

## Council Chambers

In the beginning was **Brock Hall (2 photos)**. Well, not really the beginning. Before that, Council met in the **Old Auditorium (2 photos)**. And before that somewhere in Fairview [**photo of the old Fairview Campus**].

But from 1940 until 1968 Council met on Monday nights in the Brock, as it was called [**Brock Hall photo**]. Yes, Mondays [**calendar showing Monday**], at 6:30 (not 6 pm) [**clock showing 6:30**]. And in the very early days the meetings were held every week, which was possible perhaps because Council was so small back then: only a dozen or so members [**composite photo of an early Council**]. But one thing was the same: meetings could last till midnight and beyond [**clock showing midnight**]. Council members have always liked to talk [**photo of someone talking?**]

The Old SUB replaced Brock Hall as the student union building near the end of September 1968 [**photo of SUB**]. It was supposed to open earlier in the month, but there were delays – **Delays**, I hear you say; how could there be delays in putting up a student union building? But in those days, yes, there were delays, and when the SUB finally opened on September 26, not everything was complete. Things were so different then.

But one thing that was ready was the **Council Chambers**. A good thing too, because when the AMS left Brock Hall there was no going back or holding onto areas there (except for **an antenna on the roof for the Amateur Radio Society**). So on Monday, September 30, 1968 Council met for the first time in the Student Union Building, the Old SUB (**photo of Council chambers**), right here where we are gathered for the last time – though not before first assembling in the **Henry Angus building**, for some reason, and then moving here.

And then it was right on to business. That very first meeting had to deal with the **illegal pub-ins** that had taken place when the SUB opened; these were protests against the lack of a pub at that time (because when the SUB opened there was no Pit; there were no **Pit Nights**; there was no drinking on campus, at least no legal drinking, except at the Faculty Club).

Speaking of the Faculty Club, a month later Council had to debate how to respond to the student occupation of the Faculty Club. It was the Sixties, and the American radical **Jerry Rubin** was in town, and people went a bit crazy:  
<http://digitalcollections.library.ubc.ca/cdm/singleitem/collection/arphotos/id/10972/rec/528>

Council met and declared it did not condone the occupation and instead called for a teach-in on education reform.

Just a few months later the recently appointed UBC President, Kenneth Hare, resigned unexpectedly after less than a year in office, and Council met to express its regret at his

departure. **[Photo of Hare.]** Similarly, in 1985 Council met to discuss appointing students to a presidential search committee after that year's UBC President, George Pedersen, resigned unexpectedly after less than two years in office. **[Photo of Pedersen.]** Then in 2015 Council met to craft a response after the unexpected resignation of another University President – but you all know that story. **[Photo of Gupta.]**

And over the years **this Chamber** has seen Council discuss everything from nuclear testing to committee appointments, from tuition increases to Code amendments, and from abortion protests to whether there should be a Student Court. In 1997 Council had to react to the pepper spraying at the infamous APEC meeting

[http://www.library.ubc.ca/archives/pdfs/ubyssey/UBYSSEY\\_1997\\_11\\_28.pdf](http://www.library.ubc.ca/archives/pdfs/ubyssey/UBYSSEY_1997_11_28.pdf) p. 1].

A couple of years later it voted not to endorse allowing the anti-abortion group, GAP, to come to campus, then had to deal with the fallout when some students trashed a GAP display.

[http://www.library.ubc.ca/archives/pdfs/ubyssey/UBYSSEY\\_1999\\_11\\_26.pdf](http://www.library.ubc.ca/archives/pdfs/ubyssey/UBYSSEY_1999_11_26.pdf) p. 7]

In 1993 this Council commissioned a **governance review** that radically revised the structure of the AMS and also gave us our **Mission Statement**. In 2003 Council voted to call a referendum on the first U-Pass, which led to cheap bus fares for everyone.

[http://www.library.ubc.ca/archives/pdfs/ubyssey/UBYSSEY\\_2003\\_02\\_25.pdf](http://www.library.ubc.ca/archives/pdfs/ubyssey/UBYSSEY_2003_02_25.pdf) ]

Before that Council had called the referendum that produced our Health and Dental Plan **[photo, from an earlier presentation]**.

And through it all Councillors moved motions, raised points of order, and sometimes argued late into the night, as in 2004, when the attempted firing of the General Manager led to two emergency Council meetings in the middle of the December exam period, one of which went to 3:30 am (**clock showing 2:30**) – hmm, well, it was really 3:30, but you know what the clock is like in the Council Chambers.

Sometimes meetings were so controversial that they attracted dozens of guests, crowding the Chamber so much that people feared we were violating the Fire Code. One time the fire alarm went off in the middle of a Council meeting. Some Councillors said, “What’s the proper procedure under **Robert’s Rules** for adjourning when there’s a fire?” To which the Clerk of Council replied, “It’s a fire. Let’s get out of here.” **[photo of me/photo of a fire]**

Actually, there was no fire; it was a false alarm. There was a fire, the famous **Brock Hall fire** of 1954, just before a Council meeting, but that was in another building ... That time of the false alarm, Council moved to **MASS** (the Arts space), and other times Council moved out of the Chambers because there were so many guests. This happened especially in the time of Gazagate **[photo of Boat to Gaza]**, when Council found itself dragged into the Middle East dispute (not where it really wanted to be, but the meeting attracted attention and forced a change of venue to the **Hebb Theatre**). The year before Council found itself dragged to the UN in UN-gate (**photo of United Nations**), and this also prompted a move to a different location, this time the **Norm**.

And through it all the Council Chambers has seen a number of stalwarts, fixtures, and notables.

In the early 70's **Stan Persky** and **Svend Robinson**, who later made names for themselves in the world beyond UBC, one as a politician and one as a political commentator.

In the late 70's **Moe Sihota** and **Herb Dhaliwal**, who both became politicians after their time here.

In the 80's, **Dave Frank**, who led the successful fee referendum that created our Capital Projects Fund; and **James Hollis**, who got elected to the Executive four years in a row;

In the 90's, **Kurt Preinsperg**, the only AMS President to come close to impeachment for writing **Rules for Romance** (which later became a documentary film).

And **David Borins**, AMS President in 1996-97, who now serves on BAGB. And **Allison Dunnet** and **AM Johal**, who helped start Humanities 101. Allison also helped start Imagine Day.

Then in 1998-99 the first appearance of **Dave Tompkins**, later to be Council Speaker, and a graduate student in computer science who created our VOICE software: the clickers for voting, which work some of the time, with a little coaxing.

And then over the next few years: **Mark Fraser**, who served for two years as VP Administration and who is also back with us on BAGB, and **[Dave Tompkins, 99-2000]**; Then **Mike Warner**, a VP Finance who ran on the Action Nude slate, and **[Dave Tompkins, 2000-01]**;

Later there was **Spencer Keys**, who got Council to ban slates, and **[Dave Tompkins, 2001-02]**;

And there was **Chris Eaton**, who served in many capacities on Council, and now works in Enrolment Services, and **[Dave Tompkins, 2002-03]**;

Then there was **Sophia Haque**, a VP Finance who now comes back to talk to Council about the Health and Dental Plan, and **[Dave Tompkins, 2003-04]**;

And there were others, such as:

**Janice Boyle**, an AMS President who later served as Speaker for several years, and **[Dave Tompkins, 2004-05]**;

**Darren Peets**, who once ran for election as the **fire hydrant** (and nearly won), and **[Dave Tompkins, 2005-06]**;

**Kate Woznow**, who went to China to protest about Tibet, and [**Dave Tompkins, 2006-07**];

**Joel McLaughlin**, a self-declared Conservative on Council, a rare bird, and [**Dave Tompkins, 2007-08**];

**Mike Duncan**, the popular AMS President who now works for the Alumni, and [**Dave Tompkins, 2008-09**];

**Matt Naylor**, who brought us committee reform, and [**Dave Tompkins, 2009-10**];

**Pavani Gunadasa**, our long-serving ECSS (what we now call the Student Services Manager), and **Caroline Wong**, our president two years ago -- and in his last year, graduating at last [**Dave Tompkins, 2010-11**].

Oh, and did I mention **Dave Tompkins**? He was on Council so long, he even had children [**photos from the year everyone dressed like Dave in the composite**].

And finally on a sadder note, I should mention **Raj Mathur**, who attended Council meetings in this Chamber for 20 years, from 1994 until his death in 2014, originally as a Council member but then just as a guest. Our most loyal supporter, one might say. There was talk of doing something to honour him, and I hope someday that we will. No one ever attended as many Council meetings as Raj.

Anyway, that's about it for our 47 years in this Council Chambers. We laughed – when Abdul allowed us, and cried, and did productive work, and joked around. And now it's on to our new adventure in the **Nest**. Oops, wrong nest. **Here's** where we're actually going.