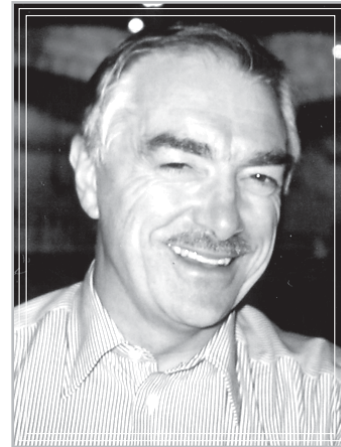


Iain Allan, BDS

Kelowna, British Columbia, Canada

BY DR. GERALD NELSON *Dr. Iain Allan comes to the attention of the PCSO Bulletin thanks to leaders such as Dr. Robin Jackson (Richmond, BC), Phillip Rollins (PCSO Executive Director, SF, CA) and Dr. Terry McDonald (Salem, OR). All of them have worked with Iain in one capacity or another. Robin (Past PCSO President) routinely encourages and mentors his colleagues to participate in association activities. Phillip Rollins makes it so easy for members to be active in the PCSO. Terry (Past PCSO President) led us to make the changes that brought more Canadian representation to the PCSO Board, and consequently, the opportunity to meet Iain.*



Dr. Iain Allan

Iain was a PCSO board member for four years ('95- '99) and during that time, I got to know him and his wife, Lizann. When I approached him to be a Portrait subject, he felt he was not really a notable PCSO member, just an orthodontist in the trenches. But in fact, the PCSO Portrait is meant to bring the life of a real live practicing orthodontist to the readers. It is not a feature to sing the praises of our stars, who get plenty of praise and recognition already. So Iain seemed like a person we could all appreciate and learn from. Here's his story.

EARLY DAYS

Iain was born on July 4, 1951, in Glasgow, Scotland. His father was a physician and his mother a maternity nurse (from Canada). He and his three siblings grew up in Grangemouth, near the city of Edinburgh, where his parents still continue to live in the family home.

While he has become quite a traveler, he didn't go too far away until after finishing at Edinburgh Dental School in 1974. Edinburgh followed a common European model of dental education – five years, with a greater emphasis on medical training than is common in the U.S. They learned to administer general anesthesia,



which was commonly used in General Practice in Scotland at that time. Iain told his family he expected to move to Canada, but both the Dean of the school and his father made him promise to practice in Scotland for at least two years before leaving the country. They told him he needed to know what he would leave behind, which to this day he credits as excellent advice.

OFF TO CANADA

As did most of his classmates, Iain associated for two years in a National Health Service clinic. One of his associate friends had immigrated to Canada, and Iain gave him a call to see how he liked it. He told Iain it was a great opportunity, and that Iain should come quickly, because it might not be easy if he waited. Iain had recently married his highschool sweetheart, Lizann Summerfield. So in 1976, they arrived in Vancouver, after Iain successfully completed his BC Dental Board

exams. At this point he knew next to nothing about orthodontics, and considered taking specialty training in periodontology.

He took an associateship with Dr. Ron Waddell, in Prince Rupert, which was an excellent General practice experience. Iain was quite amazed to find that the decay rate was quite low in Prince Rupert, which had fluoridated water. It was quite a change from Scotland, where the caries rate was very high. It was a powerful lesson in preventive dentistry and public health. Dr. Waddell had trained in Oregon, and was visited regularly by an orthodontist, Dr. Hector McDonald. Hector had trained at Oregon Health Sciences University under Dr. Ernie Hixon, and it was his enthusiasm and love of orthodontics which caught Iain's attention. When Iain witnessed what Edgewise orthodontic treatment could do for patients, he became very interested in pursuing a specialty degree in orthodontics.

Iain and Lizann had to get established financially, and after working for nine months in Prince Rupert, they moved to Williams Lake in the Cariboo and opened a practice with another Scotsman, Dr. Alistair Menzies. Here they enjoyed the pioneering delights of British Columbia, and their two daughters, Sarah and Lisa, were born.

To OREGON

After five years in general practice, Iain applied and was accepted by the Oregon Health Sciences University Orthodontic program. The faculty was headed by Dr. Doug Buck, and included Dr. Cy O'Brien, Dr. Paul Klein (the K in AlastiK), Dr. Dale Rhoney and Dr. Larry Doyle. Iain, the oldest resident in the class of four, loved the program. After the intense private practice in Williams Lake, this was a

picnic. Portland proved a wonderful experience for the whole family, who all remember it fondly.



Dr. Allan and his team

Iain did his research on cephalograms taken from patients with metal implants that had been placed as fixed reference points using a similar technique to Bjork's landmark studies. He went down to San Francisco to work with Dr. Shelly Baumrind at the University of California Craniofacial Research Instrumentation Laboratory at the Department of Growth and Development. Here he spent a

week digitizing films using computer-aided tracing equipment in a dark back room at the University. The PCSO Annual Meeting happened to coincide with that trip, and for Iain, this was the start of an important relationship with the association.

Iain's classmates included Douglas Fry (Newberg, OR), and Kent Baugh (Salt Lake City, UT). They were trained in pre-adjusted appliances, (0.022), but had one clinic day under Dr. Cy O'Brien's eagle eye, where they had to place all standard brackets and really learn to bend the wires. Iain was very impressed with the quality of the specialty training under Dr. Buck's influence, which owed much to Dr. Ernie Hixon's contribution when the department was founded.

SETTLING IN KELOWNA

Iain graduated in 1984, and bought a practice in Kelowna, taking over 283 memorable cases. He tells us he learned a lot from finishing these cases, which included a higher percentage of non-extraction treatment plans than compared with his training. Kelowna is not a large town, and patients who wanted to go elsewhere would have to travel. He has a broad patient population, including children, adults, cleft palate and cranio-facial patients, and surgery

Portrait of a Professional

In
graduate
school. . .



patients. Since the Canadian Health Services contribute most of the cost of surgery, this option is employed when needed. Iain and his partner treat about 20 surgery cases each year. His partner is Dr. Bill Mulgrew, who also completed his orthodontic training at the University of Oregon, graduating in 1995. They share staff, office space, oncall, and vacation coverage, but see separate patients. Iain greatly appreciates the rapport and support of a good partner.

Iain and Lizann's daughters are Lisa, 23, who recently graduated from the University of Victoria with a degree in psychology. Sarah, 26, is in a PhD medical science program at the University of British Columbia. Lisa and Sarah were also among Iain's best patients!

Iain credits many orthodontists with inspiration and guidance. Dr. Joe Ryan followed Dr. Hector McDonald as an inspiration, and at his first PCSO meeting after graduation in Seattle, he met Dr. Bob Kemp, whom he continued to see at meetings.

has remained a great role model. Dr. Doug Buck as head of department and Dr. Cy O'Brien encouraged Iain and his classmates to take the ABO, which he completed in 1991. Dr. David Kennedy encouraged him to pursue the Fellowship in Orthodontics at the

Dr. Robin Jackson urged him to become involved in association work, and

Royal College of Dentistry and he also completed this in 1991. He became a member of the Edward H. Angle Society in 1999. Iain says that every time he presented cases to a panel of examiners and received feedback, he took another step up the ladder to orthodontic treatment excellence.



Iain with his daughters, Lisa and Sarah.

He has been active in local dentistry, as President of the Kelowna Dental Society and the Thomson-Okanagan Regional Dental Society. He also served as the BC Orthodontic Society President. He has served as Chief Examiner for Orthodontics for the Royal College of Dentists, and helped to develop the examination format and protocols recently used in Canada for National



Working hard in a remote location. . .



Sailing with Lizann on Lake Okanagan



Iain and Lizann on the slopes.

Specialty Licensure. He also served as General Chair of the recent PCSO annual Scientific Meeting in Vancouver, which he counts as one of his best experiences in organized dentistry.

Iain and Lizann have recently become involved in Rotoplast, a team of Rotary International doctors offering treatment for Cleft Palate patients in third world countries.

CHERISH YOUR CONNECTIONS

I asked for his advice for young orthodontists:

“Go to as many meetings as possible and cherish your connections with other orthodontists. It is hard to take time from family and practice to attend meetings, but the payoff is great. I always return from a meeting with answers. Sometimes all I need to know is that others face the same challenges I do.”

“Develop a strong and loyal staff. Take the time to train and get to know them well, and make sure that they understand the ideals you are trying to reach. Recognize their contribution! I have been very fortunate with my own staff both clinically and administratively – without them I couldn’t have reached my goals.”

Iain’s other interests include sailing, rugby (now on TV rather than on the field), golf and travel. He and his family visit Europe regularly, both to see family and tour the continent. On their last trip, he and Lizann rode bicycles through Umbria with another couple, before visiting family in Scotland. When I spoke with him recently they were preparing to leave for the San Juan Islands for a ten-day sailing adventure. But Iain says his greatest joys are his family, many friends, and orthodontics.

