



*Nigel at the reception with some WKM alumni*

those are the partners they're transferring to."

"We planned a long transition period of about two years," says Doug Wootton, "because many of Nigel's clients have been with him for more than 20 years. His client relationships are very strong, and we want to make sure that they're totally comfortable with the change."

The new arrangement frees up Nigel to focus on the business consulting work that he enjoys: preparing business plans, projections and forecasts, reviewing and monitoring investment opportunities, and providing corporate tax planning and corporate reorganization services for clients.

"We're really looking forward to having Nigel here in a consulting role," says Doug. "We've always offered these services, but we haven't always had staff available to perform them. Now we've got a highly experienced C.A. who knows our clients, who is strong on taxation, and who we can dedicate solely to projects like these. It lets us offer another level of service that you don't often find in a mid-size firm."

That focus on service has been with the founding partners since they started working together 12 years ago. It's an approach that's worked – WKM has grown from a staff of five to an office of 17 people serving clients throughout the Lower Mainland and in Fort St. John.

Nigel and Doug's relationship goes back even further. "Before we formed WKM," says Doug, "Nigel and I ran a practice in Richmond for a large, international accounting firm. For us, the most interesting part of that practice was working with entrepreneurs in a hands-on way. So when we established our own firm, we focused on offering high-quality accounting services, with a focus on tax issues, to owner-managed businesses."

That focus on tax is part of the legacy Nigel leaves behind. "I was the third accountant to join the firm back in 1991," says Ron Mulhern, "and I was brought on specifically because I was a tax specialist. Since then, we've added Ken Olson and Lynne Tiu to our tax team and made a point of mentoring all of our senior accounting staff in the art of identifying tax opportunities. As a result, we're one of

the few mid-size firms in the Lower Mainland to offer such a strong tax focus to clients."

Although Nigel is leaving behind a strong team to carry on with the day-to-day business, they're happy that this isn't "goodbye". "This is a great opportunity for Nigel, and something that he's been looking forward to for a long time," says Scott Armstrong, "but we'd miss him if he left completely. Nigel is a real 'people person' and a great resource for bouncing ideas off."

Nigel feels the same way. "I'm looking forward to my new challenges, but I'll miss seeing the clients and staff every day – I've made a lot of good friends in both groups." 📷

## WKM – Stronger than Ever in 2003!

The staff at WKM has grown since the beginning of last year, so we thought we'd start 2003 with brief introductions to all our team members. It's a strong team, with plenty of senior accounting experience across a wide range of industries, in-depth tax knowledge, and – as always – a keen focus on high-quality, personal service!

### Doug Wootton C.A. / Partner

With more than 25 years of accounting and business experience to draw on, Doug is valued by clients for offering solid business advice that takes into account both their accounting *and* their business needs.

Since he co-founded WKM in 1991, Doug has offered clients a "big picture" approach to accounting that goes far beyond their financial statements. Known as a creative problem-solver, Doug often acts as a sounding board for his clients' ideas, and he has assisted many of them in making the business, systems, and tax transitions that come with expansion and growth.

Prior to co-founding WKM Doug was a partner at an international C.A. firm, where he worked with owner-managed businesses for many years. He graduated with a Bachelor of Commerce degree from the University of British Columbia in 1975 and received his C.A. designation in 1977.

### Ron Mulhern C.A. / Partner

A tax specialist for almost 20 years, Ron provides WKM with a level of in-house tax expertise that's unusual for a small, mid-size firm. He's very strong technically and able to translate his knowledge of tax solutions into language his clients can understand.

A noted problem solver, whose attitude to tax problems is "let's find a way to do it", Ron uses all the resources at his disposal to identify tax opportunities for clients. At the same time, he understands that a client's business goals may be more important than his or her tax position, and that tax decisions must be made in conjunction with business objectives.

Ron received his Bachelor of Science degree from Simon Fraser University in 1977, later returning to their Economics and Commerce program. He obtained his C.A. designation in 1982, then spent the next three years in the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants' In-depth Tax Program. Ron joined WKM in 1991 and became a partner in 1993.

### Scott Armstrong C.A. / Partner

Scott helps to drive business development at WKM and he brings this opportunity-focused approach to his clients. Like the other partners, he's concerned with more than just his clients' tax positions or financial statements, and he looks beyond routine accounting practices to deliver solutions that will help them grow.

Scott serves clients across a wide range of industries in both Vancouver and Fort St. John, including oil, gas, and high-tech firms. He's known for going the "extra mile" for his clients and for searching out tax opportunities that will save them money now and in the future.

Scott received his Bachelor of Commerce degree from the University of British Columbia in 1993, followed by his C.A. designation in 1998. He joined WKM in 1994 and became a partner in 2000.

### Cathie Savoie C.A. / Senior Manager

With more than 20 years combined experience in accounting, business and banking, Cathie has a strong technical knowledge of accounting that makes her a valuable resource for clients and staff.

A natural "people person", she's perceptive at identifying her clients' strengths and weaknesses and helping them to capitalize on one, while protecting

themselves from the other. And she has a reputation for doing what it takes to deliver the results they need.

When she joined WKM in 2001, Cathie brought with her many years of experience in public practice serving a wide range of businesses in industries ranging from manufacturing to retail.

Cathie received her C.A. designation in 1993 while working at a national firm in New Westminster. She is also an Arts graduate of the University of Manitoba and a Financial Management graduate of the British Columbia Institute of Technology.

### Ken Olson C.A. / Tax Consultant

Ken offers clients a well-rounded range of business experience. He has worked for many years with small, owner-managed businesses providing them with accounting, taxation, trust and business management services. He has also worked for Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA) and a national accounting firm.

Ken obtained his C.A. in 1975 after receiving a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of British Columbia in 1970. He joined WKM in February 2000.

### Ashwin C. Maharaj C.A. / CA4IT Customer Service Manager

Ashwin is the Customer Service Manager for WKM clients registered with the Chartered Accountants for Information Technology (CA4IT) program, which provides services for clients in the Information Technology field.

Ashwin came to WKM in October 2000 from a downtown accounting firm, where he performed accounting, taxation and audit functions. He received his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of British Columbia in 1996 and worked in the field of chemistry before changing fields and obtaining his C.A. designation in 2001.

### Cathy McDormand C.A. / Senior Accountant

Cathy's extensive experience managing entrepreneurial clients in manufacturing, real estate, service, and not-for-profit businesses serves her well at WKM. In fact, it was her interest in working with owner-managed businesses that brought her to us in January 2000 from the international accounting firm where she'd worked for the past 12 years.

Cathy began her working life as an x-ray technologist, but switched careers after obtaining her Bachelor of Business Administration degree from Simon Fraser University in 1987. She obtained her C.A. designation in 1991.

### Eben Louw C.A. / Senior Accountant

Eben joined WKM in July 2002 after working for a large international accounting firm in both Canada and South Africa. He brings with him experience working with owner-managed businesses in the manufacturing, distribution, transport and entertainment industries.

Eben is experienced at helping clients develop business plans, key performance indicators and cash flow plans to help improve their overall effectiveness and ability to adapt quickly to changing markets. His experience in this area has proven valuable to companies without full-time senior finance personnel.

In October last year, Eben successfully completed his Canadian CA Reciprocity Exam. He has a post-graduate degree in Strategic and Marketing Management and

an undergraduate degree in Economics.

#### **Hearthy Liu C.A., C.P.A. / Senior Accountant**

Before joining WKM in 2002, Hearthy worked at several large international accounting firms serving a client list that included commercial and residential real estate development, property management, high-tech manufacturing and waste management companies. She has also had experience with junior public companies in various sectors and not-for-profit organizations.

Hearthy has a Bachelor of Commerce degree and a graduated study in Accountancy from Concordia University in Montreal. She obtained her C.A. designation in 2000 and recently added Certified Public Accountant (C.P.A.) to her credentials.

#### **Yvette Franc C.G.A. / Senior Accountant**

Yvette joined WKM in September 2001 as part of our audit team. Her previous public practice experience includes accounting, taxation, and auditing non-profit organizations, as well as training, consulting, and human resources.

Yvette graduated from the University of British Columbia in 1998 with a Bachelor of Commerce degree and she followed that with her C.G.A. designation in the summer of 2002. Not content to rest on her laurels, Yvette is now pursuing her C. A. designation.

#### **Lynneth Tiu, C.A. / Tax Consultant**

Lynneth is an independent tax consultant who assists us in serving our clients' tax needs. After receiving her Bachelor of Commerce degree from the University of British Columbia in 1989, Lynneth worked for 11 years for an international public accounting firm. For the last 9 of those years, Lynneth specialized in taxation.

Prior to becoming a tax consultant, Lynneth worked as the Director, Taxes for an international mining company.

#### **Marek Zhanel, C.G.A. Student**

Prior to joining WKM in April 2001, Marek worked in the accounting departments of several small business and manufacturing companies – experience that helps him serve a broad range of WKM clients.

Currently enrolled in the C.G.A. program, he is a graduate of the Financial Management program at the British Columbia Institute of Technology with an Advanced Accounting option.

#### **Aaron Chan, C.A. Student**

Aaron joined WKM in July 2002 and is currently articling towards his C.A. designation. He graduated from Simon Fraser University in 2002 with a Bachelor of

Business Administration degree concentrating in Accounting and Finance. As a student co-op, Aaron gained valuable experience working as an auditor with Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA) and he plans to pursue his interest in taxation.

#### **Farhan Shaheen, C.A. Student**

Farhan joined WKM as a co-op student in January 2001. He completed three work terms at WKM, and then graduated from the University of British Columbia in December 2002 with a Bachelor of Commerce degree in Accounting. He joined us as a full-time staff member in January 2003 and is currently articling towards his C.A. designation.

Prior to joining WKM, Farhan worked for the Surrey Chamber of Commerce, where he promoted and facilitated small business growth in Surrey.

#### **Lee Ann Paradis, Firm Administrator**

Lee Ann joined WKM in December 2002. She has many years of administrative and accounting experience in the mining, automotive and sporting goods industries, and in public practice.

Part of her focus as an administrator is on designing and improving workflow systems, controls and procedures in conjunction with business software.

#### **Jennifer Smith, Office Administration Manager**

Jennifer has been with WKM since October 2001. She has a strong customer service and administration background and has worked in related positions at Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA), the Provincial and Family Courts, American Airlines, Roots Air, and in the retail food industry. ☺

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## **Nigel King Changes Directions**

**N**igel King has never been afraid of change and – after 35 years of providing a full range of accounting and business consulting services to his clients – he's decided it's time to make one.

Nigel is starting his own consulting practice – a move that will allow him to focus on the aspect of accounting work that he enjoys most, and that he believes provides the greatest value to clients.

This doesn't mean that he's leaving WKM behind, however. "I have a great opportunity to do consulting work for some long-time clients while continuing to work on a special-project basis for WKM," says Nigel. "It's the best of both worlds – I'll be able to concentrate on the type of work that really interests me, and I'll still maintain contact with my clients and the staff at WKM."

Nigel is continuing to make time for his current WKM clients to ensure that the transition to other partners and senior staff is as smooth and seamless as possible. Although he isn't in the WKM office on a daily basis, he still picks up voice and e-mail messages and helps out where needed.

"If a client has a problem or a question, or issues about continuity, I'm there to resolve it for them. Many of my clients already have relationships with Scott Armstrong or Ron Mulhern, and

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*Nigel and his wife Christine after the reception*