

On the Front Cover

Diana M. Priestly

Diana M. Priestly, who has served as Law Librarian and a member of the Faculty at both of the Province's law schools, will retire from her position at the University of Victoria on June 30, 1987. Her association with the law and the legal profession in British Columbia began in January, 1946 when she enrolled in the Special Veteran's Class at the U.B.C. Faculty of Law. Prior to enrolling, she had served in the Womens' Royal Canadian Naval Service from 1943-46. While she was a student in law school, she served as Secretary of the Law Undergraduate Society. After graduation from U.B.C., she articulated and practiced with the Nanaimo law firm of Leighton, Meakin and Weir. The first case in which she became involved was the textbook case of **Cook v. Lewis** wherein she assisted Arthur Leighton when he argued the case before the Court of Appeal. This case, which later went to the Supreme Court of Canada, remains as the authoritative decision on the onus of proof in a situation where the plaintiff has proven injury by reason of the conduct of one of two independent tortfeasors but the plaintiff is unable to prove which of the two tortfeasors caused the injury.

After learning, in **Cook v. Lewis**, about all of the dangers associated with shooting grouse at Forbes Landing and the other subtleties of practice on Vancouver Island, she entered the University of Washington. Upon obtaining her Degree of Master of Law and Librarianship, she returned to U.B.C. in 1953 where she served as Law Librarian and a Lecturer in the Faculty of Law until 1963. Many graduates of that era credit her with teaching the skills of legal research to a whole generation of lawyers in British Columbia. Diana fondly refers to that period of her career as the "happy years".

In 1964, she began a ten year pilgrimage through eastern Canada during which she earned the admiration and respect of lawyers, faculty, students and staff at the University of Toronto (1964-67), Osgoode Hall Law School (1967-70), the University of Western Ontario (1970-72) and the Department of Justice, Legal Research and Planning Section, in Ottawa (1972-74). During this period, she gained national and international recognition as a law librarian.

In 1974, she returned to British Columbia where she became the founding Law Librarian and a Professor of Law at the University of Victoria. This was an enormous challenge when it is remembered that in 1974, the University of Victoria did not have a law library and that many law reports, periodicals and legal texts which would be required to build a law library had been out of print for decades and in some cases for centuries. Using her knowledge of law libraries and her contacts throughout the common law world, Diana met the challenge and she succeeded in assembling a first class law library collection which now consists of over 140,000 volumes. The breadth and depth of this collection has been the subject of many accolades by judges, lawyers, and academics in British Columbia and around the world.

For the past thirteen years, she has again been responsible for teaching the skills of law library research to another generation of lawyers from the University of Victoria. The Uvic graduates and students have developed the same admiration and affection for "Miss Priestly", as did their predecessors at U.B.C. in the 1950s and early 1960s. Students, faculty and members of the Bench and Bar have all benefited from her

knowledge and appreciated the patience and understanding which she has demonstrated while assisting them with inquiries about legal materials and research.

The Board of Governors of the University of Victoria has recently recognized her outstanding achievements in developing the Uvic Law Library and her contributions to librarianship and legal education in Canada by naming the law library at the University of Victoria as the "Diana M. Priestly Library".

Diana M. Priestly is a truly impressive person with a distinguished record of accomplishment and service who has a personal charm that endears her to everyone she meets.

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