative years, and the investment has plainly been well rewarded.

Somehow, while maintaining a busy practice and family life, Bill has found a way to give a substantial measure of his time and talent to the community and the legal profession at large. To offer a few examples, he

- was a member of the board of the West Point Grey Soccer Association;
- was an elected member of the CBA (B.C. Branch) Council;

- was the honorary solicitor and vice-president of the Vancouver Playhouse Theatre;
- was a member, and later the chair, of the board of Crofton House School;
- was a director of the St. Paul's Hospital Foundation;
- was a member of the board appointed by UBC to establish an official community plan for the University Endowment Lands;
- was an adjunct professor of construction law at the UBC Faculty of Law;
- was a member of a committee of members of the bar in private practice that assisted in the selection of the current dean of law at UBC;
- is the honorary solicitor for the Point Grey Golf Club; and
- has been a bencher since 1998.

Bill's talents as a barrister, his extensive contributions to the profession and his service to the community at large were recognized by his appointment as Queen's Counsel in 1991.

For rest and relaxation, Bill turns to golf and, most of all, to his summer cottage on Hernando Island—a welcome refuge for the family from the cares and troubles of the workaday world. Hernando is accessible only by private vessel or float plane, and, when Bill is there, we all try hard not to disturb him. Time will tell whether the travails of office in the president's chair will intrude upon the Everetts' annual summer idyll in 2004.

When we consider Bill's approach to golf, we must embrace a distinction between notions of style and fashion. Bill's playing style has been described as "earnest" and "determined", and occasionally "journeyman-like". However, his friend and golfing buddy Jim Wilkinson, of Perimeter Transportation, points out that from a golf *fashion* point of view, Bill is "sartorially challenged". Woefully so, in fact. For many years they have together attended the annual Spring Tide tournament in Palm Desert, for which the price of admission gets you (in addition to 18 holes on a fine course) a rather pedestrian white tournament shirt. It had been Bill's invariable practice to wear the Spring Tide shirt on every other golf outing through the year, until the next Spring Tide tournament, when the pattern would then repeat itself. Jim and Bill journeyed to Pebble Beach last year to play the links there, and, in keeping with tradition, Bill appeared at the breakfast table before the first round wearing his tired 1997 Spring Tide tournament shirt. This was just too much for Jim, who, muttering "If it wasn't for Spring Tide, you'd be naked!", marched him summarily into the Pebble Beach pro shop and forced him to buy several colourful new shirts. Benchers attending meetings on warm casual Fridays in 2004 will now see a more stylishly attired figure sitting in the president's chair, thanks to Jim's sartorial intervention.

Bill's friend Guy Sobell believes that had he not become a lawyer, Bill would surely have been a back-up singer. He writes:

Performing background vocals (or "BG's" as they are known in the trade) is one of Bill's less celebrated skills, for, sadly, most law firms today require them less and less. Yet those

who have seen Bill in performance—the rhythmic and deftly fluid movement of the hands, shoulders and hips, reminiscent of such greats as Carmen Miranda, Mr. Bean and the Supremes—have admired the balletic artistry accompanying his most daring vocal bravuras.

As was noted above, Bill began his bench career in 1998 and immediately had an impact on the then-current debate on multidisciplinary practices. (He was against them.) He has chaired the Discipline Committee for the past two years. He was instrumental in the early reconsiderations by the Ethics Committee of the rules against acting against current clients. Bill has consistently advocated fiscal responsibility; he urged the formation of the Financial Planning Subcommittee, which now facilitates bench participation in the Law Society's budgetary processes. He was also behind the establishment of a government relations subcommittee and has played an important role in the money-laundering issue, instructing counsel and more recently meeting with Federation of Law Societies representatives and the federal government in an attempt to resolve the problems raised by the issue in a manner that serves the public interest.

In all of his bench endeavours, Bill has demonstrated the same steady and thoughtful approach that has characterized his work. He has been a "full-service bench", taking his full share of committee and hearing assignments when asked. In this regard, his service to the Law Society of B.C. has mirrored his committed and effective service to his clients, his firm, his profession and his community. The benchers, the Law Society and the public at large will be well served during the year of Bill's presidency.

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