I

N LATE OCTOBER, a group of alumni returned to the faculty for an afternoon of tea and conversation. What made this tea special was the presence of faculty, staff, and students in attendance. In the past, the alumni teas have been primarily alumni-only events; it was a great experience, for students and alumni alike, to enjoy each other’s company. Many guests commented on the lively chatter going on around the room, and said how wonderful it was to include the entire FIS community at the alumni event. The faculty is hoping even more alumni will return to campus for a tea this semester!

Fall Alumni Tea Welcomes the Entire Faculty

More pictures from the Fall Alumni Tea on page 8

FIS “Walks the Walk”

LAST YEAR AT FIS (2003-04) was the “Year of the Talk,” as we prepared our Academic Plan to carry the Faculty forward for the next six years. This year (2004-05) is FIS’ “Year of the Walk,” as we continue to shift our emphasis towards activities that will bring that plan to life.

Changes are happening on several fronts. At the most concrete, Room 307 of the Bissell Building has been converted into a new Laboratory for Usability and Interaction. It is furnished with state-of-the-art equipment to support video-conferencing, monitoring and recording of individual and group interactions, and facilities to enable both local and remote usability studies. Extensive renovation and equipment were provided by two sets of grants from the Canadian Foundation for Innovation (CFI) and the Ontario

Continued on page 4

keep in touch

The best part of a school newsletter is keeping up with news from old classmates. If you’ve got a new job, retired from the one old, written a book, won an award or done any number of other interesting things, we’d love to hear from you. Please be sure to include the following information when you contact us: name, graduation year, address, and, of course, your great news.

Your update can be mailed to:
Editor – INFORMED, The Faculty of Information Studies,
140 St. George Street, Toronto, ON, M5S 3G6.
Or by email to: s.figueiredo@utoronto.ca.

Add your name to the FIS Alumni e-mailing list! Stay up to date on faculty news and events by sending your e-mail address to alumni@fis.utoronto.ca.

More pictures from the Fall Alumni Tea on page 8

Dean Smith invites the alumni guests to say a few words.
On December 15th, the faculty celebrated the end of the semester with faculty, staff, students, and alumni. While the event boasted the same wonderful treats and enthusiastic spirit as past years’ festivities, this was also a bittersweet occasion marking Karen Melville’s retirement from the faculty.

As part of Karen’s farewell, Dean Smith invited a few different individuals to speak about the contributions Karen had made to the faculty and to the Professional Learning Centre (PLC). Former faculty Dean, Professor Lynne Howarth, and Financial Officer Susan Brown spoke to Karen’s efficiency, humour, and collegiality. On behalf of the PLC staff, Marcia Chen, the financial and administrative officer for the program, gave a touching thank you to Karen for her work with the PLC.

Louise St. Denis, President of the National Institute for Genealogical Studies, got up to say a few words about how Karen, supporting the Institute’s efforts, helped to pioneer a PLC course in genealogy studies that is now tremendously popular. Sara Figueiredo, from the Alumni and Development Office, then presented Karen with her very own “special edition” of INFORMED, which detailed, among other stories, Karen’s “criminal past” (specifically the repainting of her office on the sly) and a rousing account of her overzealous cleaning of the administrative offices, when eleven garbage trucks from the Toronto Sanitation Department “removed 3,271 boxes of refuse.” While these stories might not have been entirely true, the twinkle in Karen’s eye indicated they were neither entirely false.

While we are all sad to see Karen go, it was a touching celebration of her time at FIS and a great opportunity for the faculty to gather and celebrate the end of 2004.


FIS Students Recognized by the University for Leadership Excellence

In a ceremony held on the evening of March 31st, five students from the faculty were awarded the distinguished Gordon Cressy Leadership Award, an annual honor that goes to graduating students who have demonstrated extra-curricular leadership at their faculty or at the University as a whole. Emal Bariali, Shelley Respondek, Lorraine Salt, Nicholas Wesson, and Edward White were chosen by members of the faculty and staff who identified the students’ significant contributions to life at FIS.

In his award citation, Emal Bariali, a member of the Faculty of Information Studies’ Student Council, was recognized for “developing and teaching a 5-week technical workshop at the Faculty, and assisted faculty and students with technology needs.” As head of the Student Council’s Professional Development Committee, Shelley Respondek “was responsible for successfully coordinating tours, guest speakers, and the resume clinic at the faculty.” Lorraine Salt was noted for “diligent work [that] led to the creation of a pioneering course in advocacy issues that was offered [in the Fall 2004] term for the first time in any faculty of information and library studies.” Nicholas Wesson, an Executive on the Student Council and chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, was awarded a Cressy for “his involvement] with policy and governance at the Faculty, being a student representative on the FIS Faculty Council and the FIS Master’s Committee.” Edward White was acknowledged for being “very involved in FIS governance, serving as the President of the Student Council, and acting as a student representative for the Faculty Council, the FIS Executive Committee, the Faculty Search Committee, and the Assistant Dean Interview Committee.”

The faculty is proud to congratulate these individuals for this achievement! There is no doubt that these students will continue to make a difference wherever they chose to go after graduation.
FOCUS ON A STUDENT – SUSAN LAI

Why FIS? The University of Toronto is considered by many to be the number one university in Canada; it has a great reputation and a large academic library collection. I am interested in the research aspects that FIS supports.

What was your undergraduate degree in? Bachelor of Arts: major in English Literature and minor in Linguistics.

What program are you studying at FIS? I am studying the Library and Information Science stream.

What do you think of the changes in the field of librarianship/ information management in the last few years? Where do you see this field going? Technology is taking over previous manual systems and print forms, while shifting to automated online systems and electronic resources. The trend is moving towards an extensive use of electronic sources, cataloging, databases, and online and multimedia resources because of the Internet and new technology. Despite the cutbacks and questions of the needs of libraries and information professionals, I believe librarians are important professionals, and are needed to help corporate, private, public and non-profit businesses in succeeding.

As a student, how have you stayed involved at the faculty? I have been involved in attending workshops, seminars and guest speaker lectures. In addition, I am a member of the Faculty of Information Studies Student Council, an Alumni Association Representative, a Professional Development Committee Member, and Co-Representative of the Canadian Library Association.

I assisted with student Orientation Week by welcoming and guiding new students into the faculty. To assist first year students with integrating into the faculty, I surveyed second-year students and FIS graduates and created a tips handout that should prepare students better and help them enjoy their program at FIS.

Furthermore, to improve the facilities of FIS, I have provided feedback and suggestions to the Life and Times Committee.

Is this your first time on a student council? If no, what types of things have you done before? If yes, what made you decide to run for office? Do you have a particular platform? I have been on the student council before in high school, as the visual arts communicator and Poster Club coordinator. My role was to announce school activities and events through arts design.

I have decided to be more involved with FIS to extend my roots. Running for office is a great way to do this because I enjoy meeting people from various backgrounds and experiences, as well as working with a team of peers to improve the program and taking ownership in providing supplementary academic and social events to enhance the student experience at FIS both professionally and academically.

Is there any particular event at FIS that you are looking forward to in the next year? Certainly, my graduation ceremony in November 2005 and the FIS convocation party afterwards! As well, the faculty’s end-of-the-semester party when all the members of the faculty, including alumni, gather to meet and share our year’s progress and achievements.

What are you hoping to pursue when you graduate? After graduation, I am hoping to pursue a career as an information professional, preferably in a public library environment, because of my enjoyment of literature.

As this is a newsletter that goes out to FIS alumni, is there anything you’d like to say to them? I hope the alumni will notice the improvements made at FIS since the last time they have been here for school! In addition, with many events occurring during the year, I hope the alumni feel welcome to drop by the events (or anytime they feel nostalgic) to visit and talk to the students. One of my favourite memories here at the faculty was the October Alumni tea event where Alumni, some of whom are my grandparents’ generation, visited and shared their experiences with students. It is great for Master’s students to learn about the library school and what the faculty was like in the past, and to compare how FIS has changed over the years to adapt to the demands of today’s workforce.

NAME: Susan Lai
HOMETOWN: Vancouver, BC
FIS “Walks the Walk” << Continued from page 1

Innovation Trust (OIT): one pair supporting FIS’ participation in the Text Analysis Portal Project (TAPOR), a nationwide collaborative project developing an infrastructure for text analysis; the other, supporting a research Project on the Foundations of the Information Age, headed by the Dean. Our long-range goal for the new Laboratory is for it to provide a well-equipped facility to host, study, and explore a wide variety of forms of technologically-mediated interaction.

FIS has also initiated a five-person, multi-year, open-rank and open-area faculty search, intended to bring five new faculty members into FIS over the next several years. This major faculty initiative, which has drawn considerable international attention, stands witness to the ambitious goals articulated in our Academic Plan. Applications have been received from junior and senior faculty from around the world. Some areas of special interest are the use of information systems (retrieval, HCI, social policy, etc.), health and medical informatics, and the history and future of the book. However, we have dedicated the search to finding the very best people possible, with area of research interest playing a secondary role. Hiring new faculty members is the most important process in the life of any academic unit. The results of this FIS search process, which will renew almost one third of the Faculty’s faculty positions, will have an enormous impact on the Faculty for many years to come. For information on the available positions visit: http://link.library.utoronto.ca/academicjobs/display_job_detail_public.cfm?JOBID=1568.

We hope you will join us on “the Walk,” as we continue to grow and develop over the next year. Thanks to the support of the faculty community, FIS is destined to play an important role at the university in the years to come.

Alumni Notes

SHONNA (née FIMRITE) FROEBEL (MLS ‘89) worked as the Business Librarian at Barrie Public Library since March 2002, and in October 2004 began a new position as Manager, Adult Information Services. Previously, Ms. Froebel was the Manager of the Knowledge Centre at the Toronto Stock Exchange, where she worked for several years. Her e-mail address is: sfroebel@city.barrie.on.ca.

TRISHA LUCY (MLS ‘95) married Wayne Ng on May 26th, 2004, during an intimate ceremony on the beach in Vancouver Island, BC. She is currently working in Ottawa at Library and Archives Canada, trisha.lucy@lac-bac.gc.ca.

GRACE KEENAN PRINCE (BLS ’53) now retired, of course, amuses herself in her “old age” by freelance writing (G&M, Montreal Gazette, America Magazine, Maclean’s, — anybody who’ll pay) radio and TV appearances (Sex, Truth & Videotape — “where I am to be seen ducking and weaving and evading and blushing; at my age, while roses do not mantle my cheek, this old neck sure gets mottled!”**) Mrs. Prince edited a collection of detailed Great War diaries smuggled from the Western Front by her uncle, 2nd Lieut. John Patrick Teahan, published under the title Diary Kid (Ottawa, Oberon Press). He served with the Royal Canadian Dragoons, and after OT at St. Omer, with the British Sherwood Foresters. [** “I’m glad Bertha Bassam isn’t here to see this.”] For Mrs. Prince’s reflections on her time at FIS (when it was the Library School), please turn to the article on page 5.

In Memory

We remember FIS alumni who have passed on recently.

Edith Adamson (Dip. Lib. ’34, BLS ’56)
Lois Allan (BLS ’44)
Irving Bonney (BLS ’52)
Ruth P. Brooking (BLS ’62) – January 11th, 2005
Mary B. Brown (Dip. Lib. ’36, BLS ’39)
Eileen Daniel (MLS ’79) – October 8th, 2004
Mary Higgins (BLS ’40) – November 8th, 2004
Retired in 1981 as Deputy Chief Librarian, City of York Public Library
Marjorie Hobson (BLS ’38)
Margaret E. Johnston (Dip. Lib. ’33, BLS ’45) – July 30th, 2004
Dorothy Lighthart (Dip. Lib. ’33, BLS ’61)
Irene McCordick (BLS ’67)
Dorothy McPhillips (BLS ’52)
Daphne Phillips (MLS ’74)
Holly L. Priest (BLS ’62)
Colin Robertson (BLS ’50) – October 4th, 2004
Lawrence Sanders (BLS ’63)
Gladys Shepley (Dip. Lib. ’36, BLS ’41)
Dorothy Skinner (Dip. Lib. ’34)
Helen E. Stubbs (BLS ’39)
Katharine Symons (Dip. Lib. ’36, BLS ’40)
Margot Thompson (Dip. Lib. ’35)
Agnes Weweler (Dip. Lib. ’39)
Carl B. Wicklund (BLS ’53)
Margaret A. Williams (BLS ’39)
Rosemarie Wolfe (BLS ’66) – December 3rd, 2004

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HALF A CENTURY AGO, I GRADUATED FROM Library School – by the skin of my teeth and the grace of God, I guess, because I wasn’t much of a student. After my first degree, I didn’t really know where I was going, or what I was doing. It was my best friend who talked me into Library School – she didn’t want to go alone because she knew it wasn’t going to be any fun. She wanted company.

I arrived a few days late that Fall. I had been ill. The office dragon, Miss Jeffries, eyed my bateau neckline icily. “If you had pneumonia,” she snapped, “You should be more ... warmly dressed!” I learned to shudder at Library School, and that was my first lesson and it wasn’t from the cold.

Our first assignment from the formidable Miss Bassam was a brief essay justifying our presence in Library School. “Don’t say you love books,” she said threateningly. “I don’t want to hear that!” I thought briefly of opening with the announcement that I hate books — but, for once, discretion prevailed.

An odd sort of anti-intellectualism prevailed in that bleak building, which we shared with OCE – the teacher’s training school of the period. Everybody looked hunted: deadlines were serious business compared to St Mike’s, whence I had come. Gloomy student teachers were constructing papier-maché projects, and we were arranging cards for Miss Cockshutt, who liked things alphabetical.

Terrifying as Miss Bassam was, we felt lucky to have been spared her predecessor Miss Barnstead, a truly fierce Director, and a legend. She wouldn’t have married women in the course! Our Miss B may have felt deceived when a couple of my classmates turned up sporting engagement rings, but she didn’t throw them out (and this, long before “student power”).

A feeble old lady came in at intervals for Children’s Lit. She always wore a black, crushed velvet hat and was given to coughing spasms, watched with a kind of detached fascination by the class, who wondered what we’d do if she’d expired on the floor before us. (I’m older now than any of those ancient women who taught me!)

Angus Mowatt lectured too, but I have no idea what his subject was supposed to be. He just reminisced about his travels and his canoe: being a character (though a librarian) was his forte. W. S. Wallace taught Canadian Literature. He, when he set his final exam, begged us to “entertain” him. When I wrote that paper, I, knowing little about “Can Lit,” spent my time expatiating upon “My Favourite Canadian Writer,” in this case, an old beau who had been working on a novel for years. I knew a lot about Miles (though I didn’t tell all I knew) and pointed out that he pioneered the device of “continuous revision” in fiction. I must have entertained Dr. Wallace, for a letter from the great man arrived shortly, informing me that he had given me an Alpha Plus.

It is worth remarking that we did all our work in longhand - except for cataloguing which we carefully printed. Only our thesis had to be typed, and Bertha Bassam gave us detailed instructions on the format. We were cautioned that she would accept no late papers, nor would she read overly long or short offerings. It amazed everybody to learn that one arrogant student flouted these instructions and hand-wrote his thesis, far too long and a day or two late. It amazed nobody that he failed his year.

Library School wasn’t all work. We had our mild revels, when the administration threw a party. Publishers were bidden to the Annual Tea, and those reps who drew the long straw (I guess) turned up looking patient. They told us, wistfully, that decadent McGill entertained them with sherry. Then we looked wistful, too. We had had a lecture on Hospitality, and Talking to All our Guests and we were chivvied about relentlessly by the supreme hostess, usually just when we had got a conversation launched.

My class of 59 was a very mixed bag. We were all ages – one bright woman was head of the TPL Music Library, and we had a poet and a nun. Our dozen men included Brian Land, the only cute guy around but, unfortunately, married. He, not just a pretty face, later became very distinguished and, at one point, Director of the Library School. I wonder if he introduced sherry to those uncomfortable parties. (I wonder too if he remembers his oral presentation on the subject of Codex. Cool Brian sure lost his composure that day!)

As I look back at the training I received long ago, I really admire those doughty teachers who taught me all I needed to know to go out into the library world and perform. They always stressed that high marks don’t produce the best librarians; what’s needed is attention to detail, reliable records and a spirit of service. The last cannot be taught but with it we are good and without it we’re no bloody good at all.

Clare O’Gorman dragged me to Library School, made me go to class, and sat up all night with me while I wrote my thesis. I will always be grateful to her, too.
FACULTY OF INFORMATION STUDIES ALUMNI ASSOCIATION (FISAA): PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Dear Alumni and Friends:

Spring is in the air, which means that Spring Reunion is just around the corner, so mark your calendars and get ready to reunite with classmates and friends – classes ending in 0 or 5 will be specially honored. In a departure from previous years, this year we will be hosting a Spring Reunion Open House to be held on June 9th at the Bissell Building. Don’t miss this opportunity to come back to campus and reconnect with the Faculty and hear about all the changes being planned. We held our last event in early February where we hosted a well-attended gathering of alumni for cocktails and appetizers at Joe Badali’s Ristorante to kick-off the OLA SuperConference.

We are currently accepting nominations for the Alumni Jubilee Award. This Faculty has many distinguished graduates whose contributions to the profession are a credit to their alma mater. Every year, the FIS Alumni Association honours one such individual with an Alumni Jubilee Award. The Nominations Committee looks at innovation or leadership in libraries, information centres, professional organizations, publications/research, non-traditional professions, or the community at large. If you would like to put forward a nomination, please submit the nominee’s name along with a paragraph outlining the nominee’s contribution to the profession and relevant biographical information. Nominations should be sent in confidence via e-mail to Nancy Birch, Director and Chair, Nominations Committee, FISAA at nancy.birch@bmo.com by April 29, 2005.

One of the new initiatives we have launched this year is the Ask an Alum Program, where current students get a chance to ask Alumni about their chosen career paths or seek advice other advice and information from information professionals in a broad range of fields. For more information, visit the FISAA website at www.fis.utoronto.ca/people/fisaa/index.htm. We have already had a great response; we are very pleased that the Ask an Alum Program has had such a great start! A special thank you also goes to everyone who participated in our Annual Job Shadowing Program; your assistance and willingness to open your doors to current students is invaluable.

Have you been receiving our monthly e-newsletter? If not, make sure to send us your current e-mail address so that you don’t miss the latest announcements and events. Our goal this year continues to be to provide our alumni with the ability to network, connect with current students, and stay abreast of current news and events at the faculty. We invite you to participate in this effort. You can get involved with us in a variety of ways, including:

• Updating the faculty on your accomplishments and contact information
• Acting as a resource for current students with job opportunities, internships, etc.
• Sponsoring an alumni event in your region

If you would like to get involved in any of these opportunities, or if you have suggestions or questions, please contact alumni@fis.utoronto.ca. Additionally, if you are interested in getting more involved with your Alumni Association, we are currently looking for new Directors to join the board from all years, industries, sectors, and fields. For more information about joining the executive, contact me at: roula.panopoulos@utoronto.ca.

— Roula Panopoulos, MISt ’99
President, FISAA

Note to FIS Alumni from FISAA:

Changes to the Alumni Association constitution have been proposed, and FISAA will be voting on the amendments at the Annual General Meeting in June. For more information on the constitutional revisions, please visit www.fis.utoronto.ca/people/fisaa/index.htm.
New Director of the Professional Learning Centre Announced

Dean Brian Cantwell Smith is very pleased to announce that, in February 2005, prominent information professional, consultant and educator, Rebecca Jones (MLS ’81), became the new director of the FIS Professional Learning Centre.

Rebecca is the co-founder and principal of Dysart & Jones, a leading consulting firm specializing in knowledge management and strategic planning. At Dysart & Jones, Rebecca’s focus has been on facilitating clients’ planning processes, problem solving and project management. Before moving into consulting she worked for Imperial Oil for eight years as Manager, Information Resources, and subsequently as Leader, Computing Skills Training.

Rebecca is a popular speaker at international conferences and has written extensively on business plans, information audits, and the effect of information technologies on the roles of information professionals.

Her teaching experience includes several years as co-instructor in two PLC courses, “The Information Audit,” and “Applied Strategic and Business Planning.” In 2004, she partnered with The Education Institute, an amalgam of four provincial library associations, to oversee their leadership and management educational offerings.

Retired PLC Director, Karen Melville, and the PLC staff are delighted to welcome Rebecca to the fold. Her deep knowledge and understanding of the issues affecting the profession, her relationships with many key leaders in the field, her organizing and managerial abilities, and her outstanding communication skills will strengthen the PLC and consolidate its position as a leading provider of professional development opportunities.

Exciting Changes to the FIS Staff

A new member of the Inforum staff, Anar Somji is assisting with Interlibrary Loans and Document Acquisitions. A recent graduate of the University, she greatly values the opportunity to gain experience in a field she is interested in pursuing. Anar is pleased to provide the FIS community and others with assistance at the Inforum Information Desk, with Interlibrary Loans assistance, and to facilitate the library’s acquisitions. In her role as an assistant to the Life and Times Committee at FIS, Anar provides administrative support and helps to set up the Dean’s Teas. Anar notes, “I am delighted to join FIS and look forward to my interactions with the community.”

Justyna Berzowski (MISt ’02) has worked as an educator, an administrator, a dynamic web content developer, and, most recently, as an Information Strategy Consultant. Her consulting has included projects with the Canadian government, the Faculty of Information Studies, PISCES consulting, and the Cancer Advocacy Coalition. In October, Justyna took a temporary role as Web Content Coordinator at FIS. She has been maintaining the website, providing electronic resource support, developing & teaching Inforum workshops, and helping the faculty move toward a more representative electronic presence. She is thrilled to be working with the wonderful people at FIS and looks forward to meeting more of the alumni in the coming months.

FIS is enormously pleased to announce that Judy Dunn will be accepting the new position of FIS Assistant Dean, Academic and Program. Judy, who will be joining us in June 2005, comes from Dalhousie, where she has most recently been Programme and Graduate Coordinator for the School of Library and Information Studies in the Faculty of Management. A librarian and graduate of the Dalhousie Library and Information Studies Program, Judy recently received their 2004 Outstanding Alumni Award. She brings to FIS tremendous enthusiasm, great experience, and a legendary love of students and people. She has been well-loved at Dalhousie; it is a great honour for FIS that she will be joining us here in Toronto.

Congratulations are also in order to Nalini Singh (MISt ’98), who last fall was promoted to Librarian III, with tenure. Nalini has brought wonderful expertise, dedication, and service to the Inforum. Every one of us at FIS is delighted that we can count on her being part of the community for many years to come.
The Faculty of Information Studies is hosting a Spring Reunion Open House on Thursday, June 9th, from 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. at the Faculty, located at 140 St. George Street. We encourage the entire FIS community to come out, whether you are a Library School graduate from years ago, or a recent grad with a career in Information Technology. For more information on this event, please visit the FIS alumni website: http://www.fis.utoronto.ca/people/fisaa/fisaa10.htm. Don't miss this special opportunity to reconnect with FIS!

Visit www.springreunion.utoronto.ca for updates!