



## ON THE FRONT COVER

MICHAEL C. WOODWARD,  
PRESIDENT OF THE CBA  
(B.C. BRANCH)

*By Robert C.P. Walker*

Michael Cassels Woodward was recruited to Thompson & McConnell in 1991. I knew his five years of experience reflected a noteworthy and well-developed skill set. What I did not know was the esteem in which he was held by many very satisfied clients. Their testimonial letters confirmed a unique and charismatic talent—a rare commodity that was already established so early in his practice.

Michael made partner early the next year. He became the “go to” guy for larger clients with particularly difficult problems, and he successfully handled a wide range of litigation, achieving excellent results. In 2002, Thompson & McConnell dissolved and he and I commenced a new municipal law partnership, Woodward Walker.

Michael was born and raised in St. Catharines, Ontario, where he competed in rowing throughout high school and university, winning gold medals at Canadian Henley five times. Something of an academic rolling stone, he enrolled initially in engineering at Waterloo, but switched to mathematics the next year, graduating in 1978 with a minor in philosophy. One can imagine his diverse opinions over coffee!

Although he had never been out west or skied, he came to Banff that autumn to be a ski bum and later worked in Alberta for Michelin in commercial sales. After two years out of school, and having become fond of Vancouver, Michael had

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the idea he would like to be a philosophy professor. He enrolled in the M.A. program at UBC, although he had also been accepted into law school. It was when some "thesis frustration" set in that he decided to attend law school for a change of pace, never expecting he would stay more than a term.

Well, he enjoyed it, and he graduated on the dean's list in 1985. He worked a summer at the law society along the way, and then articulated with Campney & Murphy. Michael stayed as an associate in the firm's then very large labour law group, working primarily for municipalities and school boards. In 1989, he left to join the municipal law boutique led by Don Lidstone. He came to Thompson & McConnell two years later.

Michael has always had a high energy level. His involvement in positions of increasing responsibility in the Canadian Bar Association over the past 10 years has been no great surprise. He is a strong leader. His abilities include finding solutions to complex problems. He accepts these responsibilities with real seriousness.

Michael is bright, driven, humorous, informed and articulate. I expect that his term as president will also attract the description "flexible, to success", particularly in this first year of voluntary membership.



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