When Duane Sandmeyer graduated from high school in 1963 he intended to go to university, major in physics and eventually solve some of the unknowns of the universe. In his words, “I considered that to be the greatest achievement anyone could accomplish”. However, he didn’t reach that goal and now hopes a future scholarship will help others attain it. His wife Peggy states simply, “We want to help others with our scholarship fund. I think the subjects Duane have chosen are very worthy of our support.”

Instead of unlocking the secrets of the universe, Duane took an electronics course in his hometown of Yakima, Washington, and was bitten by the ham radio bug when a fellow student introduced him to the radio sport contesting aspect of the hobby. That was the catalyst that made his career path take a sharp turn. Duane worked in a radio communications service shop in his hometown of Yakima, Washington, and was bitten by the ham radio bug when a fellow student introduced him to the radio sport contesting aspect of the hobby. That was the catalyst that made his career path take a sharp turn.

In 1990, while visiting his parents in Sequim, Washington, he met Peggy. She had graduated from high school in 1971 with honours in English and had hoped to pursue a career in writing, classical piano, singing or some combination of all three. However, in 1978, a near-fatal car accident changed everything, and it took many years to partially rehabilitate her body and brain. After meeting Duane, she became involved in a two-year, long distance courtship, finally marrying him in Campbell River in 1992. They first lived in Sayward where Peggy helped Duane finish the house he was building and supported him in all his other endeavours. Duane confirms that her “loving assistance has been very supportive.”

In 1993, Duane sold both his businesses and decided to retire. He put most of the proceeds of the sale into the financial markets, building up a fund that is to become the Duane and Peggy Sandmeyer Scholarship. It will generously support UVic Science students for untold years.

Duane and Peggy now live on an acreage near Courtenay. It contains a large state-of-the-art ham radio station surrounded by four giant towers; the perfect set-up for a man whose passion for his hobby turned his life around many years ago.
Elisabeth Dixon: Accomplished scientist continues lifelong advocacy

Dr. Elisabeth (Lis) Dixon loved a lot of things. One of them was travel - her favourite trip was to the Galapagos Islands. She loved sport and physical activity – she skied and climbed mountains, was a goalie for the Canadian Women’s Field Hockey Team, an avid squash player (once ranked #5 in Canada) and, in retirement, captain of her local ladies golf league. She also loved her black cat Sarah – a companion for 20 years. But most of all, Lis loved learning and teaching.

In 1969, twenty-five-year-old Lis Dixon moved from Great Britain to Canada to begin graduate studies at the University of Victoria. She left five years later with a PhD in Science and went on to complete post-graduate work in Calgary. In 1978, Lis joined the University of Calgary as a professor of organic chemistry and spent the next twenty-five years supporting and challenging students to become leaders in their field through real-world study.

Throughout her career, Dr. Dixon’s research covered topics as varied as the pheromone chemistry of bark beetles, the taste and odour associated with municipal water treatment, and the environmental effects of preservatives leaching from power poles. She was the founding Director of the University Of Calgary’s Environmental Science Program and a founding member of WISE (Women in Science and Engineering). Her chemistry and environmental science students voted her teacher of the year for many years.

As a person of so many accomplishments, Dr. Dixon left an indelible mark through her own work, but also through the work of her students and her colleagues. She was a strong advocate of the importance of post-secondary education, particularly for women, and left instructions in her Will to establish a scholarship at the University Of Victoria.

The first recipient, Elanna Stephenson, credits the award with giving her the freedom to go as far as possible in her chosen field; research in analytical chemistry. She says the scholarship made her “dream a reality.”

Through the Dr. Elisabeth Dixon Scholarship in Chemistry, generations of women will be supported in their pursuit of Science.

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Legacy Giving by the Numbers

Over the last 5 years, legacy gifts from 49 donors totalled $17.2 million in new funding for people and projects in 12 areas, including Business, Education, Engineering, Fine Arts, Law, Libraries, Human and Social Development, Humanities, Island Medical Program, Science, Social Sciences, and general university-wide support.
The theme was “oceans” at the fifth annual T.S. McPherson Legacy Society luncheon in November 2018. Donors who are committed to leaving a legacy gift to UVic were fascinated by our two guest speakers, graduate student Amanda Timmerman and Kate Moran, President and CEO of Oceans Network Canada (ONC).

Amanda showed us slides of her adventures in a research vessel off the coast of B.C. She is studying phytoplankton, the crucial base of the food chain in our oceans. Her video of storm-tossed waves from the prow of a heaving ship elicited a few groans. Amanda expressed heartfelt appreciation for the legacy gift known as the Dr. Arne H. Lane Graduate Fellowship in Marine Science, which helped her achieve her research goals.

Next, the audience learned about Dr. Moran’s impressive international career in oceanography. Then she showed how ONC gathers long-term, continuous scientific data from our oceans and makes it available online to assist researchers, communities, industry, and policy-makers. You could hear a pin drop in a room that had been quite boisterous a few minutes earlier.

It was the fullest-possible house at the University Club and we were delighted to see lots of hugging as old friends mingled and new friends met.
T. S. McPherson Legacy Society Honour Roll

Donors who are committed to leaving a future gift to the University of Victoria are invited to join the T. S. McPherson Legacy Society. These supporters recognize the impact legacy gifts have on UVic’s ability to maintain and exceed its standard of excellence. Some of them have graciously allowed us to publish their names on the list below. This is a mere fraction of the more than 275 members of the Society, but these donors have agreed to this publicity in the hopes that it will encourage others to leave a legacy gift to the University of Victoria. Thank you!

Ilka Abbott
Frank G. Ainsworth
Anna I. (Bunty) Allen
Pamela Allen
Dr. Douglas E. Baer
Dr. Lewis and Mrs. Caroline Bartlett
Lin and Doug Beardsley
Kay and Judd Buchanan
Gerald W. Burns and Lorraine E. Burns
Doreen Chadwick
Haji Charania, P. Eng.
Joyce Clearihue
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Linda Magnusson and Jim Rierson
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For more information about leaving a legacy to UVic students, contact:

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