



**SPEAKING NOTES
FOR CROFTON HOUSE SCHOOL
ON THE OCCASION OF
THE SCHOOL'S 114TH BIRTHDAY**

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**KERRY-LYNNE D. FINDLAY, Q.C., M.P.
CLASS OF 1971**

**RECIPIENT OF THE 2012 ALUMNAE
LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

I have never had the pleasure before of thanking my own daughter on an occasion such as this. What a joy! Thank-you, Hannah, for that kind introduction.

Good morning to Head of School, Dr. Pat Dawson, Head of the Junior School, Susan Hutchison, Distinguished Guests, Faculty, Celia Dawson, Alumnae Association President, Alumnae, Parents and Students. Thank-you so very much for this honour you are giving me today. This is a lovely way to come back to my school.

I am told that there are now 720 Crofton House students from grades 1 through 12! And now all these 4 and 5 year olds! Wow! Last century, when I graduated, there were only 35 of us in our whole graduating class! Miss Addison, whom we dearly miss, was my Headmistress then.

There are many things at Crofton House that have changed since I was here. Notably, the buildings! There was a Bedford-Jones Hall but I lived in it as a boarder. There was a Farrell Hall, but it was our gym and where we sat cross-legged on the floor (just as you are today) for assemblies. Where Crofton Manor (the Seniors Home) is, on 41st near Macdonald, was an small converted house on a large piece of property called Crofton House Annex, and I lived there in grade 8. We used to walk to school every morning, two by two, with our white berets on, our navy blue trench coats and gloves.

Of course, the school doesn't even have boarders anymore. But when I first arrived at age 11, going into grade 8, it seemed like such a big school – worthy of Hogwarts – and I used to imagine when we ate in the Main Dining Hall in the Old Residence all the grand balls and entertaining the early owners must have had in that place. I understand from some

conversations this morning, that even though the Old Residence is being renovated, that beautiful ceiling in the Dining Room that sent me into those imaginings is going to remain. And yes, we rolled our skirts to make them shorter too!

Time has gone by, but there are still things about Crofton House that have not changed, and those are the best parts of life at this school. This is why I have sent all 3 of my daughter here, and I am so pleased that they could all be here today: Hannah Chapman McCormack, was House Captain of Stuart. Now she has a Masters Degree in Counselling Psychology, helps students like yourselves transition into post-high school studies and supports families in crisis. She also married her high school sweetheart who graduated from St. George's! Donna Chapman, who many of you will remember, was a prefect, and is now busy with her studies in First Year at UBC, working part-time, and (of course) her social life. And, Lindsay

Chapman, in grade 11, who is off to Kelowna this weekend for a volleyball tournament.

What has not changed about Crofton is its sense of community and the legacy of achievement, encouragement, scholarship, striving for excellence, and the fun of friendships and competition. I am very proud that it is my school, and that I graduated from here.

After 7 years at UBC, I became a lawyer and engaged in many activities along with raising 4 highly active, very talkative, and strong-willed children. That's okay, because I am pretty active, talkative and strong-willed myself! Hmmm, I sense a pattern there! (Something about reaping what you sow, I think).

Times have also changed in my profession of law, some of which I shared with the Grade 12 law classes and Grade 11 Socials classes here at Crofton House a few weeks ago. When I

graduated there were few role models. There was one woman judge, one woman Bencher of the Law Society whom everyone was somewhat terrified of, and she liked it that way. Today, half of all law graduates are women! Amazing!

I have managed to learn a few lessons along the way in this adventure we call life, and I would like to share some of them with you today. I know, especially for those of you in grades 10 through 12, you spend a lot of time just wondering what is going to become of you, what your future will look like, will you get into the university you like best....there are so many unknowns it makes you feel uncertain and impatient!

Dreams and ambition and a little impatience are all good things. These are what drive you and support you into your next steps, even when you aren't sure what those next steps are going to be, you will take them.

It is important in life to take some risks, to be brave enough

to risk failure. I don't know any successful people who haven't been defeated and discouraged at some point along the way. The trick is, when you do fail, is to take the time to figure out the lesson in it. You can even feel sorry for yourself for awhile, but only for a short time, because the issue/the problem/the challenge will still be waiting for you after you have cried and asked 'why me?' Find out your part in it, and change what you can change. In your acceptance of the situation, and your determination to move past it, answers are always waiting and a new (and often) better path.

Keep your sense of joy in the world, in nature, and in your friends, and keep your sense of humour . It will get you through every hardship.

Anyone who tells you that hard work is not important, is not telling you the truth. Whatever your passion, you have to spend some time with it, you have to work at it.

Pay attention, have awareness in your choices, and in your contributions to those around you. Treat others, always, with compassion and respect. And if you slip up, own up.

It may sound a little boring to you now, but it is so important in life to keep striving to balance yourself.

I loved to talk, and I loved to be silly and make people laugh. I had to learn to listen, and to give others the opportunity to make me laugh.

I am very independent, so I had to learn to ask for help and let others have the joy and satisfaction of helping me. I was very impatient, so I had to learn to calm down and let the world flow around me, and through me, to get on the right path

Lastly, when you learn something, pass it on. Those who are in grades below you now, and later in life, who will be coming along behind you in your profession or in your life experiences, help them out. Give them your hints. Tell them

what you have learned. Enrich your life by enriching their knowledge.

Lastly, it is a great life if you really live it. Live it to the fullest. Make honest and bold choices, and love those around you. It will be worth it!

Thank-you all.