



REUNION PLANNING KIT

## **Brandon University Homecoming**

The Brandon University Alumni Association hosts Homecoming Weekend each year during the fall. It is usually held the weekend after Thanksgiving (Canadian). Homecoming is an opportunity for alumni of Brandon College/Brandon University to return to their alma mater and reunite with friends and fellow classmates. The Alumni Association plans events throughout the weekend to welcome home alumni who are celebrating class reunions. All class years are welcome and encouraged to attend. Homecoming is the ideal time to host a class reunion as there are already events being planned in honour of alumni and these events can be a part of your overall reunion agenda and are of low cost or free in some instances, such as the campus tours and the Saturday morning "All Alumni" Reunion.

The Homecoming Dinner takes place the Saturday evening and is a relaxing event open to everyone. All reunion classes/groups will be seated together. During the course of the evening, class representatives will have an opportunity to say a few words of remembrance about their class/classmates during the brief formal program. This evening is also the University's opportunity to recognize the achievements of some outstanding alumni with the presentation of the Alumni Awards. Please go to: <http://www.brandonu.ca/alumni/awards/> to view the awards criteria and nominate a fellow graduate.

Events and reunions can also be organized for clubs, teams, residences, faculties, etc. Reunions can take place any time during the year, so if Homecoming Weekend is not an ideal time for your group, another time during the year can be considered. The Alumni Office will assist reunion organizers to plan a reunion during a time that works best for them.

## **Reunion Organizers/Class Representatives**

When organizing a reunion it is important to have someone who will be the group/class representative. This person will create a small committee (if possible) and will liaise with the Alumni Relations Officer. This person can be anyone who willing to take the lead for the group. Sometimes this is the former Class President, Senior Stick, Lady Stick, Social Convenors, Residence Ambassadors, etc. As a reunion organizer, the first thing you may wish to do is contact the Alumni Office as they can assist you with your planning.

## How the Alumni Office can help

The Alumni Office will assist you with:

- **Advice** – The Alumni Relations Officer will provide you with information on events that are being planned for Homecoming Weekend so that reunions can be scheduled accordingly. The Office will also provide you with information on possible venues, menus and associated budgetary considerations if the class/group is planning events outside of the scheduled Homecoming activities.
- **Class Lists** – The Alumni Relations Officer will provide a class/group contact list once a Confidentiality Agreement has been signed, which legally binds you from using the information for anything but reunion purposes. *See appendix A for a sample Confidentiality Agreement.*
- **Mailings** – The Alumni Relations Officer can help in preparing and mailing letters (created by the reunion committee) and will provide reunion information to your class/group on your behalf (two mailings, budget permitting). We reserve the right to edit all letters for space and content. Letters should not exceed one page (8.5 x 11), typed, 12 point font. Letters should be signed by at least one member of the organizing committee and, if possible, all members of the committee should be listed as some classmates might remember one but not another.

As alumni frequently move, the Alumni Office may lose contact with BC/BU alumni if updated information is not provided. These alumni are marked as “lost” in the alumni database. A “lost alumni” list may be included in your initial mailing encouraging members to help locate fellow classmates so that they can be informed of the upcoming reunion.

- **Emailing** – The Alumni Relations Officer will send out two email blasts per reunion to promote your event. We will send it out in our reunion email template. We reserve the right to edit for space and content.
- **Promotion** – The Alumni Relations Officer will include your reunion information in the Alumni News magazine, the Alumni Association website, and the Homecoming Brochure (timeline permitting).
- **Nametags** – The Alumni Relations Officer will produce name tags for your event provided that we have your final guest list one week prior to your event.

## Reunion Committee

- The Committee should have a representative who will take the lead and will be the liaison with the Alumni Office. The Alumni Office may contact key alumni (such as Class President, Senior Stick, Lady Stick) if a special anniversary year is approaching and no one has stepped forward to organize a reunion.
- The Committee should have 5 – 8 individuals who will assist in the planning and promotion of the reunion. If possible, your committee should have a chair and co-chairs, and several committee members with designated responsibilities. A timeline should be created outlining the duties and responsibilities of the committee. *See Appendix B for a sample timeline.*
- The Committee should schedule regular meetings. If necessary, members may wish to participate via a conference call. Email is a good way to communicate effectively and efficiently. An email distribution list can be created and email updates can be provided on a regular basis.
- The Committee should discuss whether they wish to produce a Reunion/Anniversary Booklet for their class reunion. These booklets may include updates/life stories of class members, photos (individual, class photos), memories, a “Do you remember when” section covering the highlights of the years attending BC/BU, what was going on in the world during this time period (top hits, movies, politics, inventions, etc.). If the committee determines to produce a booklet, a committee member must be assigned to collect the information, and produce and print the booklet. As there is a cost to printing the booklet, a budget must be established.
- Committee members should be active in finding lost classmates in order to ensure everyone is invited to the reunion.
- Facebook is a great communication tool. The Alumni Office can help you start a Facebook group dedicated to your reunion so classmates have a forum to communicate and help to grow interest and momentum.
- Encourage classmates to pull out their memorabilia such as photographs, pins, crests, trophies and other artifacts and bring them to the reunion/Homecoming Weekend. Brandon University’s S.J. McKee Archives may be interested in acquiring items related to the University. If you have something that you think might be of interest or if you have any

questions, please contact the S.J. McKee Archives at 204-727-9634.

- If your class/group is interested in exploring a reunion gift to the University, please contact the Department of Institutional Advancement at 204-727-7374 or at [development@brandonu.ca](mailto:development@brandonu.ca). A reunion gift can be made towards a project that your group feels passionate about. Past reunion gifts have supported items such as scholarships, bursaries, library acquisitions, technology upgrades, laboratory equipment, and classroom renovations.

## **Reunion Ideas**

- Wine and Cheese reception
- Brunches, lunches or dinners
- Golf game/tournament
- Picnic
- Concerts
- Keynote speakers
- Off-campus excursions: city tours, museums, art gallery exhibits, parks, sporting events, etc.
- Pub/lounge night
- An event hosted in the home of a class member

## Reunion Tips

- Create a slideshow to be shown during your reunion.
- Remind classmates to bring their old school jackets, ties, beanies, trophies, etc to be put on display during the reunion.
- Invite classmates to include an update for the “Keeping in Touch” section of the Alumni News magazine providing a brief update about what they have been doing and letting people know that they will be attending this year’s Homecoming Weekend/reunion.
- When determining your food menu, be sure to ask about any dietary restrictions. Buffets usually work well. The Homecoming Weekend host hotel(s) usually work well for class reunions/dinners/lunches/receptions as many guests are already booked at these venues, therefore it is convenient. On-campus venues can also be booked for events. Contact the Alumni Office for assistance.
- Be sure to consider wheelchair accessibility when determining a venue.
- Always have safe ride home options.
- Be sure to take photos and send in a group shot to be included on the Alumni website and/or the *Alumni News* magazine.

**Appendix A**  
**Confidentiality Agreement**



**PLEDGE OF CONFIDENTIALITY**

In consideration of my association with the Brandon University Alumni Association, and as an integral part of the terms and conditions of my association, I hereby agree, pledge and undertake that I will not at any time, during my association with the Brandon University Alumni Association, or after my association ends, access or use personal information, or reveal or disclose to any persons within or outside of the Brandon University Alumni Association any personal information except as may be required in the course of my duties and responsibilities in accordance with applicable Legislation, and University and departmental policies governing proper release of information.

I understand that my obligations outlined above will continue after my association with the Brandon University Alumni Association ends.

I further understand that my obligations concerning the protection of the confidentiality of personal information relate to all personal information whether I acquired the information through my association with the Brandon University Alumni Association or within any of the facilities or campuses of Brandon University.

I also understand that unauthorized use or disclosure of such information may result in a disciplinary action being taken.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

*(please print)*

Your Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Witness \_\_\_\_\_

*(please print)*

Signature of Witness \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B

### Sample Timeline for Organizing a Reunion

| Task  | Assigned To   | Timing                      |
|---|---|-----------------------------|
| Contact Alumni Office about hosting a reunion.<br>*We encourage you to try to host your reunion during Homecoming Weekend.  | Reunion Organizer/Class Representative  | 12 months before reunion    |
| Create a Reunion Committee and begin generating ideas and select date(s). Establish a budget. <i>See Appendix C for sample budget.</i>  | Reunion Organizer/Class Representative  | 12 months before reunion    |
| Send out first letter to inform classmates of reunion idea and proposed date to determine interest in reunion. This could be a "Save the Date" letter with a list of lost classmates included.<br>Request updated mailing address, phone numbers, email addresses. <i>See Appendix D for sample letter.</i> | Alumni Office will send out letter on behalf of the Committee.<br>Committee to provide an electronic copy of the letter to the Alumni Office for mailing. | 10 months before reunion    |
| Track responses from the first letter and report to committee and Alumni Office.  | Reunion Organizer/Class Representative or designated committee member.  | Ongoing                     |
| Committee to meet to determine event(s)/venue(s)/budget.<br>Book venue(s).<br>Determine menu.<br>Book entertainment (if required).<br>Book photographer (if required).  | Committee   | 9 months before reunion     |
| Create an email list of classmates and email reunion information.<br>Committee members call classmates with no email address.<br>Keep collecting updated contact information and updating the Alumni Office.  | Reunion Organizer/Class Representative and/or Committee   | 8 – 9 months before reunion |
| Open class reunion bank account.  | Reunion Organizer/Class Representative or designated committee member.  | 7 months before reunion     |
| Confirm details with venue and caterer.   | Committee   | 6 months before reunion     |



|   |   |                              |
|---|---|------------------------------|
| Send out second letter to alumni including a class reunion registration form with event details and costs as well as a bio information sheet to be submitted for the Reunion Booklet. | Alumni Office will send out letter on behalf of the Committee. Committee to provide electronic copy of the letter and registration form to the Alumni Office for mailing. | 6 months before reunion      |
| Send out invitations to special guests such as former professors, deans, coaches.   | Committee   | 4 - 6 months before reunion  |
| Track responses on a spreadsheet and make regular financial deposits.   | Reunion Organizer/Class Representative or designated committee member.  | Ongoing                      |
| Work on details for reunion, including Reunion Booklet, slideshow, photo albums/displays, music, decorations, etc.  | Committee   | 4 – 6 months before reunion  |
| Email classmates with reunion details and reminders to register.  | Committee   | 3 months before reunion      |
| Alumni Officer and Reunion Organizer/Class Representative meet to fine-tune any further details.  | Reunion Organizer/Class Representative & Alumni Officer   | 2 - 3 months before reunion  |
| Follow-up with any outstanding registrations  | Committee   | Ongoing                      |
| Provide final numbers to venue/caterer.   | Committee   | 1 week before                |
| Pay final invoices.   | Committee   | Ongoing                      |
| Committee to hold a wrap-up meeting and close bank account.   | Committee   | Within 2 weeks after reunion |
| Send photos to Alumni Office and/or class members (electronically or printed budget permitting).  | Committee/Alumni Officer  | Within 2 weeks after reunion |
| Send out thank you letters (if required).   | Committee/Alumni Officer  | Within 2 weeks after reunion |

## **Appendix C**

### **Sample Reunion Budget**

*Budget per person:*

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| Friday evening class reunion dinner – buffet | \$30.00        |
| Wine for Hospitality Room                    | 10.00          |
| Hospitality Room Charge                      | 10.00          |
| Class Photo                                  | 15.00          |
| Postage & Miscellaneous                      | <u>10.00</u>   |
| Total Expenses                               | <u>\$75.00</u> |

***\* Please note: Homecoming Weekend registration and costs are separate and in addition to individual class reunions.***

**Appendix D**  
**Sample Reunion Letter**

**Class of XXXX – XX<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion**

November 1, 20XX

Dear Class of XXXX Member,

We can hardly believe it's been XX years since our graduation. It would be great for us to all get together, get reacquainted and reminisce for our special milestone anniversary.

This letter is to inform everyone that this is our year to celebrate and to see if you would be interested in attending a class reunion. We have established a committee and we would like to propose that we hold our reunion during Brandon University's Homecoming Weekend scheduled for October XX, 20XX. We chose this time as, each year, the Brandon University Alumni Association hosts this weekend to celebrate alumni and friends of Brandon College/University. They organize a schedule of events such as an "All Alumni" class reunion, a welcome reception, campus tours, Homecoming dinner, and farewell brunch. During the Homecoming dinner, the Alumni Association recognizes the special anniversary class years (who are seated together) and class representatives are asked to say a few words on behalf of their group. The alumni awards are also given out this evening and this is an opportunity to nominate fellow alumni who we feel should be recognized. The evening closes with the classes singing their class yells, which is always a lot of fun!

The committee would like to hear your feedback on the following two options:

- 1). Schedule our class reunion on the Friday evening (around any other events) allowing us to take in the Homecoming events already scheduled for us throughout the weekend.
- 2). Host our class reunion during the "All Alumni" class reunions on the Saturday morning. All classes are invited and a display of photos, class flags, memorabilia and other archival materials will be available for viewing. Alumni are encouraged to bring their own memorabilia as well. The Alumni Association provides coffee, juice and light snacks.

Please contact any of the committee members below with your thoughts and ideas. To ensure every one of our classmates knows about our reunion, we would like your assistance in finding our "lost" classmates. The Alumni Association has provided a list of members whom they have lost track of and we have enclosed this list for your review. If you know how to reach any of these individuals, please encourage them to contact the Alumni Association to update their information at [alumni@brandonu.ca](mailto:alumni@brandonu.ca) or at 204-727-9697.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Your committee,  
Names/Emails/Phone numbers listed