

Reunion Weekend 2008 a Success

During the first weekend of July, Computer Science alumni returned to Fredericton to reconnect with old friends. The reunion kicked off on Friday, July 4 with a round of golf at the Kingswood Lynx Golf Course. That afternoon, the Faculty hosted an open house with rereshments and tours.

Two faculty members received special recognition at the open house event. Gaetan Roy (BScCS, 1984) presented a special tribute to Dr. W. Dana Wasson (Professor and Dean Emeritus), and Professor Rod Cooper was honoured by the Associated Alumni.



Computer Science alumni joined other UNB alumni for a lobster boil, silent auction, and maritime kitchen party on Friday evening. Following a brunch on campus Saturday morning, CS alumni visited the Boyce Farmers' Market and the Beaverbrook Art Gallery before taking a break to relax on the patio at the Crowne Plaza. Later, participants enjoyed an evening of fun at the NB International Speedway, owned by former CS students Steve Burns (1992) and Chris Johnston. The weekend concluded with an Ecumenical Service at UNB on Sunday.

The 2008 reunion weekend marked the beginning of a year-long celebration of 40 years of computing excellence at UNB. If you would like to be informed of upcoming 40th anniversary events, please send an email to fcs@unb.ca or call 506-453-4566.

Some Computer Science attendees of Reunion 2008 are shown here. This photo was taken at the Crowne Plaza following a live performance by ECMA-winner Troy Neilson (BCS, 2002; MCS, 2006), a.k.a "Brockway Biggs".

Banff Workshop Brings Together Mathematicians and Biologists

Doing interdisciplinary work between math and biology poses certain challenges. A workshop, entitled "The Biology-Combinatorics Interface: Addressing New Challenges in Computational Biology", was held in July. The goal of this workshop was to set broad research agendas and to focus on specific well-defined problems that are of interest both to biologists and mathematicians.

Dr. David Bremner was one of the workshop organizers and Dr. Patricia Evans was a participant. Both Dr. Bremner and Dr. Evans are Associate Professors within the Faculty of Computer Science at UNB.

For more information, visit:
www.birs.ca/birspages.php?task=displayevent&event_id=08w5069

Dr. Ali Ghorbani is Chosen as New Dean of Computer Science at UNB

In July of this year, Dr. Ali Ghorbani began his five-year term as Dean of the UNB Faculty of Computer Science.

Over the past 27 years, Dr. Ghorbani has held a variety of academic positions, including heading up project and research groups and as Department Chair, Director of Computing Services, Director of Extended Learning and as Assistant Dean.

Dr. Ghorbani joined the Faculty of Computer Science at UNB in 1999, and since then he has been actively involved in teaching, research, and administration. He recently served as Assistant Dean (Research and Outreach) within the Faculty, has served on the Senate and has directed many large-scale research projects.

Throughout his career he has also made an outstanding contribution to the field of computer science through his research and teaching. He has published over 150 articles in peer-reviewed journals and conference proceedings and has presented papers at more than 30 conferences throughout the world.

"Dr. Ghorbani has the management skills, the leadership abilities and the strategic vision to effectively lead the Faculty of Computer Science," said UNB President John McLaughlin. "He is bringing a number of key attributes to this position, including his demonstrated record of research and scholarship."

Dr. Ghorbani's plan includes building a positive faculty climate, developing undergraduate and graduate programs and increasing the number of students through student and faculty recruitment. In addition, he'd like

to expand community outreach and adapt the current curriculum to government, industry and research requirements.

"These priorities will be the challenge of the job," said Dr. Ghorbani. "However, in my past roles I have provided leadership on various issues and have brought together individuals with very different perspectives, helping them to find common ground and to reach productive conclusions. I feel I can do the same, in my role as dean, to increase our productivity and visibility."



Dr. Ghorbani is pictured here with the three previous Deans of Computer Science. L to R: Dr. Ali Ghorbani, Dr. W. Dana Wasson, Dr. Jane Fritz, Dr. Virendra Bhavsar.



A Message from the Dean

Dean of the Faculty, I on this new position with high hopes and lofty dreams for the future of our faculty. I feel deeply grateful for the opportunity to lead this outstanding faculty, to stand next to our accomplished faculty members, to meet our passionate students, and to work with our alumni. My overarching theme for my tenure as Dean is to work toward making our faculty indisputably recognized, nationally and internationally, as one of Canada's finest Computer Science programs, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Our mission is to deliver high quality teaching, learning, and research experiences which contribute significantly to the vitality and diversity of the university and the region in an environment that promotes mutual respect among all students, staff and faculty. In addition, our strategic priorities include: 1) Enhancing the student

experience; 2) Amplifying research productivity; and, 3) Increasing the community and alumni involvement.

Let me emphasize that our primary aim is to provide an environment where our students can gain vital Computer Science and Information Technology skills and build their way to a successful life after their graduation. We will do this through innovative and career-focused curricula and a teamwork approach.

Our students and alumni are our faculty's greatest assets. Our alumni represent the culmination of a Computer Science education and serve as the foundation of the faculty's aspirations. Building a strong and cohesive alumni community is of primary importance to the faculty and to me personally. I invite our current students to become better acquainted with our faculty in order to discover not only

computer science excellence, but also a faculty alive with critical-thinking, tremendous research, and intellectual activity. This is the first of our faculty's quarterly newsletters that are being published to showcase academic accomplishment, alumni's and Co-op students success stories, create community, and promote career development. During the 2008-2009 academic year, we are celebrating 40 years of excellence in Computer Science at UNB. I invite all of our students and alumni to participate in various events during the year-long celebration of our 40th anniversary. Please visit www.cs.unb.ca to learn about upcoming events and involvement opportunities. Also, please send us email to update your contact information, post a class note on our faculty's quarterly newsletter, or reconnect through us with former classmates. (Send to: fcs@unb.ca).

Upcoming Events

- September 2 - Undergraduate Orientation
- September 3 - Graduate Orientation & Grad House Lunch
- September 10 - Faculty, Staff & Students Meet & Greet
- October 15 - Annual CS Awards Ceremony
- October 23 - Fall Convocation

Looking Back

By Dr. Ali Ghorbani

Special Series

There have been remarkable changes in the area of computer science in the 40 years since our first class started in 1968, and the UNB Faculty of Computer Science has had its share in these advances. We are particularly well prepared to continue to make significant contributions to our profession's body of knowledge through our active faculty and student research, outstanding curriculum and the technologically advanced laboratories and centres.

This article will be the first of many in which we will attempt to write the history of Computing and Computer Science at UNB.

Just a few years after the design and development of the Electronic Numerical Integrator And Computer (ENIAC), the University of New Brunswick Computing Centre purchased its first computer in 1959. It was an LGP-30 with a CPU, Flexo-writers, a paper tape photo reader, and a punch. The initial equipment cost \$39,000. The New Brunswick Electric Power Commission (NBEP) provided \$20,000 to make this purchase possible. The balance was paid off over the next 3 to 5 years. This machine was used to provide services to commercial users including NBEP. The installation of this machine was completed in September 1959 with a total equipment expenditure of \$49,000. The

commercial rates at that time for providing computing services were \$20 an hour for NBEP and \$30 an hour for everyone else.

It did not take too long for UNB and the commercial users of the LGP-30 in New Brunswick to realize the importance of computers in training and services. In 1964, UNB purchased a new machine, an IBM 1620-II for an initial cost of \$180,000 and installed it in March 1964. This machine had a CPU, 40k memory, keypunches, a 407 printer, and a sorter. UNB received a 60% discount on the price of the CPU. NBEP paid \$80,000 in advance, which was considered pre-paid service and was used as a down payment. The balance of \$100,000 was paid over 4 years. Later this machine was upgraded with 60K memory, disk drives, and an on-line printer. NRC grants and \$15,000 from the sale of the LGP-30 helped finance the expansion. The total equipment expenditure after the expansion was \$276,000. The commercial rates for providing computing services were \$80 an hour for NBEP and \$100 an hour for others.

To be continued in our next issue ...

* Thanks to Dr. W. Dana Wasson for providing a list of equipment that was purchased for the UNB Computing Centre.



Professor Cooper is Recognized by the UNB Associated Alumni

Professor Rod Cooper was recently presented with an honorary membership in the UNB Associated Alumni.

The provincial act that created the Associated Alumni in 1870 states that membership is restricted to graduates and former students of UNB. However, in 2003 the Alumni Council recognized that many other individuals have contributed to the life and work of the Association and University. So, a category of Honorary Membership was created; this allows for non-alumni who have performed outstanding service to be recognized.

Professor Rod Cooper came to the University of New Brunswick in 1975 from the University of Waterloo where he did his undergraduate and graduate work and was at that time the Manager of their Computer Systems Research Group.

Since 1975, Professor Cooper has contributed greatly to the UNB community. He was the Don of Aitken House from 1977 to 1984 and then again from 1990 to 1992. He has authored several computer science textbooks, over 40 research papers, and is the co-author of an 8-volume lemmantized concordance of Saint Augustine's *Confessions and the City of God* in latin. Several years ago he was cross appointed to the Department of Chemistry. He has received over \$1.5 million in research funding. Professor Cooper now has six graduate students and in the past has supervised 3 doctoral candidates and nearly 50 masters students. He is also a two-time recipient of the Faculty of Computer Science Excellence in Teaching Award. Professor Cooper is most proud of the fact that a bursary was recently established in his name by his former students.

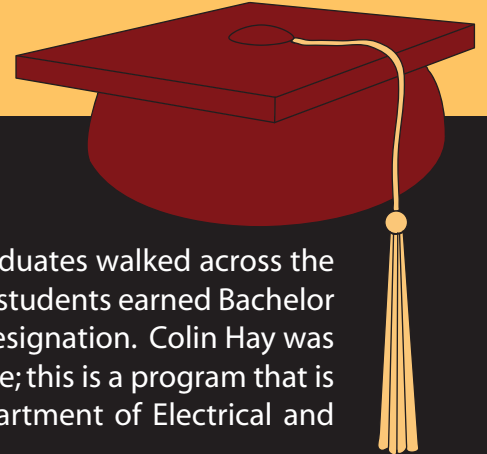
Professor Cooper attends UNB Reunion weekend and other alumni-related events regularly and can be seen at many university functions. He is a strong supporter of UNB and has received the Distinguished Service Award.

The honorary membership in the Associated Alumni is just one way of saying "thank you" for all that Professor Cooper has done for UNB, and all that he will do in the future.

Professor Cooper (left) is shown here accepting his honorary membership from Kevin Ferguson, President of the University's Association of Alumni Council.



Welcome New CS Alumni!



As proud parents and loved ones cheered, several computer science graduates walked across the stage at the One Hundred and Seventy-ninth Encaenia in May. Thirty-six students earned Bachelor of Computer Science degrees, among whom seven earned an honours designation. Colin Hay was the sole recipient of a Bachelor of Science in Software Engineering degree; this is a program that is jointly administered by the Faculty of Computer Science and the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering.

Graduate degrees were also awarded at this ceremony, with seven students receiving Masters degrees in Computer Science. Of the thirteen PhD degrees that were awarded at UNB Fredericton in May, two were earned by students in Computer Science, Iosif Viorel (Vio) Onut and Jiang Su.

The Computer Science faculty and staff extend best wishes to all new UNB CS graduates.



Doctorial recipient Vio Onut (center) is pictured here with members of the Faculty; L to R: Rod Cooper, Natalie Webber, Vio Onut, Ali Ghorbani, Ken Kent.

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Special Thanks to:
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Final Words...

We hope that you've enjoyed the first issue of our newsletter and we welcome your feedback!

Also, if you have story ideas and/or pictures that you would like to contribute to future issues, please contact us.

Send email to: fcs@unb.ca with "Newsletter" in the subject line.