

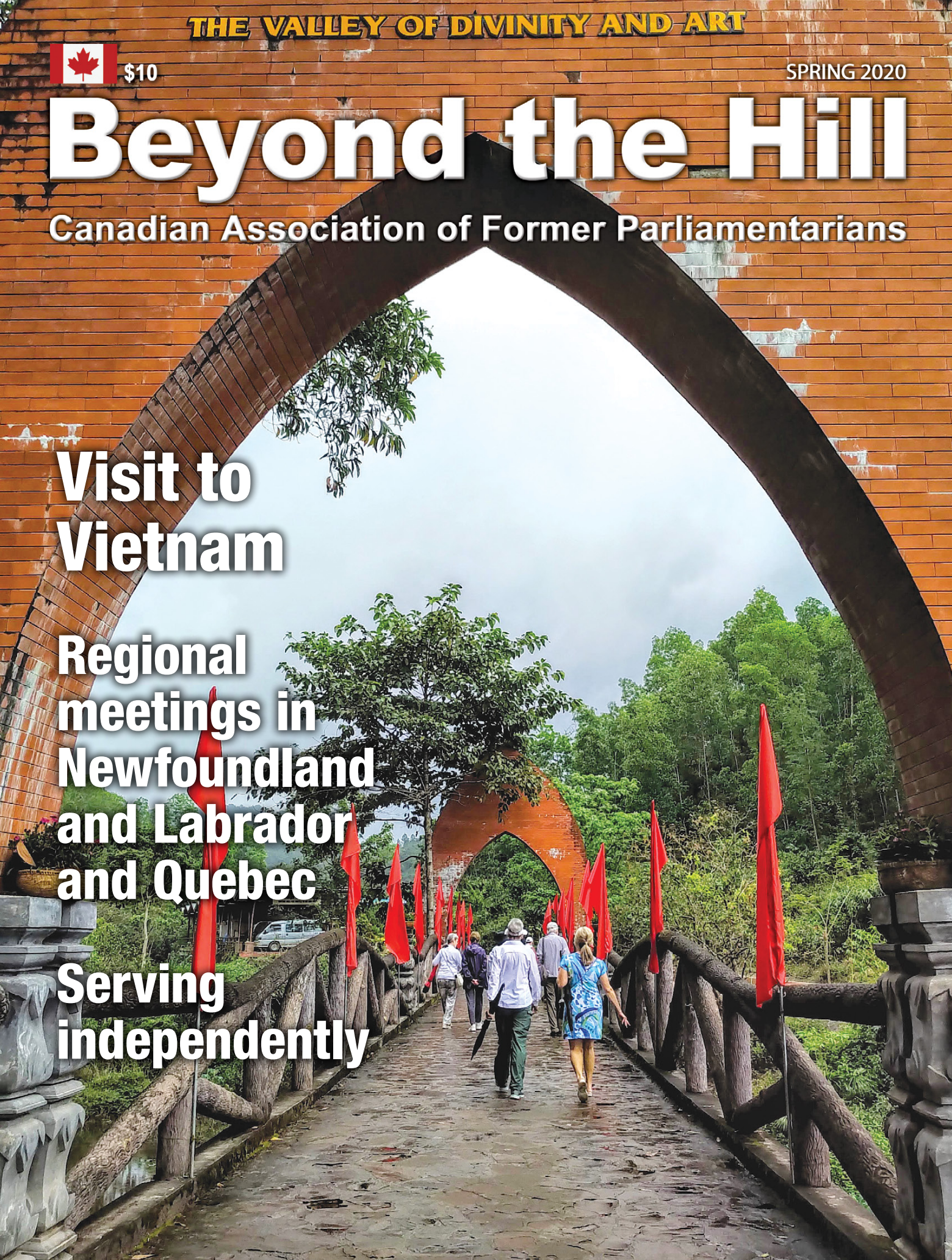
Beyond the Hill

Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians

**Visit to
Vietnam**

**Regional
meetings in
Newfoundland
and Labrador
and Quebec**

**Serving
independently**



Vietnamese study tour

Feb. 4th until the 18th, 2020.



Hon. Eleni Bakopanos.



Dorothy Dobbie and Ian Waddell.



A fountain in the courtyard of Sophie's Art.



Warren Redman and Dr. Hélène Bertrand.



Charlette Duguay gets her temperature taken as she enters a restaurant.



Danielle and Massimo Pacetti pose with the server at the restaurant where we made our own dinners.



Léo Duguay luxuriates in one of the VERY comfortable National Assembly chairs.



Ken Hughes.

Beyond the Hill

Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians

Volume 16, Issue No. 1

Spring 2020

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Entrance to My Son Hoi An, Vietnam.

Photo by Dorothy Dobbie.

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Our Mission Statement

Beyond the Hill, a magazine for former parliamentarians, is designed to engage, enlighten and inform its readers about each other, their Association and its Educational Foundation. Its aim is to encourage participation in the Association and to promote democracy. The views of the contributors to this publication do not necessarily represent those of CAFPP nor its Educational Foundation. *Beyond the Hill* welcomes letters to the editor, submissions and suggestions. P.O. Box 1, 131 Queen St., House of Commons Ottawa, ON, Canada, K1A 0A6. Telephone 1-888-567-4764, Fax: 613-947-1764 E-mail: ex-parl@parl.gc.ca. Website: www.exparl.ca.

YOUR ORGANIZATION

The Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians

Who we are and what we stand for



As individuals, former members of Parliament and senators mirror the values and expectations of the citizenry. We are a dependable source of practical experience in government and are the keepers of a vast store of knowledge and parliamentary wisdom.

Canada has the highest turnover of MPs in the world, averaging 30% and ranging to as high as 60%. The Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians acts as a stabilizing resource for the good order of government.

The goal of the Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians is to put this collective experience at the disposal of Canadians and their replacement representatives. CAFPP is here to:

1. Preserve and promote Canadian democracy at home and abroad.
2. Preserve the corporate memory of Parliament and serve as a resource for serving, retired and incoming members.
3. Advise and inform young people about the processes and exercises of power and good government.
4. Encourage democratic participation by new generations.
5. Provide the public with non-partisan information and experienced analyses of how government works.

Our programs include:

1. **Beyond the Hill.** The magazine carries informative and inspiring stories about political life and situations from the past.
2. **Parliament to Campus program.** Speaking to schools and universities.
3. **Speaker's Bureau.** Participating with the media and speaking to groups about the Canadian Parliamentary system.
4. **Overseas Election Observation.** Fielding members to do work in other countries.
5. **School of Public Service.** Members provide advice to new federal recruits.
6. **Equal Voice.** Members provide the mentorship to encourage women to become involved in politics.
7. **Parliamentary Interns.** CAFPP has supported this and many other initiatives supporting democracy.
8. **Website and Social Media.** CAFPP is an active participant on the Internet and on social media platforms to engage in debate, provide information and serve as a resource for the community.



Editorial interns from left to right: Matthieu Reekie, Wade Morris, Daniel Birru and Gina Hartmann.

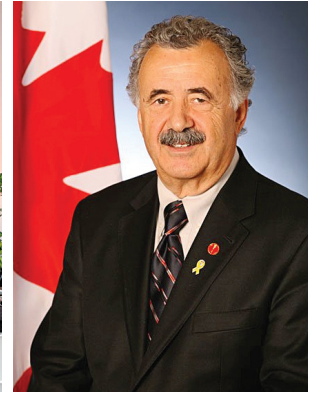
Election Observation

Social media and accessibility on the agenda

By Gina Hartmann



DoP group photo.



Hon. Consiglio Di Nino.

Former senator, the Hon. Consiglio (Con) Di Nino has been observing election processes for some time now. As a Senator, he travelled the world to monitor elections and continues to participate in reviewing electoral best practices.

“I participated in International election observation missions for about ten years, when I was in Parliament. It’s one of the truly positive activities for Parliamentarians. Helping to improve democratic practices leaves a lasting legacy. I have monitored elections or participated in conferences in a number of countries, including Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Albania, Serbia, Russia, USA and, on behalf of ODIHR, led electoral missions in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan” said Con.

Con goes to Poland

In Nov. 2019, Con agreed to participate on behalf of CAFPP in a recent visit to Warsaw, Poland for the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation (DoP) 14th implementation meeting.

“Participants from around the world get together, organized by the ODIHR organization, to review and refine best practices for more effective and democratic elections,” said Con of the meeting.

ODIHR stands for Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, which is the principal institution of the Organization for

Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which describes itself as dealing with the human dimension of security. During Con’s time in the Senate, he was one of a group of international parliamentarians within the OSCE that was involved in election monitoring.

Keeping things fair

“Observing” elections is critically important in making sure elections around the world are fair and have up-to-date rules and technology,” said the former senator. “You deal with problems discovered while observing elections and recommend changes to insure future results better represent the will of the people. Like you would in any endeavour, you are constantly upgrading and updating.”

The Warsaw conference took a closer look at social media, technology and the impact on elections. The variety of sources now bombarding society, demands that accurate and reliable information be provided to voters.

Social media and technology

“This last conference was as good as any in identifying problems or issues that need to be addressed to improve election results,” explained Con. “The main subjects discussed at the conference were the impact of social media and technology on election participation and results. Both can have a huge role in the distribution of information, but also in

the distribution of misinformation.”

Though it’s difficult to monitor social media and technological development, Con believes the focus of the conference on identifying problems and successful solutions will continue to improve election processes and participation worldwide, particularly in countries where democracy is evolving and developing.

Accessibility

Another topic discussed at the meeting in Poland was voting accessibility and how participation can be improved by allowing more persons with disabilities, full access to their right to vote.

“It was an incredibly positive experience, indeed a welcome surprise. I have been involved with the issue of recognizing the abilities of all citizens and in creating ways to improve opportunities for those with disabilities for many years and the subject was keenly and positively discussed. The fact that accommodations need to be made for those with mental disabilities was particularly recognized, needs to be applauded.

Ways to insure participation in the election process is as fair and as wide as possible, is the principal purpose of these conferences.”

The Hon. Con Di Nino was appointed Senator in 1990 representing Ontario by Prime Minister Mulroney. He represented the Progressive Conservative Party. He resigned from the senate in June 2012.



Dorothy Dobbie.

As we move forward in 2020 and look back at 2019, it has been quite a year.

New members

The election this fall, brought some new members who may be reading this issue of *Beyond the Hill* for the first time. To you, I offer my condolences on your loss, but I welcome you to the Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians, which we hope you will formally join.

Being a member of the Association has many intangible benefits, not the least of which is being able to get together with folks who understand and know what you know – all those subtle things that are hard to express. When we get together, we have an immediate bond, no matter what our party affiliation. We have more things in common with each other than we have with anyone else who has not been in elected office.

Consequently, new friendships are forged that are very close and, in some cases, new opportunities present themselves as a result. Even if you plan to run again at some time in the future, getting involved with CAFP is a good way to stay in touch or transition to your new life as a former member.

Perhaps most importantly, we have fun. Despite the negative nellys in the news, parliamentarians are generally exceptional people who are intelligent, engaging, interesting and involved. When we get together with no political axes to grind (or to bury!) we discover a very like-minded, congenial community.

We hope you will take out a membership. The cost is just \$125 a year and \$40 for spouses. And if things are a little tight right now, we can make some special payment arrangements.

Oh what a year!

We may be able to help

Now that several months have passed since the election, you may be finding it tougher than you thought it would be to make the transition from elected to non-elected. This can be a difficult time personally.

We know that you often enter a period of post-traumatic stress, a kind of grieving, that you may not have realized in the initial flurry of moving away from your previous duties. This is not unusual, and you can feel awfully alone as you encounter the new realities. Many of us have been through the same thing and we understand.

We know that it is often most difficult for members who are not eligible for a pension and/or who have not yet been able to transition to a new job (it often takes a long time – we have been through it and know this).

Our staff in the offices at 131 Queen Street – Susan Simms, Céline Brazeau Fraser, Carina Legault Meek – are knowledgeable and helpful. They can often help you in ways you haven't thought about yet. And if not, we can find you someone who can.

We are here for you. Please, just call the office and we will put you in touch with someone near you who can offer support and guidance.

What's new

Your Association has been very busy as you will see as you go through this issue of the magazine. We participated with the Association of Former members of Provincial Legislators at a meeting in Quebec City. Our thanks to Hélène LeBlanc, who has been working to raise our profile among former Quebec members. We learned that former MLAs have many issues similar to ours and several of the associations have initiated programs to support their defeated members through their own transitions.

There is interest in being more in-

volved with the Canadian association. We agreed that we can all learn from each other.

A number of members attended the excellent Regional Meeting in St. Johns, Nfld. Our heartfelt thanks to Jack Harris, Ross Reid and Bonnie Ashley for their wonderful efforts in putting together a first-class event that was enjoyed by all who attended. There is more on this story in this issue.

Your vice-president, Hon. Eleni Bakopanos, represented us in Washington last spring at the Annual Meeting of the Former Members of Congress and, subsequently, a study tour to Canada was organized by their association for constituency staff members of sitting members from 10 states.

Former Senator Con di Nino attended the 14th Annual Implementation Meeting for Endorsers of the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation in Warsaw, Poland on our behalf at his own expense earlier this year. Con has agreed to chair the committee examining ways to restart the election monitoring activities by former members. Further to his duties, Con met with Zoe Dugal, Canadem's Deputy Director Operations. She told him that, in the last couple of years, the only election monitoring mission funded by Canada was the mission to Ukraine! Con continues to explore the possibilities.

The Hon. Bill Blaikie has been heading up the membership committee and sent a letter in January to all the recently defeated members to remind them about the Association.

Léo Duguay, your fundraising chair, has been very active, setting up a very successful study tour to Vietnam. There is a full report and photos in this issue. He has met with several key players to determine the best way forward to the next fundraising initiative.

Continued on next page.

CAFP Delegation tours Vietnam

By Francis LeBlanc



The whole crew at China Beach. Left to right: Susan Simms, Léo Duguay, Charlette Duguay, Ken Hughes, Hon. Karen Redman, Denise Hughes, Marlene Shepherd, Francis LeBlanc, Midge Philbrook, Herb Grubel, Hon. Sue Barnes, Massimo Pacetti, Dorothy Dobbie, Warren Redman, Hon. Eleni Bakopanos, Hélène Bertrand, Ian Waddell, Danielle Maclean.

Vietnam was the chosen destination for CAFP's sixth Study Tour and from Feb. 4th until the 18th, 2020, a group of 19 former parliamentarians and spouses explored this fascinating country. Sadly, though, we were without two of our most loyal members and ardent travellers. Senator Jean Bazin, the first to sign up when the tour opened, regrettably passed away in late 2019.

And Senator Raymond Setlakwe, who, with his wife Yvette, has been a joyful participant of all previous CAFP Study Tours, was obliged to decline this time for health reasons. We missed them both.

Our tour took place as the current coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic was beginning to wreak havoc with international travel. We lost three more of our participants to these dis-

ruptions. For those able to make it, the virus caused ongoing worry but no serious impediment to our activities. Instead, we got to explore this dynamic and vibrant society, from the bustling business centre of Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) in the South to the political and cultural heart of the country, Hanoi, in the north, with many stops and side trips in between.

Continued from the previous page.

Francis LeBlanc continues his work with the House to improve access to services for retiring members. Hon. Eleni Bakopanos represents this committee on the Board of Directors.

Finally, I must also mention with warm thanks, Ian Waddell, who is the current president of our Foundation. Ian has been actively trying to raise funds, visiting the heads of some banks and so on, and attending various functions on your behalf. Ian's energy and enthusiasm are much appreciated by the Association.

AGM postponed till fall

In light on the epidemic, our AGM, which was scheduled to take place in June, has been postponed to the call of the chair, but will hopefully be held in early September. The Regional meeting has been postponed indefinitely.

I welcome the input from all members and encourage you to let us know if there is some way in which you would like to make a contribution.

We will have several openings on the Board this year and are looking for nominees.

COVID-19

As we go to press with this issue, we are in the midst of the intense lockdown of our nation in our attempt to slow the spread of the corona virus. Just like everyone else, we are all working remotely, doing our best to keep things going so we can quickly recover from this most extraordinary event. Know though, that we will recover and things *will* get better. We are strong.

Dorothy Dobbie
President



Léo and Charlette Duguay being greeted at the National Assembly.



Meeting with Ambassador, Her Excellency, Ms. Deborah Paul.



Francis LeBlanc, Dr. Hélène Bertrand and Dorothy Dobbie in the National Assembly.

Highlights of our trip included an overnight boat cruise in the Mekong Delta, hair-raising rickshaw riding through the crowded streets of Huế, shopping for tailor made clothes and classes in Vietnamese cooking in Hoi An, sombre tours of the Vietnam war experience at the War Remnants Museum (Ho Chin Minh City) and the Hao Lo Prison (the “Hanoi Hilton”) and memorable meals throughout the country.

As in previous tours, our delegation was led by Léo Duguay and supported by staff from the CAFPP office. This time it was Susan Simms who kept our group together and happy. However, it was Nora McCabe, an expert on travel in Vietnam, who arranged the intricate and varied program, and accompanied us in our travels, choosing our restaurants, explaining the food and local customs, and providing a running commentary on all things Vietnam. Her former husband and good friend, Michael McCabe, who has led a 15-year cooperation CIDA program with Vietnam Government, arranged for some valuable meetings with the National Assembly in Hanoi.

We all know the recent history of Vietnam. The tragic war with the US that ended in 1975, the dark period afterwards, in which Canada

accepted many Vietnamese refugees and “boat people” fleeing the repressive regime, and the more recent opening up of the country with the restoration of diplomatic relations with the US in 1995. We know that Vietnam is a socialist country with a one-party state government. What came as a revelation was how young,



Hon. Eleni Bakopanos with the fabulous light fixture that is centred over the National Assembly.

entrepreneurial, and forward looking this country has become. Every street corner pulsates with activity. For the past two decades, the Vietnamese economy is growing at an average annual rate of more than 6 per cent, and the government has been promoting open trade and good relations with all countries in the world.

In Saigon, we met with representatives of the Canada-Vietnam Chamber of Commerce, including prominent members of the Vietnamese diaspora who have returned to help rebuild the country. They spoke of a vibrant business culture, smart and hard-working people, and abundant investment opportunities, in insurance and business services, education, natural gas, high-tech manufacturing to name but a few.

In Hanoi, we found government wedded to its socialist principles, but forward-looking and intent on building a prosperous future for its people. We encountered a dynamic artistic and cultural scene and saw the works of some of Vietnam’s best artists. We sampled a wide assortment of Vietnam’s extraordinary cuisine, and came home with high quality, tailor-made suits and new respect for this remarkable country.

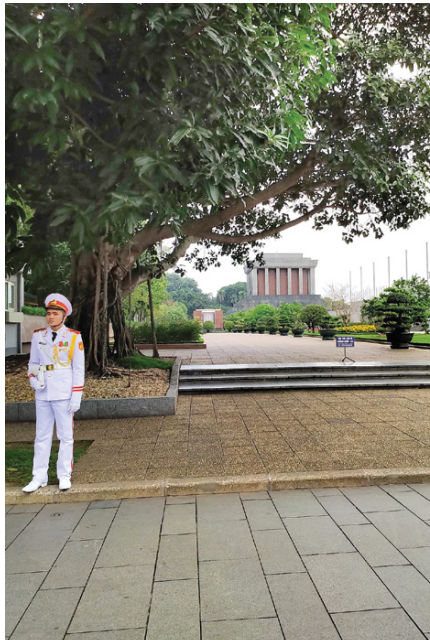
The pictures tell the story.



The official delegation poses in the courtyard of the Canadian Embassy in Hanoi. Left to right: Hon. Eleni Bakopanos, Léo Duguay, Massimo Pacetti, Ambassador Deborah Paul, Hon. Karen Redman, Hon. Sue Barnes, Dorothy Dobbie, Francis LeBlanc, Ian Waddell, Ken Hughes and Herb Grubel.



The main entrance to the National Assembly.



Ho Chi Minh's tomb, guarded by one of the faithful. He is worshipped in Vietnam as their Liberator.



Gateway to a river cruise. Water is central to all travel in Vietnam. This waterway has the romantic name of Perfume River.



The best loved part of the trip was a day and night on the Mekong River in this boat.



Sightseeing in Hue.



Hon. Karen Redman - currently Regional Chair, Region of Waterloo.



The hikers, while the others were off biking. A rice paddy in the background.



Hon. Sue Barnes in the Botanical Garden in Saigon.



Herb Grubel and Dr. Hélène Bertrand.



Hon. Sue Barnes catches up with old friend Michael McCabe who was a long time trade attache in Hanoi.



Midge Philbrook at the famous Metropole Hotel in Hanoi.



Hon. Eleni Bakopanos and her friend Hon. Sue Barnes.



Léo Duguay notices something fishy on the boat as it cruised the Mekong River.



Massimo Pacetti and Danielle Maclean.



A rainy day at the Vietnam answer to Angkor Wat, My Son Sanctuary.



Hon. Karen Redman and Warren Redman.



Hon. Eleni Bakopanos, Charlette Duguay and Marlene Shepherd.



Midge Philbrook and Marlene Shepherd.



Ken and Denise Hughes with Léo Duguay at Lang Co Beach.

Quebec hosts meeting of provincial formers



Front row from left to right: Guest, Rita Dionne-Marsolais, Karen Haslam, Jean-Marc Lalonde, Dorothie Dobbie, Yvan Bordeleau, Second row: Ian Waddell, Hon. Eleni Bakopanos, Marie Malavoy, Karen Lebovici. Back row: Serge Geoffrion, Monique Richard, Hélène LeBlanc et Normand Jutras.

The provincial former members met in Quebec City, Oct. 31 to Nov. 1, 2019. The meeting was organized and hosted by the Quebec provincial former members, Amicale des anciens parlementaires du Québec. It was attended by Rita Dionne-Marsolais, President; France Dionne, VP; Normand Jutras, Secretary; Yvan Bordeleau, Past President; Serge Geoffrion, Communications chair; and Marie Malavoy, Women's President.

At the time of the meeting, l'Amicale had a Bill (Bill 390) pending to change their name to The Council of Ex-parliamentarians of the National Assembly of Quebec. This is to ensure gender neutrality and to assist in creating more positive exposure. The word "Council", it is hoped, adds a certain dignity.

Quebec has 268 of a possible 558 members, dues are \$75 a year. They are accorded a staff member and a private meeting room in the Assembly Building. For many years, they have been assembling videos of past members as a historical record.

Ontario reported that they also have a YouTube channel consisting of videos that they use as part of an education program. They also produce a PowerPoint presentation for use by members who go out speaking. They publish a small publication, called The Informer. The Legislature provides them with \$5,000 a year.

Ontario has started a Foundation to which they donated \$10,000 to get it started. Membership is only \$50 per year and formers over 80 are honorary members who pay no fee. They cur-

rently have 75 honorary members!

Manitoba also has a legacy video celebrating past members. They meet several times a year over luncheon with a guest speaker. Manitoba still supports a Mock Parliament every winter.

Alberta, represented by Karen Lebovici, Past President, is re-organizing since their president recently passed away. The Association is working on a benefits plan for those who are over 75 years old.

Ian Waddell, who is also president of the CAFP Foundation, represented B.C. president Jeff Bray. They receive \$4000 a year.

CAFP was well represented by President Dorothy Dobbie; Vice-president Hon. Eleni Bakopanos; board member Hélène LeBlanc and President of the Foundation, Ian Waddell.



First row from left to right: Karen Lebovici, Dorothy Dobbie, Marie Malavoy, Rita Dionne-Marsolais, Monique Richard, Karen Haslam, Jean-Marc Lalonde, Hon. Eleni Bakopanos, and hostess. Second Row: Serge Geoffrion, host, Yvan Bordeleau and Ian Waddell.



Ian Waddell, Hélène LeBlanc, Dorothy Dobbie, and Hon. Eleni Bakopanos pose outside the National Assembly.



First row seating: Marie Malavoy, Dorothy Dobbie, Rita Dionne-Marsolais, Jean-Marc Lalonde and Karen Haslam. Second row standing: Ian Waddell, Monique Richard, Yvan Bordeleau, François Paradis Président de l'Assemblée nationale du Québec, Karen Lebovici, Hon. Eleni Bakopanos, Normand Jutras, Hélène LeBlanc and Serge Geoffrion.



Bottom row: Guest of Mr. Lalonde, Yvan Bordeleau and Rita Dionne-Marsolais. 2nd row: Hélène LeBlanc, Jean-Marc Lalonde and the Hon. Eleni Bakopanos.



Grand staircase in the Assembly Building.



Ian Waddell was impressed with the reading choices at the National Assembly Library alongside Karen Haslam.



The old senate Chambers in the National Assembly. It mirrors the House but is now used only for special events.

Meeting in St. John's, Newfoundland



The sheltered harbour where St. John's lies snugly nestled.

The Regional Meeting of the Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians was held in St. John's, Nfld., this past September. It was ably organized by three former members who had all held the seat of St. John's East in succession: Tory, Ross Reid, Liberal Bonnie Ashley and NDP member, Jack Harris, who was recently re-elected.

There is something other-worldly about St. John's; a sense of history pervades the air and it is easy

to understand that this was once an independent nation. As we were told, St. John's had a population of 10,000 when Toronto was still a hamlet. The air of latent sovereignty here is hard to escape, even after 70 years as a province of Canada.

Indeed, we met at the Legislature in the chamber for a panel discussion by a quartet of learned historians who were still arguing the events, merits and causes of Confederation! They were kept in line

through my Sister Elizabeth Davis who didn't stand for any nonsense!

Meetings such as this and the opportunity to get in touch with former members from across the country, is one of the indefinable but irreplaceable benefits of being a member of CAFP. Not only do you get to meet a lot of old friends and make some new ones, you have an opportunity to learn a great deal more about our country.

Many thanks to our three organizers of a very successful meeting.



Murray McBride and Hon. Bryon Wilfert.



Chungsen Leung and Hon. Vim Kochhar.



Howard Meeker.



A tour of the House of Assembly was followed by a panel session about Confederation. It was the province's 70th anniversary as a part of Canada.



Historic picture of our three hosts who all represented St. John's East at various times: Jack Harris, NDP; Bonnie Ashley, Liberal; and Ross Reid, Progressive Conservative.



Joey Smallwood's chair at the museum.



Keith Penner and one of the panelists.



The meeting started with a reception at the Munroe House, where guests were treated to a female barbershop quartet.



Taking a rest in the private quarters of the judges at the Supreme Court.



Maurice Harguail and guest.



Céline Brazeau Fraser, Ross Reid and Hon. Alphonsus Faour.

Jack is back!

One man's journey in and out of the House of Commons

By Gina Hartmann

Jack Harris first entered politics in 1987 after winning a federal by-election representing St. John's East and, though his first time on the Hill was short lived, his career in politics didn't stop there.

"I had been involved with the NDP for several years. I believe in the party and believed politics was a way to change the system and change the world, and I still do," said Harris regarding his choice to pursue politics. "There is a lot of unfairness in the system and it needs to be fixed. When you look at economic justice and social justice, and now the era of environmental justice, I believe people have to work to change the world to make it better. If you have the willingness to do that and the desire to do that, politics is a way to do it."

After his first stint in the House, Harris entered provincial politics and had a career as a member of the House of Assembly from 1990 to 2006. He was also the leader of the NDP party of Newfoundland and Labrador until he resigned his role and seat in the same year. With the encouragement of Jack Layton, Harris ran for federal politics again.

Layton brought him back

"I wasn't sure if I would end up in politics again after I retired from the provincial scene, from my own choosing. With the urging of Jack Layton, I did. We were successful and had a good team. We did well in 2001 with 102 seats. Unfortunately, Jack died later that year. We got a new leader and I ran in 2015 and lost," recalled the returned member of Parliament. "I wasn't expecting to lose and neither were some people expecting me to lose. We had been the official opposition. Going into the election, we were the team to beat. As we all know, we were beaten to the third party with Justin Trudeau."



Jack Harris in the House of Commons.

With all of the east coast painted in red, Jack Harris was no longer representing St. John's East in Ottawa. However, he wasn't ready to walk away just yet. In 2019, Harris put his name back in the ring for the same seat and won the election with over 71 per cent of the vote.

"That was my involuntary sabbatical. I wasn't ready to retire from politics. I had something to offer and I still do. I was encouraged by a lot of people in my riding to run again and eventually I decided to do so," said Harris. "I like the role. I believe in the democratic system. I am very privileged to be in the House of Parliament. We had a wonderful platform to run on this time. I was proud to be a part of it, the things we were championing in the campaign and in the House."

Still lots to fight for

"There are battles that are not over to have an equal and fair society that I believe we can afford. We have seen other countries be successful. It's a human problem, not a problem that needs to be solved. It's a decision that needs to be made."

After the 2015 election, The NDP Caucus went from 97 seats to 43, with 53 of Jack's teammates finding themselves without a job.

"The whole notion of being defeated comes as a shock to some people, especially when you are getting used to being an MP and all of a sudden you have to figure out what to do next," said Jack of his experience in 2015. "I thought the provisions were not adequate, and some people didn't understand what access they had to them."

For example, some former MPs had left their line of work and may need help to transition back into their career. There is a fund available to them, but a lot of members weren't well aware of those options.

Worked hard for CAFP

Jack recognized this need for improvement and worked on a committee with the Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians to address accessibility and look at the transition process out of the House.

The committee surveyed members of Parliament and former members to hear about their experience. They also worked with the House of Commons staff who administer the programs and former clerk and honorary member of CAFP, Audrey O'Brien, as well as gaining advice from former speaker, John Bosley. The committee met with party whips about some suggested changes.

One issue the committee noted was that the same department was dealing with new members entering par-

liament, as well as defeated members who needed support leaving the Hill.

"The reality is with each election, there are around 100 or more people who are in the situation. If 200 leave, then 200 are coming in and that's a lot of people to deal with," said Jack. "You're in the middle of your career, in a profile of high prestige, and then suddenly you aren't without warning. Many people in the public might think it's all a bed of roses, but the fact of the matter is, when the election comes you're re-applying for your job and many times, through the political winds of change, without necessarily any fault of yours, you're out of work and your identity is tied up with their role."

Jack said he respects the democratic system and is not complaining by any means, but was happy to find success with the committee to make changes



Jack in St. John's, acting as a host of the Formers in September, 2019.

to the transition process for members leaving the House.

And now that he has transitioned out, he looks forward to his transition back in.

"Politics is a challenging position, as well as a rewarding one, in the sense

that you are doing things that are important and important for the country. If we didn't have good people willing to do them then democracy wouldn't be much of a system. I'm doing what I want to do, what I am happy doing. I'm happy to be doing a job and representing St. John's East. It's a big responsibility to live up to and I am honoured to have that privilege."

The committee continues its work with Francis LeBlanc, Brian Hayes and Hon. Eleni Bakopanos at the helm. They have made considerable progress but continue to look for ways to help the transition of former members into their unelected role.

Jack Harris served in the House of Commons from 1987-1988 representing the riding of St. John's East with the NDP and returned to Parliament from 2008-2015 for the same riding. He returned in 2019.

Bill Casey was a winner no matter who he ran for!

Bill Casey says sitting on the back benches as an independent without the camaraderie of his colleagues was challenging. "Mostly there were no committee roles or caucus meetings, etc., to attend. I still was able to ask questions, table Private Members Bills and put questions on the order paper. I had the same budget and staff as everyone else. I still had access to the ministers and some even agreed with my stance of the Atlantic Accord."

Bill was first elected as a Progressive Conservative in 1988 to the second Mulroney mandate. He developed a solid relationship with the prime minister who not only answered his calls but helped him in several ways when he ran into difficulties. Bill was used to the respect and consideration of the top guy and saw that as the proper order of things.

He lost his seat along with all but two PCs, Jean Charest and Elsie Wayne, in 1993. He ran again in 1997, 2000 and 2004 regaining his seat each time with increasing majorities.

Bill was still there in 2006 when Stephen Harper won his first minority government as a Conservative.

This was a vastly different party than the one Bill had served for so long and while he continued as a loyal servant, this leader was not as open to sugges-



Bill isn't worried at all about being out of politics or the Covid-19 isolation. He now has plenty of time to work on his antique cars.

tions as Bill's first prime minister had been. In 2007, concerned with what he saw as an illegal breach of the Atlantic Accord, Bill went to his leader to tell him his concerns. He was not met gladly. When the budget was handed down, Bill voted against it.

He was expelled from the Conservative caucus and sat for the rest of the mandate as an independent. Known for his good humour and gregarious warmth, Bill found a niche among the backbenchers of the Liberal Party.

The following year, Bill's Conservative riding association confirmed his candidacy for the 2008 election, but the Party refused his nomination and fired the board. So, Bill ran as an independent. He won by a landslide. It was a pyrrhic victory. He soon discovered he had prostate cancer and resigned his seat in April 2009 on the advice of his doctor.

Unlike two of his colleagues, Bill recovered, becoming active in CAFPP. But during his stint as an independent, he had been seated near then backbencher Justin Trudeau. A bond was created through their shared derision for the prime minister.

Bill had one of the winningest records ever. He had never won with less than 42 per cent of the vote and, in his last three elections at the time, his margins were 50.9 per cent in 2004, 52.02 per cent in 2006 and 69.01 per cent in 2008. He was clearly a desirable catch. So, when the new leader of the Liberal Party called, Bill said, "What the heck. Why Not?"

He ran as a Liberal in 2015 and won with 63.73 per cent on the vote. At 75, Bill announced that he would not seek re-election in 2019. Having twice had pneumonia, he found the lifestyle a little more than he or his beloved wife, Rosie, wanted to handle.

The secret lives of Independents

What does it mean when a member of parliament breaks with their party?

By Matt Reekie

David Kilgour's career in federal politics saw its fair share of twists and turns over its 27 years. He holds the uncommon distinction of having resigned from both Liberal and Progressive Conservative caucuses, serving a short stint as an independent on both occasions. When he was expelled from the Progressive Conservative caucus in 1990, he had a few axes to grind with the party, not least of which was an all too familiar complaint: he claimed that any dissension from party lines or criticism for the party or the prime minister was met with a loss of privileges in the House.

In Kilgour's estimation, party discipline in Canada is amongst the strictest of the world's democracies. As a result, he believes our legislature is abnormally constricted and backbenchers take a diminished role.

Voting the Party line

The average MP in the 42nd Canadian parliament has reportedly voted the party line 99.6% of the time. As Memorial University of Newfoundland professor Alex Marland wrote in Policy Options, "Backbenchers need reminding that they are not part of the government." A Liberal member, Marland summed up the backbencher's predicament thusly: "In a government caucus, there are those in cabinet, and [...] those working hard to join it." If one wants to be rewarded with a coveted cabinet or critic position, then they have to play the game. But what happens when an MP doesn't play nice?

Good luck on your own!

"Good luck getting elected as an independent!" John Nunziata received these parting words from then Prime Minister Jean Chrétien. Nunziata had dutifully represented his constituents under the Liberal banner for 12 years, but going forward, his representation would be free from party constraints.

Mr. Chrétien is not alone in expressing skepticism for the viability of independent candidates. The re-election



Jody Wilson-Raybould currently serves as an Independent MP for the riding of Vancouver Granville.

of MP Jody Wilson-Raybould made headlines due in no small part to the novelty of her running as an independent. Such a thing had not happened in over a decade.

But in 1997, against all odds, Nunziata was accorded a fourth term by his constituents. "I was very honoured," says Nunziata of his re-election, but it amounted to a Pyrrhic victory: though substantive, his 12 point lead was a far cry from the 70% electoral trouncing he was meted out in 1993, and he would be unseated by a Liberal challenger in the next election. Breaking with party discipline all but ended Nunziata's career in federal politics, but he wasn't the first and wouldn't be the last. Why would anybody take such a risk?

As a Liberal MP, Nunziata had taken at face value the campaign promise made by his party that they would repeal the GST. However, he became increasingly uneasy with the inaction of his caucus' to uphold their pledge. "We promised to do what we said we were going to do." He recalls. "By 1996, it was obvious that they weren't going to

keep the promise."

Aiming to register his discontent at such a broken key promise and the likely consequences, he voted against the budget tabled by his government in 1996. Nunziata was expelled from the Liberal caucus by order of the Prime Minister.

In hindsight, Nunziata concedes that keeping the GST was the right choice, but nonetheless stands by his actions. His duty, as he saw it, was not to his party, but to the voters and taxpayers in his riding. This tension between loyalty to the party and duty to constituents is a recurring theme in the decision of many to break ranks with their party.

Tough choice between party and constituents

Bruce Hyer, former MP for Thunder Bay-Superior North, also felt pressure from his party to fall in line when it came time to vote on the Long Gun Registry. Hyer and fellow NDP member John Rafferty were disciplined by party leadership for their support for the Conservative government on the issue. "I was a hero in my own riding" he says, but his party leadership didn't quite see it that way.

Besides banishment to the political wilderness, the party and its whips have at their disposal a number of carrots to keep the ranks in line. For example, whips assign offices, sanction participation on committees, and authorize travel. In Hyer's case, he was stripped of his critic role and denied opportunities to make members' statements. Feeling increasingly unable to toe the party line while representing his constituents, Hyer announced his departure from the NDP caucus in 2012. He ran for re-election in 2015 after having joined the Green Party, but was unseated by the Liberals.

Running against the odds

Running as an independent is an uphill battle. Though Nunziata defied the odds, Hyer and many others are not so fortunate.



Ex-Liberal MP John Nunziata was successfully elected as an independent MP in 1997 for the York South-Weston riding.

Conservative-turned-independent Brent Rathgeber recalls the surprise he encountered from people in his riding for whom the very fact that one could run as, or vote for, an independent, was unknown.

Strategic voting also plays a role. According to a Leger poll published in 2019, 35 per cent of respondents voted while “taking into account the chances that your vote will prevent another party’s candidate from winning.” Independent candidates are seen by many as a wedge that may divide voters with similar interests. Voters may hesitate to back an independent candidate over a party-affiliated representative, even if they share similar views, for fear that a split vote will propel a rival candidate to victory. “Every door we knocked on,

people said they love Jane, but that they can’t vote for her because they can’t let [the Conservative candidate] get elected.” said a volunteer on Jane Philpott’s 2019 independent campaign.

Others are discouraged by the belief that an Independent cannot advocate for their interests as effectively as a party-affiliated candidate could, but John Nunziata points out that opportunities exist for Independents to be heard. Amending procedure can require unanimous consent of the House. By denying his consent, he was able to bargain with house leaders to ask questions and participate in committees. Their support can also be very valuable in minority governments, as was the case with David Kilgour, who conditioned his continued confidence in the

government on support for causes otherwise unrecognized.

In some cases, the law itself is tilted against Independents. Unlike parties, Independent candidates are prohibited from spending any campaign funds before the writ is issued, setting them back in the already difficult task of raising awareness for their campaign. They are also required to return any leftover campaign funds to the crown. Meanwhile, party riding associations are able to keep their leftover funds and re-use them in later campaigns.

Though they may have their day in the House or in the media, the historical consequences of Independent members are debatable. As for Mrs. Wilson-Raybould, it is still too early to judge her stint as an Independent in parliament. Will her momentum carry over to the next election cycle, or will she bleed support despite her efforts, as John Nunziata did over his final term in office? As the first Independent elected in a decade, her future in federal politics, and the credibility of future Independents, will depend on whether or not she can show that “strong, independent voices matter”, as she defiantly claimed.

David Kilgour was a member of Parliament from 1979 to 2006.

John Nunziata served as an MP from 1984 to 2000 representing York South – Weston.

Brent Rathgeber represented Edmonton – St. Albert in the House of Commons from 2008 to 2015.

Bruce Hyer is the former MP for Thunder Bay-Superior North from 2008 to 2015.

MPs who have run and won as independents

Since Confederation, there have been 93 MPs who crossed the floor and sat as Independents. Only a handful were re-elected. A few ran without any previous political affiliation and won.

(Joseph-Napoléon-) Henri Bourassa. Served as Independent from 1925 to 1935. Was a Liberal.

Tony Roman. Ran and won as Independent in 1984. No prior party af-



Louis Riel.

filiation.

Louis Riel. Ran in 1873 and was elected three times as Independent. Never took his seat as there was a warrant out for his arrest for the execution of Thomas Scott.

Camillien Houde. Won as an Independent in 1949. Served one term. Was a Conservative.

Gilles Bernier. Ran and won as a Independent in 1993. Had been Progressive Conservative.

Chuck Cadman. Ran as Independ-

ent in 2004 and won. Was Reform.

Bill Casey. Ran and won in 2009. Originally Progressive Conservative, then Conservative. Later ran for Liberals.

Andre Arthur. Won as an Independent in 2008. No previous party affiliation.

John Nunziata. After several terms as a Liberal MP, ran as an Independent in 1997 and won.

Jody Wilson-Raybould. Won as an Independent 2019. Was Liberal.

Twenty-nine MPs have crossed the floor since 2010.



Dorothy Dobbie.

When you think Vietnam, you think “communist” and you expect a totalitarian regime with a heavy-handed administration. What we found on the recent study tour undertaken by the Canadian Associations of Former Parliamentarians was a very different case.

Here is a nation of 95 million people (up from 45 million since the war!) that is very much trying to find its way into the modern world. The current president, Nguyen Pho Trong, is the head of state and the third leader since unification. His term is five years and he is only allowed to serve three terms. While he gets to appoint everybody with any power, and this is a one-party state where Party membership bestows immense prestige and power, it appears there is little of the whisper-whisper, secret-secret atmosphere of many similar regimes.

Speaking out quietly

Indeed, we found the people to be very open in their criticism of both the Party and the regime.

There is an underlying sense of fierce, personal independence among the populace that is expressed in numerous ways; the most obvious is the way they ignore traffic rules. It is jokingly acknowledged that the best way to get killed in Vietnam is to cross the street! Automobiles, trucks, and the ever-present motorbikes see traffic lines and lights as hints only and pedestrians are dodged. Somehow, weaving in and out of what we would consider orderly lines, is the way of the road, with each seeming to have an invisible antenna on either side that governs the distance to be kept in order to avoid collision. It's like a ballet, choreographed to the last inch.

Who pays?

It is also said that many don't pay income tax, which ranges up to 35 per cent (20 per cent for non-residents) for those with a job. The “out” here is



Vietnam has changed a lot since the 1960s. There is lots of screen time. Above, a wife seems to tell hubby to get off his seat and get to work.

that “non-employment income” rates vary from .1 per cent to 25 per cent and is income earned from business activities among other things. Many, many people are in business. The last census says there were 517,000 businesses in Vietnam, but that counts only those who registered! Small business accounts for 40 per cent of the GDP and represents about 98 per cent of all commercial activity. Everyone seems to have something going.

Out for business

Vietnamese are entrepreneurial in the extreme. They waste nothing and find ways to make a buck doing just about anything. And they work very

hard, often at more than one occupation.

Women are highly respected, traditionally playing a large role in war and sustaining the family fortunes. That doesn't mean they have an equal place in the National Assembly and their participation is about the same as it is in Canada, yet even though a woman is currently leader in the National Assembly, there has never been a woman in the Politburo. However, a surprising number have become leaders in enterprise and industry. Women own about 22 per cent of all formal enterprises which are just as large as those of their male counterparts.



People live in their places of business. Here a dad teaches his toddler to walk on the street.



20th Century technology just never really had a good chance to take hold here. Back in the day, only Party members had phones. Loudspeakers were installed to disseminate propaganda. They still try. Nobody listens.



Everyone has a motorbike. A 4-litre tank can take you 160 to 200 km for less than \$5. Centre: The old letter writer at the Saigon Post office has less business now that most young people can write. Right: The War Museum. This poster may explain why the Vietnamese seem to harbour so little resentment toward Americans. There was such revulsion from ordinary soldiers about what was happening towards the end of the war; they just stopped fighting.



The Mekong starts 3000 miles to the north and has always been the main source of transportation. Top is the floating market. Bottom, a market in Hoi An.

On the surface the Vietnamese people seem happy but dig a little deeper and you will find a well of sadness going back to memories of the war and the pain of loss and hunger. It would seem natural for them to be angry with America, but quite the opposite: they seem to have an abiding affection for Americans and all things American. This is the opposite to their reaction toward the French, which is quite negative, although they have sensibly left the French buildings intact and have adopted their wonderful baking as part of the culture.

Where are the social services?

Most surprising for a so-called communist country is the lack of social services. Citizens pay for everything; Most health services are self-paid (only .9 per cent of the Vietnamese

GDP goes into health), although the state is apparently working toward an improved system. There is no universal education system, yet the literacy rate is over 95 per cent!

This may explain a story they told about a toll road the government installed to pay for the Cai Lai road. The people paid for a while, we were told, but once they felt they had paid enough, they objected. Some started paying the fee of about 25,000 Dong (USD \$1.10) in very small bills which backed up traffic for miles. Their protests ultimately resulted in this toll being removed.

Meeting with Foreign Affairs

At the meeting we held with the foreign Affairs Committee in the National Assembly, I asked how they handled these mild protests. They all

laughed, clearly embarrassed. Yet, it seems to indicate that they are acutely aware of how tenuous their hold on power is. While the Party apparatus tries to keep control, the spirit of capitalism has gripped the nation and it seems that they are forging a new political system that works for them for now.

What does the future hold?

Will they move closer to democracy in the future? Only time will tell. What is clear is that the former tools of control, the loudspeakers droning out propaganda, for example, are not making the same deep impression on a nation buried in their cell phones and distracted by the endless possibilities of enterprise and freedom.

Dorothy Dobbie was the Progressive Conservative MP for Winnipeg South, 1988-1993.

How comedy cuts the tension in Parliament

By Wade Morris

It's no secret that the political world can be draining at times. Deadlocked votes and flying insults can leave the process feeling dry and joyless. Canada has a low voter turnout, and if you ask, you'll find many Canadians don't follow politics because "it's boring."

But laughter is the best medicine, right? Canadians are supposed to be funny – we're known for speaking with goofy accents, owning pet beavers, and drinking maple syrup straight from the tap. But seriously, we're lucky to have so much room for humour in our political system. We're home to excellent columnists, sketch television shows, and podcasts dedicated to framing politics.

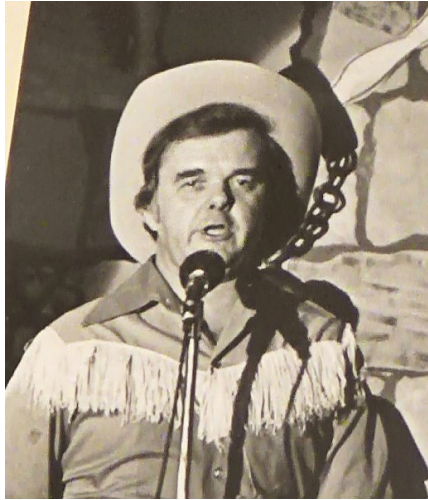
Some of our politicians are funny too: Consider recently retired MP Rodger Cuzner. While representing Cape Breton between 2000 and 2019, he became known for delivering snarky quips, joyfully corny 'dad jokes', and delivering Dr. Seuss-style speeches in the House of Commons around Christmastime. One year, he delivered a parody of 'Twas the Night Before Christmas, written to describe his perspective on the state of Parliament at that time. Rodger would earn national attention; Maclean's called him "Parliament's sense of humour".

"It's something that I had a lot of fun with," Rodger said, "and I know a lot of people had fun with it in the 19 years that I was there." Rodger's quips were delivered in good fun, and most would agree that he made a positive impact.

"When you're working in a tense atmosphere, sometimes a witty remark or a funny observation cuts the tension." Rodger would be careful not to overdo it, though. "It's like seasoning you have to sprinkle. It makes a good dish if you don't overuse it."

Another MP who brought laughter to Parliament is Geoff Scott, who represented the Hamilton – Wentworth riding between 1978 and 1993.

At a young age, he teamed up with "man of a thousand voices" Rich Little, making audiences in the Ottawa Val-



Geoff Scott performing politically satirical songs.

ley laugh. Eventually, they performed nationally on TV. Geoff also worked in the parliamentary press gallery where he would write skits for parliamentary dinners. There, he learned that "you can always look on politics from a lighter and more humorous point of view."

That approach followed him into office, he explains. The ability to take your job seriously while making room for humour is a balance worth considering.

"You should never take yourself too seriously, because no one else does," he said. "You'll find that humour attracts a lot of people. It's a really good way of communicating." He also reiterates that humour transcends party lines: "it's an elixir and it affects people of all parties and all persuasions."

Humour gives voters a comfortable way into the political process.

Geoff can name plenty of political writers who earned a following through comedy. Among them is Allan Fotheringham, whose column filled the back pages of Maclean's magazine for nearly three decades. "People would open the back page first just to get a dose of his sardonic humour," Geoff explains.

Print media has certainly declined in popularity, but the next generation of voters still uses humour as a lens to

consume politics. In fact, one research project between two Canadian universities has studied this.

Political communication students at both the University of Ottawa and Concordia University have been studying political memes – images with funny captions that use wordplay or jokes to make a clever observation playfully. The image might represent someone's reaction to a debate, or a comparison between a politician and a movie character – the point being that it's funny.

Voters have historically expressed political support by putting a sign up on their front lawn, but, usually, younger voters would rather take the digital way of doing that: expressing their support on social media websites. This often includes sharing memes.

"Humour is always in play," said Concordia professor Fenwick McKelvey. "Jokes become a way of performing 'in-group' and 'out-group' identities, as well as expressing what's politically acceptable and unacceptable to partisans."

The first half of the research project saw students tracking the impact of memes that were created during the 2019 election period, and with so many different characters and scandals, students had a lot of material to work with. The second half of the project saw the formation of an online encyclopedia of these images.

The research found that memes were not necessarily influential on the election's outcome, but there were still plenty of images tracked.

Canada's voter turnout is low; hopefully, Canadians keep looking at humour as a way to stay engaged with the political process.

Roger Cuzner represented the riding of Bras d'Or–Cape Breton from 2000 to 2004 and Cape Breton–Canso 2004 – 2019 for the Liberal Party.

Geoff Scott was a member of Parliament representing Hamilton–Wentworth from 1978 to 1993 for the Progressive Conservative Party.



Arnold Malone.

A trick on a trickster

By Arnold Malone

This column is about country stuff. The riding I held for more than 19 years was a huge swath of rural real estate. The Crowfoot riding had more square miles than any one of the smallest forty-two nations at the United Nations. During my tenure Crowfoot had one hundred and thirteen towns, villages or hamlets. I lived at the very northwest boundary of the riding. To attend a meeting in Acadia Valley, in the far southeast corner, it was a three-hour one-way drive. That drive was entirely through farming and ranch country.

In farm communities? people primarily work and play within a forty-mile radius of their home. Additionally, they know a lot about the others in their circle.

Most persons in rural Canada know the make and colour of a vehicle that others drive. They can identify Jim's half-ton truck with the side mirror broken off; the faded blue vehicle named Old Blue that Hank has driven for two and a half decades and Jordan's new white three quarter ton truck that he replaces every two years. Farmers know their neighbours and the cars and trucks they drive.

It follows therefore when neighbours are friends and two vehicles are moving towards each other on a country road there is a vigorous wave from one vehicle to the other. Every driver has his or her own wave pattern. Joyce's arm would go straight out from her shoulder then bend upward at the elbow and stay fixed while her hand vibrated like a Hummingbird wing. Fred didn't really wave he just gave a nod and touched the brim of his hat with his forefinger; Emile did a large sweeping arch across the inside of the windshield. People in a community knew the vehicles that others drove and what wave to expect.

So it came to pass that I had asked Geoff Scott to speak at a constituency

gathering at Big Knife Park near the centre of my riding. As usual he did his impersonations of a variety of political personalities. He excited the audience and was, to use the queen's language, "a smashing success."

The next day I asked Geoff, an urban MP from Hamilton to come with me as I attended a meeting in Acadia Valley. When I drove out of my farmyard, Lawrence Wenig was driving out of his yard and gave me his traditional wave. I waved back. Geoff asked, "Who was that?" and I told him about my neighbour. A mile later the Brewers were exiting their driveway and again there was a wave. Geoff asked, who that was? So, I told him about the Brewer's.

After we entered the secondary highway #83 towards Camrose we met five vehicles that flashed a wave and Geoff asked, "Who they were? So, again more descriptions about people I knew.

After leaving Camrose I had decided that I would take Geoff forty miles towards the village of Rosalind, my original home community, a place where my two brothers still farmed. I wanted Geoff to see the beautiful Battle River Valley and the farm area where I once lived.

About ten miles north of Rosalind I was back in familiar country. I knew this community. So, as we approached on coming cars/trucks there was a succession of waves and each time Geoff asked who they were? Again, I was able to give a description of the person and what they did. As we drove south from Rosalind towards our home farm the same experience took place. These were once my very close neighbours so I was able to talk in detail about each of them.

It was obvious that this activity was a surprise for an urban chap. Geoff made some comments about his marvel of my seeing a vehicle and knowing whom the occupant would be.

This also excited those neurons that cause one to engage in mischief. As we drove further from my home community towards Forestburg and then near other small prairie villages, I continued to wave at every vehicle we met.

Just in case this all seems strange I

need to share that in farm country if someone waves at you, then you better make sure to wave back. Otherwise you may be challenged in the curling rink next week for being stuck-up. In fact, many people have been caught waving at an unknown driver who was reaching upward to flip his sun visor down. The very hint of a wave means you must wave back, it is expected in farm country.

Throughout the remainder of the long trip to Acadia Valley I waved at every vehicle that approached and always Geoff asked, "Who was that?" I always had an answer prepared even though I didn't have a clue who they were. "Oh that was Fitzgerald Hepstewski, he farms just beyond that hill", I would reply. We met dozens of vehicles on that drive and every wave I gave was returned with a huge smile and vigour's wave. Geoff always wanted to know who that driver was and I always had some fictitious name and background information ready. Geoff was impressed.

I was fortunate that Geoff never asked me to recall any of the names or descriptions of a driver we met minutes ago. My neuron supply had a limit such that the manufacturing of a new name required that I had to forget those past names to make room for another lie.

The next day I drove Geoff to the Edmonton airport. By now the mischievous activity was history so there was no consideration of a confession.

Back in Ottawa I was going for lunch at my party's common table in the parliamentary restaurant. Just as I was approaching the alcove I paused – beyond the view of the members – as I could hear Geoff Scott speaking to his colleagues, "No wonder he got elected. We drove for hours upon hour and he knew every person on the road. Every one of them waved and smiled at him.

So, the lesson is: Never believe everything you think.

Arnold Malone was the Progressive Conservative member for the Alberta riding of Battle River, elected in 1974. He became the member from Crowfoot in 1979, serving until 1993. He currently lives in Invermere, B.C. and writes a weekly column for the Columbia Valley Pioneer.

Social media and politics

Connecting with constituents authentically

By Gina Hartmann

When it comes to politics, social media outlets can be a double-edged sword. While it's a free way of promoting campaigns and an opportunity for elected officials to connect with their constituents on a different platform, it can also invite harsher criticism and conflict.

Former parliamentarian, Celina Caesar-Chavannes is well versed in the world of social media. With over 20k followers on Twitter, she has seen the benefits of such a platform for politics and connecting with people in a genuine way.

"It provided an immediate response, either positive or negative, to everything I did. It gave me the temperature gauge to what people were feeling. I came in as a sort of unknown and my profile grew over the last four years based on the things that I said or did, really early on," she recalled.

In 2016, Celina decided to share her personal story of depression with the public. She used her platform to create discussion on the topic of mental health, a topic that had a tendency to be avoided. A portion of her Twitter profile now states that she is "a woman with a master to #destigmatize #mentalhealth."

"When I talked about my mental health issues, I received an overwhelmingly positive response. Going viral on social media allowed me to connect to more people on different levels. I responded personally to every person that sent me a private message. It gave me that intimate connection to the people I was serving.

"I would use it to show the human side of the politician. I wanted to connect with people in a way that I knew was Celina before politics. I didn't want to engage by knowing when the budget came out, I would be engaged if that person was saying something I was interested in and snuck in a little politics."

In 2016, Abacus explored how Canadians used the internet to discuss and learn about politics. Fifty-one per cent of people gain information from a digital news source (online news), rather



Celina Caesar-Chavannes (submitted photo).

than offline and the study stated, "Social media's status as a primary source of news and information for Canadians has more than doubled in two years." It was also discovered that four in 10 Canadians describe themselves as people who like to share their opinions about politics.

Social media is an outlet that allows politicians to provide insight into their real lives and share their stories with the public, but because it's an open form of communications, there can be negative response – particularly for women. A study of women politicians across the globe performed by the Inter-Parliamentary Union stated that 41.8 per cent of the respondents believed that social media had disseminated images of or comments about them that were highly contemptuous or sexually charged. Respondents reported receiving threats and harassing comments through social media platforms.

"I would say, even when I talked about my mental health in 2016, there was 'get thicker skin' and 'if you can't do this job, you shouldn't be here,' but I think those comments were few and far between," said Celina.

However, she found there was a bigger pushback when she decided to push harder for equity and inclusion on social media. When she questioned another member about their privilege, the response was not as welcoming at first.

While she believes it's important for people to use social media as a means to post about their beliefs and stand up to injustice.

"Once you are in it, you are in it. The only time I was hesitant was after that exchange because it started getting scary. But it was not enough to make me stop talking about equity and justice issues. There is no sort of putting it back in the jar and closing the lid. It's either I continue or fade into nothingness and I didn't want to do that."

Soon the hashtag #HereforCelina started up and began to show a different opinion about the experience and her post. Both responses allowed Celina to recognize the role that social media can play.

"It was a wave of change in how people responded. That for me, was the other critical moment in understanding social media and how it works," she said. "It doesn't work by powerful people or powerful political folks, it's regular people who can galvanize a message and gather to become powerful. It's the epitome, the realization of the term 'power to the people'. Social media has given them that platform to say we stand with you, or we don't."

The Abacus Data report stated that 71 per cent of Canadians can be persuaded to change their mind, and the change in response to Celina's message is proof of that power. For politicians or anyone looking to spark change within their community or to an even larger audience, social media can provide that outlet.

"Social media has allowed me to find who I am and to be authentic doing it. I found a voice there and I found Celina on social media. I am not going to change that person to fit back into a little box. She is out of the box – there is no containment, it's authentically Celina."

Celina Caesar-Chavannes served as member of Parliament from 2015 to 2019 representing the riding of Whibby. Elected as a Liberal, she later sat as an Independent.

Lynn McDonald's private member's bill

She put Canada on the non-smokers map

By Matt Reekie

On November 18, 2019, a piece authored by former NDP MP Lynn McDonald appeared in *The Hill Times*. In it, she discussed her proposal for a new tier of Private Members Bills. When she discussed the idea with me at the CAFP holiday reception, my interest was piqued. Two months later, I reached her in London, England, where she was more than happy to continue our conversation and share her vision for a more cooperative setting in the House of Commons.

Q: As I understand it, what you are proposing is a different kind of Private Member's Bill which can be sponsored by two or more members from different parties. How would you describe it in your own words?

A: I am proposing that there be a second tier of bills that would have to be sponsored by members of two or more parties, and they would have separate time, there would be more time allotted to them so that they would not be crowding out the initial [Private Member's hour.] My contention is that private members, especially government backbenchers, don't have enough to do, don't have the opportunity to take part in the debate and formulate policy.

Private Member's hour does give them that chance, if they can't get their bills debated, they just sit there and applaud the leader and vote how they are told. This is a way out of that. It's a way for MPs of all parties to have some more creative roles, and it's a cooperative one. This new tier, it will foster cooperation, which certainly the public would like to see more of, and I think probably MPs would like to see more of.

Q: Why isn't this happening already? What stands in the way of cross-party cooperation on private members bills?

A: I think a bill has to be moved by one person. I'm not aware that you can do it with two or more. I don't think it would take any legislation, I think it would take a meeting of the house leaders in order to set up a new system. It's certainly doable, but nobody has considered it. And of course, the party in



Lynn McDonald.

power, it's very nice for them to keep their own backbenchers quiet and not raising any trouble, so why would they want to give them more chances to show initiative, to be creative?

Now, we have a minority government. The Prime Minister might feel like it's a good idea to give a nod to other parties. He's got to persuade people in other parties to vote for his bills. This might be a way of showing good will to other parties. I think the chances of getting it through in a minority situation would be much better than in a majority.

Q: Have you spoken to anybody who is currently in the House of Commons for this or do you know that there is any interest in the House for this?

A: I had that article published in *The Hill Times*, and I sent it to a number of people, and I did discuss it with a number of NDP colleagues. Jack Harris was one, and Don Davies, I think the MP with the largest number of submitted Private Member's Bills. There was certainly some interest. But I don't have conservative contacts, so I haven't taken it any further.

Q: What is the purpose of this new tier of Private Member's Bills? What is the issue that you are try-

ing to solve, and that cannot be solved by the current established parliamentary procedures.

A: There are lots of things governments don't want to do. In the case of my Non-Smokers Health Act, it should have been brought in by a Health Minister. It could have been brought in years earlier, but no Health Minister would do it. There are lots of things that Private Members can see the point of doing, they can't persuade ministers to do it. It means that people can propose ideas and get them discussed.

Q: So promoting a diversity of ideas, in a way that fosters cross party-cooperation?

A: That's the beauty of having this second tier. I think the Canadian public is pretty fed up with the strident tone in the House, they would like to see more cooperation. This is why MPs would look at fellow MPs as possible colleagues across party lines, not just as opponents. This would be a good way of promoting a more cooperative spirit in the House.

Q: What are some issues facing the country today that these bills could address?

A: I would say the vaping issue is one that the government has failed to act strongly enough on. Climate change, of course, is the biggest issue, most aspects of climate change you couldn't do much on, but there are probably some. When I say some things, when you are going to get 5 hours of debate, you can do more than with one hour of debate, but clearly you can't bring in a comprehensive climate change strategy. So you have to take on something that would be fairly precise and limited.

My Non-Smokers Health Act addressed an issue that should have been advanced by a Health Minister years before, but it wasn't. Canada was the first country to get it, and it was done by a Private Member's Bill.

Lynn McDonald was the NDP MP for Broadview-Greenwood from 1982 to 1988.

*Hon. John Reid.*

The time is out of joint: Hamlet

By Hon. John Reid

How will we weather the changes and uncertainties of the emerging world?

A few weeks ago, I attended a lecture by a distinguished professor of Jungian studies, Dr. James Hollis. He is the author of many books, 14 at this time of writing, and is considered one of the experts in Jungian studies. The subject matter was how does our past, including that of our immediate ancestors, impact our decisions and that of our societies. In the question and answer period, a question was posed about “the collective disfunctioning” of US society as expressed in its politics and the deep divisions with normal society, the apparent lack of any civility in collective discourse.

Professor Hollis suggested that many societies were at inflection points. These inflection points are similar to the ones we all must endure, when our old patterns no longer support us. The US is going through great changes, and many more are approaching quickly. He identified Artificial Intelligence (AI) as one that would likely be transformative, making significant changes in all societies. He noted that the US was not the only country going through these changes, and referenced the two year debate in Great Britain over Brexit – their withdrawing from the European community. He also noted the lack of faith in democracy in many countries because democratic institutions were unable to deal with many of the changes impacting them, thus their faith in strong, unilateral leaders whose word is fiat, irrespective of whatever constitution or law may exist in their nation.

Is democracy dying?

“L’etat c’est moi”, the motto of Louis XIV, is now the new disposition in these states. It is not only in Third and Fourth world countries where this is the norm, but also increasingly in the

*Dr. James Hollis.*

First and Second worlds as well. Many of these leaders were elected democratically and moved to take increased power with the support often of the electorate.

In my time, I have seen many changes, not all of which have been pleasant. The recession of the late 1950s, the “burning of the bras” feminist marches in the 1960s, the Cuban missile crisis, the Pentagon Papers revelations about the Vietnam War, racial riots, the assassination of John F. Kennedy, that of his brother, Robert Kennedy, that of Martin Luther King, the attempted assassination of Ronald Reagan, the fall of Richard Nixon – all shook the USA. These actions spoke to the fundamental social changes forcing themselves into the mainstream of U.S. society then.

Our economies have had many bumps too, from stagflation in the late 1970s, the recession in the late 1980s, the dot.com bubble burst in the late 1990s (it took until 2015 for the NASDAQ to regain its former peak) and, of course, the great economic crash of 2007-08. It took fully 10 years to recover fully from that.

At the same time, there were massive changes taking place: the development of the personal computer, the expansion and development of the Internet and the increasing role of social media, the decline of traditional media, the smart phone, the development of robotics now allied with Artificial Intelligence. We now know that our governments spy on us, thanks to Wiki Leaks, that cameras are (almost) everywhere and facial recognition technology is well in the hands of governments and large corporations.

Privacy has been eroded and continues to be compromised. Government and the private sector routinely swap data about us; if they have 400 bits of your data, they know you better than your parents; if they have 800 bits, they know you better than your spouse or best friends ever did. The changes appear to be speeding up, and no one knows how to slow it down.

Are the times out of joint?

People feel that the times are out of joint. Nostalgia is a powerful emotion, and when situations do not feel comfortable, we go back to our emotional memories, to a time when we felt safe and secure, usually when we were at home with parents.

An important function of memory is to forget, and replace what actually happened with what we want to feel happened. Much of our criminal law is based on testimony based on accurately recalled memory of events, but we know that memory is not that accurate, still it is one of the few tools we have and so it is used, often flawed, because it is all we have in many cases.

Governance is not an easy task at the best of times; democratic governance is even more difficult. To be effective, democracy needs an intelligent, working society of electors, who are willing to put in the time to understand issues,



Social media is having a profound impact upon our society and we're still trying to come to terms with it.

to debate and work out satisfactory solutions. Not all attempts to solve persistent problems will be successful, because no one can see the future. So we are always trying to deal with changes in full flight before we completely understand them, both individually and collectively. This is a formula for mistakes but “to err is human” and inevitable.

Still coming to grips with social media

An example of this is social media, where we are still trying to come to grips with the changes it has made and is making to our societies. This is hard work. It takes time, and it leads into uncomfortable situations where to follow the logic means to give up cherished opinions or faith. This can mean losing status with a group, changing jobs, disruption in the family, etc. People will look at the cost of intellectual change and determine it is not worth the effort and carry on unchanged. “If he/she is for it, then I am against it.”

One has only to look at social media to see what happens when one challenges the received faith of an “echo chamber”. An example is what happened to the 16-year-old Swede, Greta Thunberg, at the Davos conference. She, using the scientific consensus of

global warming, was attacked for not knowing anything about global warming and being held to a higher standard of proof than the adults around her.

There are no easy answers because many of our problems are embedded in the human psyche. We cannot live alone, humans are social animals, but we find it difficult to live in society, especially when society does not agree with us, and, of course, we are always right! Give and take is difficult for many because our personalities are bound up in our beliefs and opinions. Our fear is that if we change either or both, we shall be diminished, not only in our own eyes, but in the eyes of our friends and acquaintances.

Humans have enormous power

With all of these changes arriving without warning (for most of us) and the time it takes to work out their impacts, we are all disconcerted and affected. We are going through the end of the American Peace since WW II, the shrinking of the European Union, the rise of China as the workshop of the world, the decline of the world order created out of the wreckage of WWII, the threat of global warming, the weakening of international organizations and the rise of international diseases (Ebola and Coronavirus), and

the need for international solutions for a host of problems, to mention only a few of them.

But we must not forget that we humans have enormous power in our complex brains. We have built many civilizations of great complexity; we have constructed wonderful things; we are not to sell ourselves short. Having worked to get where we are we know that with effort and brain power we can overcome our current problems, but to do so, we not only have to acknowledge our power but also the limitations of that power in the form of the human psyche and the impediments that it imposes.

The world has changed, it has become larger; we now live in Marshall McLuhan's Global Village but we as individuals have become smaller and feel less powerful as unknown and known forces change our world into a new destiny.

We are in for a difficult decade (if we are fortunate) while these new systems work their way through our worlds. All of us will have to learn to live through ambiguity, while we seek certainty and dream of nostalgia in an uncertain world. But there is no going back.

Hon. John Reid was the Liberal MP for Keno-
ra-Rainy River from 1965 to 1984.



Hon. David Kilgour

China's treatment of the Uyghurs rings alarms

The coronavirus brings into question the conditions at Xinjiang

Extracted from Hon. David Kilgour's text and notes by Gina Hartmann

The coronavirus epidemic has been flooding the main news streams throughout the 2020 and, while it's dominating the majority of information Canadians are receiving about China, there is a more pressing and upsetting story that should be told, according to David Kilgour. It is that of the Uyghurs.

The Uyghurs are Turkic-speaking Muslims from the Central Asian region, with a large population living in Xinjiang, but the Chinese government has taken a distinct approach toward the minorities living in Xinjiang with nearly a million Uyghurs living in detainment camps.

It's hard to imagine the magnitude of the entire movement, but David Kilgour suggests removing oneself from the facts and personalizing the situation by focusing on the individual.

When a young woman named Maya (pseudonym) had left Egypt to come to Xinjiang for work, she ended up finding herself in a terrible situation. In 2015, she tried to visit her parents but was separated from her children and placed in a "vocational training centre". She later witnessed the death of her child, he recounts.

What are re-education camps?

"In 2017, Xi Jinping began erecting a "re-education" gulag for Muslim communities similar to the forced labour camps established for Falun Gong members after mid-1999. Both networks receive inmates arrested by police without a hearing, trial or appeal, a grim practice invented in Stalin's Soviet Union and adopted in Hitler's Third Reich," wrote former member of Parliament, David Kilgour for an article in The Epoch Times.

While the situation in Xinjiang in-

volving the Uyghurs people is concerning and raises a lot of moral flags, the outbreak of the coronavirus highlights new and developing concerns.

"There are major fears that the virus may have spread to Xinjiang, where an estimated one to three million Uyghurs and other Muslims reside in hundreds of camps," stated Kilgour. "Adrian Zenz of Germany, one of the leading researchers on Xinjiang's mass internments, notes, 'The coronavirus could add an entirely new dimension to the Xinjiang crisis.'"

David Kilgour is a former Parliamentarian and is currently a human rights activist. He is a Senior Fellow to the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights. During his time in the House he served as Secretary of State for Asia and the Pacific. In 2006 he spoke out about allegations that numerous Falun Gong practitioners had been sacrificed to serve China's organ transplant industry.

Kilgour worked with lawyer and human rights activist, David Matas, and wrote a report on the matter. He later published a book and travelled to different countries to raise awareness on the issue.

Kilgour shares others' concerns

"Dr. Enver Tohti, a Uyghur, has said that in 1995, when he was a general surgeon in an Urumqi hospital, he was taken to an execution ground by hospital authorities and removed the kidneys and liver from a man, who was alive when the operation began," wrote Kilgour. "In his 2014 book, The Slaughter, Ethan Gutmann estimates that the organs of 65,000 Falun Gong adherents and 2,000 to 4,000 Uyghurs, Tibetans, and Christians were forcibly harvested in China between 2000 and 2008."

Since 2016, people of the Muslim community have had numerous health checks and have blood samples taken while other individuals have not experienced the same scrutiny, according to Dr. Maya Mitalipova at the Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research at MIT. The Saudi Centre for Organ Transplant stated their citizens have bought black market organs and illegally transported them to China.

Elimination of racism

The UN committee dedicated to the elimination of racism has stated a call to action that "responsible governments and businesses worldwide should join the United States and Australia in boycotting anyone doing business in Xinjiang. Forced labour in its internment camps is poisoning the supply chain of a number of well-known companies from democratic nations operating there."

While there are some questionable moral considerations at play, from a public health standpoint, Kilgour suggests international health players should get involved, especially during the coronavirus outbreak.

"The international community should call on Beijing to allow the International Red Cross and the World Health Organization access to Xinjiang and its camps to monitor and oversee the conditions and what is being done, if anything, to stem the spread of coronavirus," he says.

Please refer to the Epoch Times article. https://www.theepochtimes.com/the-risk-to-chinas-uyghurs-from-coronavirus-demands-action_3236803.html

The Hon. David Kilgour was a member of Parliament for 27 years (1979-2006). He served under the Progressive Conservative Party, the Liberal Party and sat as an Independent.

Do Canadian elections meet the accessibility challenge?

By Wade Morris

In 2017, 6.2 million Canadians reported having one or more disabilities to Statistics Canada. That's 22 per cent of the country's population over the age of 15. The most common types of disabilities reported involve pain, flexibility, mobility, or mental health.

Disabilities are clearly prevalent, but accessibility doesn't ever seem to be at the forefront of conversations during election periods. With flexibility and mobility being of such high concern, it's easy to see how barriers could exist within the political process, making it tougher to vote, stay politically engaged, or even run as a candidate.

So, what is Elections Canada doing to make elections accessible? And what can they do?

Elections Canada launched the Advisory Group for Disability Issues in 2014. The group included members who could provide expertise and advice to Elections Canada regarding their existing and future accessibility initiatives. Some of their work contributed to the 2015 federal election, while the 2019 election saw some of its own improvements.

What is being done?

For clarity, the ballots from the 2019 election included larger text than their 2015 counterparts. Factors that might not initially cross one's mind as relevant to accessibility were also considered. Jewelles Smith, a member of the Advisory Group for Disability Issues, told CBC last year that multiple types of pencils were tested to see which would be easiest to mark ballots with, a change that would help voters who may have trouble writing.

The selection of polling places is one process in which accessibility plays a major role. Elections Canada doesn't pick just any building to operate as a polling place; venues are tested by a set of criteria measuring their accessibility. Some criteria are mandatory: a polling place must, for example, meet certain physical measurements to ensure easy access, have functioning lighting, and place its



Accessibility is an important factor when Elections Canada selects locations for polling booths.

voting room on the same floor as the entrance.

Evidence

Recently, the Canadian Centre on Disability Studies launched a new project operating under the name Eviance, an amalgamation of the words 'evidence', 'advancement', and 'vie', French for 'life'.

"Eviance really embraces an inclusive, accessible society that's sustainable for all," says executive director Susan Hardie. "That includes, most importantly, the democratic process. I can reflect back 30 years, and physical access to voting booths was an issue. I cannot say that we could see our peers as in the elected officials. A lot of that has changed."

Eviance, which primarily operates in Winnipeg, where so much has been done to advance the cause of people with disabilities, developed a booklet called "Voting with a Difference". The booklet, made available in physical and digital form, acts as a "straightforward guide" to registration and voting. It answers just about any question a voter could have, covering topics from identification to ballot types to polling stations.

The guide frames most of its headings as questions a voter may ask, and writes to a broad audience rather than trying to frame its content around specific disabilities.

"We used an intersectional approach," Susan explains, "and we also used plain language as best as possible. If we used a laundry list of disabilities, it would never be perfect."

This approach works so well because it's inclusive, Susan explains. Canadians who have physical or intellectual disabilities could benefit from the booklet, but so could the aging population, whose terminology often intersects with that of disability advocates, or others: "Sometimes using the term 'disability' makes it less relatable, for people who don't recognize disability within their culture, or also with the aging population," Susan says, "so we tended to try to focus on using inclusive language."

More improvements in the offing

The next election cycle may see more changes. The federal government has been working on a bill for years that would, in its words, "enhance the full and equal participation of all persons, especially persons with disabilities, in society," hoping to form "a Canada without barriers, particularly by the identification, removal and prevention of barriers."

Bill C-81, titled the Accessible Canada Act, received Royal Assent in June 2019. The act would apply to the public sector, Crown corporations, and all other federal organizations – including Elections Canada.

The Act will inevitably reshape the way accessibility enters the electoral conversation. Under Bill C-81, Elections Canada will likely need to take firmer action to remove barriers between political participation and folks with disabilities. Specifically, Elections Canada will need to prepare a report ensuring their approach meets the regulations established under the Canadian Accessibility Standards Development Organization.

It is not yet known what impact Bill C-81 will make on the next federal election cycle. Hopefully, the act will help more voices be heard in our democracy.

Peter Stoffer puts parliamentary experience to use

By Gina Hartmann

Peter Stoffer has bounced back from cancer and wants to keep on giving.

Peter Stoffer may be busier now than when he was in politics. The former member of Parliament isn't short of volunteer opportunities and he's proud to be continuously contributing to his community and country.

"There are thousands and thousands of Canadians who give back to the country every day and I am just fortunate enough to be one of those people who has the time and the health to be able to volunteer," said the former MP. "I, like many others, feel it's important to help your community and province and country become even better than what it is now. I am no different than any other volunteer. I have a supportive family, my wife volunteers as well and we are fortunate to be able to do this."

The Hour of Heroes

To start off, Peter hosts a weekly radio show titled "The Hour of Heroes", where he interviews emergency workers, veterans, military, frontline workers and many others who serve the country.

"I talk with all the wonderful people who have very stressful jobs wearing the uniforms of our municipality, province and country. What I really try to do is allow the audience to get to know these people and why they chose their careers. One 911 call brings a bunch of saviours running to save you and I think that's a pretty neat thing. It's interesting to get to know these folks," said the radio host.

In May of this year, Peter is hosting a 75th anniversary celebration of the liberation of the Netherlands.

Dinner for 750

"I will be holding dinner for 750 of my friends down here in Halifax. We are hoping to raise funds and all proceeds will go to five different veteran programs and first responder organizations."

As former NDP shadow minister of Veteran Affairs, Peter continues to support those who serve the country



Peter Stoffer (Submitted photo).

through the group Atlantic Heroes. The organization provides a free three bedroom apartment to any first responders and their family within Atlantic Canada, who are receiving medical treatment in Halifax. Stoffer hopes to have more units in the future to offer more space to those during a time of need.

"It offers them the comfort and security blanket in knowing there are people that care about them and that we will do everything we can to protect you. It's based on the Ronald McDonald House, and they were helpful to us. We have had a fair amount of people stay with us. If you have a safe and warm place to stay, your treatment will go much better."

Peter represented the NDP and held the seat of Sackville-Eastern Shore from 2004 to 2015 and Sackville-Musquodoboit Valley-Easternshore from 1997 to 2004. He lost his seat when the Liberal red wave poured across the Atlantic in the 2015 election, but Peter is thankful for his departure for a particular reason.

Kicked me out and saved my life!

"To be honest with you, saying goodbye to the people was the hardest part," he said of leaving the House. "The fortunate thing is I decided to get myself medically checked out because as

an MP you usually don't. They found prostate cancer and I was very lucky to have the surgery in time. I was 61 years old at the time of diagnosis. I was very lucky. My constituents don't know but they actually saved my life by not voting for me."

Now Peter finds himself using his time to give back to the community in a variety of ways, and his volunteer work expands to a myriad of different ventures. While he sits on several boards, including director of Nova Scotia with the Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians, he does seek a multitude of ways to give back, including working on a committee with GENCANBIO to look at the efficacy of medical marijuana and discovering why it works and the effects it has. He also works with a water company to review ways in which chlorine could be removed from drinking water.

Peter feels blessed to have had the opportunity to serve the country and sees volunteering as a way to continue to give back.

Blessed to call Canada home

"My parents told me all about what happened in the war, before, during and after. My dad always said, if Canada has a military like that, you can imagine the country they come from. We have been blessed to call Canada our home."

Peter was born in Netherlands. "The fact that I was an elected member of Parliament and the benefit that come with that: meeting people, travelling, working in your own party in a proactive way and working with other members – you see the yard stick moving slowly and positively and it gives you satisfaction that maybe you left behind something in a good way. In order for me to keep saying thank you to Canada, for everything it has done for me, I feel it's only proper for me to give back."

Peter Stoffer was a member of Parliament from 1997 to 2015. He represented the riding of Sackville-Eastern Shore for the NDP.

Centre Block restoration

Keeping historical craftsmanship in a modern space

By Gina Hartmann

Parliament's Centre Block is the ultimate symbol of Canadian democratic history. It has seen the many faces of every federally elected official and many important decisions, that marked the pathway for this country, have been made within its halls. As it is being renovated, it is important to preserve the original state of the building, to keep history alive and tangible, as we move forward.

Priscilla Lo is one of the many contributors helping preserve the greatness of Centre Block while it's under renovations. A project coordinator with Heritage Grade, Priscilla and her team will ensure Centre Block will still display its original features when the final project is revealed in 10 to 15 years.

"One of the fundamentals with regards to all heritage, whether it's a building or an object, is that you have to respect the history and the intent of what was done because it really tells a story and informs future design. You have to learn what the object's history is in order to best serve it," said Priscilla. "We want to preserve our cultural and heritage objects, so we have to take a step back and observe."

Therefore, it's important for restoration consultations to take place long before the construction begins. An initial assessment is made which includes revisions of drawings and blueprints to help determine the path forward.

Centre Block was originally built between 1859 and 1876 and designed by John A. Pearson and Jean Omer Marchand. In 1916, a fire took over Centre Block and destroyed most of the building, except for the Library, which is the only original room left in the building. It was rehabilitated by 1927 and the iconic tower was renamed the Peace Tower as a national symbol of remembrance to those who had given their lives in the first World War.

"We had access to the original drawings that Pearson actually made, which



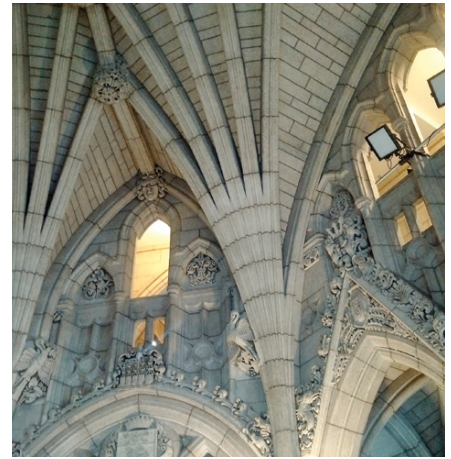
The Library of Parliament.

is really cool; we have all the historical images. Centre Block has been around for a very long time. It has gone through two fires; there is a lot of history there. But there is architectural detail that can't be replicated because we must do our best to meet the new requirements of the present day as well as the history that it speaks to," explained Priscilla.

While the renovated Centre Block will present original architectural features, it does need to be updated to adhere to modern constructional standards to be stronger and more sustainable.

"We are looking at modifying the windows and dealing with structural aspects – wiring, electrical, mechanical – that all has to be reworked to bring the building up to to present day building code. To do that we have to understand the skeleton of the building which is part of the history. There is a lot of integration between past and future and present."

While today's rehabilitation will mainly be an upgrade that keeps the floor plan relatively the same, there will be a new visitor's centre, which is planned to be in the front of Centre Block but underground as well as some other small additions. Aside from the added spaces, Priscilla can understand keeping eve-



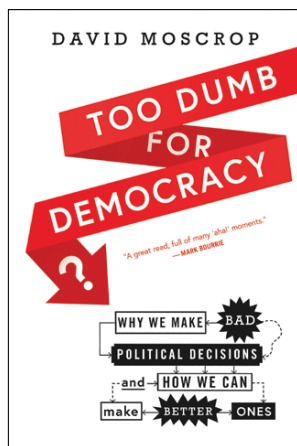
The beautiful entry hall to Centre Block with its gothic arches.

rything in its original form, especially when you get up close and personal.

"I have done the public tours and they touch on small details of the building, but working there full time for two years, you get to know the specifics. Things that weren't accessible to us before, like the ceiling; it's a 20-foot room, I believe – you can walk on the scaffolding and look at the ceiling and see the details up close. The masonries, all the carved wood – these are hand carved wood panels and it's interesting to see that craftsmanship."

Once the consultation is completed, Priscilla and her team will make sure construction is taking woodwork apart carefully and avoiding damage and that pieces are stored and packaged properly, and instructions are made for each piece for future workers. Documentation and measurement is carefully preserved made to ensure that architectural pieces are all removed and replaced into the building in the correct manner.

"I see a lot of bureaucratic office stuff and it's nice to step back and say, Wow! This is a cool project, regardless of what happens from now and until the end. It's a huge undertaking that is necessary and I think it's important that people are trying to preserve it. It's interesting."



Nobody is 'Too Dumb for Democracy' in edifying book

Reviewed by Wade Morris

Too Dumb for Democracy? Why We Make Bad Political Decisions and How We Can Make Better Ones, by David Moscrop. Published 2019 by Goose Lane Editions. 254 pages. \$22.95.

Ottawa author and political theorist David Moscrop tackles these questions in his thought-provoking new book, *Too Dumb for Democracy? Why We Make Bad Political Decisions and How We Can Make Better Ones*. The title may sound harsh, but rest assured: Nobody is too dumb for democracy. David argues the opposite, in fact: “It’s not that we lack the capacity to make good political decisions, but we do not have the incentives, skills, resources, or opportunities to do so.”

The book discusses the psychological aspects of decision-making and the history of democracy while making the overall argument that we should reassess both our thought process and larger institutions. He approaches these ideas from a number of angles – notably psychology, sociology, philosophy and history – and puts ideas like emotional and rational thinking, personality types, media tactics, and subconscious thinking into a voter’s perspective.

David does not describe particular political events as ‘bad decisions’, but he does reference his own beliefs (he writes that climate change could lead to catastrophic outcomes depending on the decisions). Still, David delicately draws upon hypothetical situations and characters that reflect the

entire political spectrum.

“It doesn’t matter if you’re liberal or conservative,” he writes. “What matters is how you come to your conclusions and policies. And since democracy requires repeated political decisions over time, achieving and maintaining good processes, regardless of party affiliation, sets us up for success in the long run.”

Instead of telling readers what’s best for them, David challenges readers to reflect on their own choices. Within that reflection, the reader is encouraged to separate themselves from their party and other institutions, and think about what’s important to them as an individual (isn’t that what democracy’s about?) Good political process, David writes, requires a voter to understand multiple sides of an issue. Instead, voters often pick their party first and defend every one of their positions, even stretching the truth to do so. Perhaps thinking beyond party lines would encourage non-partisanship and limit some of the ugliness found in politics.

So, what are ‘good decisions’ and how are they different from ‘bad’ ones? The key is not in the outcome reached, but in the process: “A bad political decision is one driven by bias, poor or incorrect information, or hidden motives,” he writes. “It is a decision we are likely to rationalize in the face of challenging or questioning. And it’s something we’re all prone to do, including me.”

Beyond its overarching argument, the book is packed with information on the human brain, and it’s presented in a compelling manner. David illus-

trates types of decisions with a wide variety of anecdotes: on one page, he’s a kid, fed up with a referee’s call against the Detroit Red Wings; on another, he’s getting robbed on vacation.

The information in the book is never too dry to digest. A particularly funny chapter sees David illustrating five theoretical models of thinking using characters we’ve surely all come across: hypothetical partygoers that have trapped you into a conversation about politics that you desperately want to escape.

David wanted *Too Dumb for Democracy* to be accessible and useful, and he drew upon as many disciplines as he could to give weight to his ideas. He had studied politics, history, and philosophy for years before writing the book, and, during his PhD, received guidance from psychology researchers at the University of British Columbia. This shaped the way he thought about the human brain, leading to the book’s conception.

What’s most admirable about David’s writing is the way he manages to relay so much knowledge on such a contentious matter without seeming patronizing or condescending. David kept this in mind while writing: “It’s not a smart-versus-stupid thing. It’s not an elite-versus-non-elite thing. It’s a human thing,” he explains.

Ultimately, *Too Dumb for Democracy* concisely covers so much ground that it’s bound to teach politically-minded readers something new. Readers who are interested in thinking about politics on a deeper human level would enjoy the book.

The man who built 24 Sussex

Reviewed by Geoff Currier

Joseph Merrill Currier: I Am, Gentlemen, Your Obedient Servant, by Andrew Narraway published by North Gower, Ontario: Rideau Township Historical Society, 2019. 73 pages with illustration. \$15.

If you served our country as a member of Parliament, there's a good chance you have visited 24 Sussex Drive. The home of Canadian prime ministers since 1954, it was given the name Gorffwysfa by its builder, Joseph Merrill Currier. Prime Minister Chrétien had a portrait of the one-time owner hung in the hallway. It may still be there.

In a relatively brief volume, Andrew Narraway of the Rideau Township Historical Society lays out the life of one of Ottawa's most important figures prior to and in the years after Confederation. While not celebrated with streets named after him like Slater, Nichols or Sparks, Currier was nonetheless one of the men who transformed Bytown from a backwater, roughneck town to the nation's capital, even serving as one of its very first MPs. (They weren't paid in those days unless in cabinet).

Narraway outlines the history of the family's arrival in North America in the mid 1600s. The family originated in England, although in his obituary, the Ottawa Citizen incorrectly identified Currier as being of French background. This may explain why certain official records have published this inaccuracy. Still, Narraway has re-printed the obituary and the story which covered his burial in 1884. A read of those two articles reveal his importance and impact on the city.

J.M. began life as a labourer and rose to prominence and the book gives a reasonably accurate account of that rise, and subsequent fall due to financial hardships. It's a fascinating story and one of the failings of the book is the lack of exploration into his character, personality and relationships. It is essentially a chronology. We learn a



The prime minister's official residence was built by a local labourer turned MP.

fair bit about what he did with his life but almost nothing about the man himself.

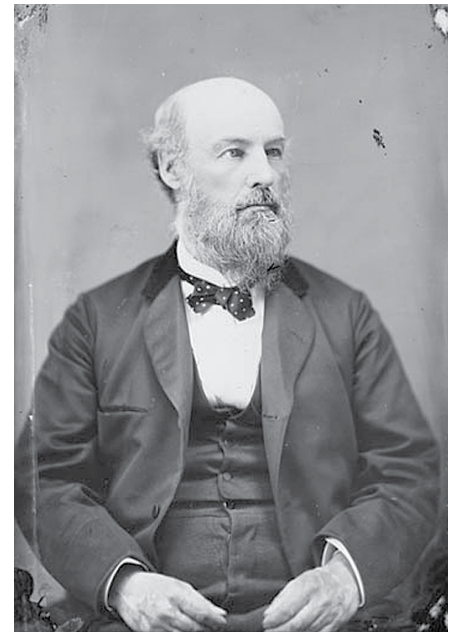
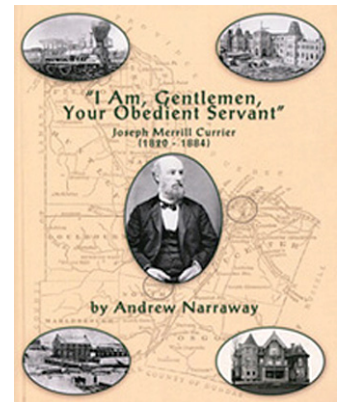
Currier's life mirrors that of the development of the Ottawa area as a major lumber producing region. It was the lumber business which enabled him to make his fortune, and ironically, perhaps what cost it in the end. However the book doesn't get the real inside scoop on why his many business ventures went sour. We're left to wonder what could have gone south on the man who was involved in such a variety of business endeavours.

We do learn about his connections to others like Moss Dickenson, with whom he partnered to build what is now called Watson's Mill in Manotick, a town he co-founded. He also founded Beachwood Cemetery where his and so many of his descendants are laid to rest.

That local landmarks do not bear his name or honour his contributions to Ottawa life, is lamented to some degree by Narraway as he outlines how J.M. managed to overcome enormous personal tragedy to taste success.

For those curious about the early days of Ottawa and some of the people who helped shape it, this is a quick read which ideally would send the reader to more in depth research.

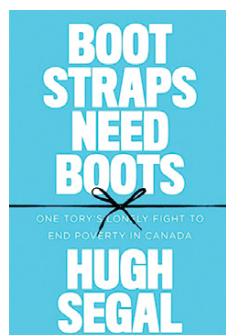
Geoff Currier is a Winnipeg broadcaster and the great-great-grandson of Joseph Merrill Currier. This review first appeared in Rabble.



Joseph Merrill Currier (1820-1884). Photo courtesy of Library and Archives Canada.

J.M. Currier in politics

Currier served as Ontario provincial member for By Ward from 1863 and continued on in politics through Confederation until 1882. He voted Conservative federally. It appears that the loss of his fortune was tied to his position as a member of Parliament and false accusations of conflict of interest. After his retirement in 1882, he served as postmaster of Ottawa until his death.



Segal's bird's eye view into the Tory Party

Reviewed by the Hon. Bill Blaikie.

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Bootstraps Need Boots: One Tory's Lonely Fight to End Poverty in Canada, by Hugh Segal with an introduction by Andrew Coyne, published by University of Chicago Press. 216 pages. \$32.95.

Hugh Segal's new book, *Bootstraps Need Boots: One Tory's Lonely Fight to End Poverty in Canada*, is a good read. As an almost lifetime advocate of some form of guaranteed annual income, Segal has woven the history of the Canadian debate about a basic income policy into a book that is part personal memoir, part political memoir, part political history, and always fully partisan in favour of such a policy receiving more support than it has over the years.

It is a policy story that is told from the perspective of one who has been deeply involved in Canadian politics. Segal has long been a Tory, from his first infatuation with John Diefenbaker in the federal election of 1962, to his time on the executive of the Progressive Conservative Youth federation, and later in the offices of Tory luminaries such as Opposition leader Robert Stanfield, Ontario premier Bill Davis, and Prime Minister Brian Mulroney. Later, he would be appointed as a Conservative senator by Liberal Prime Minister Paul Martin, where he served from 2005 to 2014. He left politics to take up the position of principal of Massey College in Toronto, which he held until July of this year.

The personal memoir is largely of his childhood in Montreal. Born in 1950, he was raised in "a very low end working class family in what is now called Le Plateau" on the "cheery edge of poverty." In the chapters devoted to Segal's early years, we learn a lot about his Jewish immigrant grandparents, and the influence that their lives had on his ideas about the struggles of ordinary folk. There is also a story about his father

giving away a toy of his to a boy who his father thought needed it more, and Segal's reflection on this event underlies the book from beginning to end.

The political memoir is also personal in a way, but however one describes it, it is a romp through over 50 years of internal Tory politics, in a manner consistent with Segal's reputation for independent thinking and intelligent reflection on his own political universe. He is not happy with what has happened to Canadian conservatism in recent decades, and shares a number of insights about the liabilities of the myopic rabbit hole that conservatives have gone down, not just for them but for the country, and for the future of the liberal democratic order. He shares the concern of many on the left about the corrosive effects of poverty and increasing inequality on our politics and our way of life.

For Segal, poverty and inequality would be best addressed through the implementation of a guaranteed annual income for Canadians. "The most central issue for the poor is lack of money," he writes, consciously echoing the 1971 Senate report *Poverty in Canada* chaired by David Kroll. The Kroll report's most salient recommendation was for a guaranteed annual income to deal with poverty.

In the same vein, Segal argues that what are often seen as factors contributing to poverty are in fact the things that poverty itself causes. He also claims that bureaucracies charged with designing redistributive or social welfare policies are too often captive to the lure of fancy or nuanced targeted programs as opposed to across the board increases, or even more so, a basic annual income. While he speculates that such programs may also keep self-serving civil servants employed, the more likely or at least complimentary argument is that their political masters prefer what one might call ongoing "announcables" to the rela-

tive invisibility of a successful universal program.

In any event, Segal provides an instructive and insightful summary of the history of universal basic income as an idea in Canadian politics, and the variety of arguments, ideological and cultural, that have been deployed against it. However, he doesn't deal directly with the argument from the left that a basic annual income might provide an excuse for right-wing governments to jettison or underfund other essential social services.

From the Kroll Report, to the Mincom Pilot Project initiated by NDP premier Ed Schreyer in the 1970s (which went underappreciated for decades), to Segal's own attempt to influence a Senate report on rural poverty, *Bootstraps* tells the story of universal basic income in Canada. The happy ending to this latter day Sisyphean struggle might have been the fact that Segal was asked to play a major role in the development of what would become a major pilot initiated by the government of Ontario Liberal premier Kathleen Wynne.

But alas, and ironically for Segal, who had good reason to feel that maybe the rock he and others had been pushing uphill for years was nearing the top, it would be a fellow Conservative who would kick it back down with a vengeance. The project was only a year into its three year span when Ontario elected Conservative Premier Doug Ford. Ford cancelled the project, stranding many who had enrolled and planned their immediate futures accordingly.

As Segal laments at the end of the chapter on this tragedy, "Ford had campaigned on a slogan of 'For the People.' Obviously this didn't extend to low-income people."

The Hon. Bill Blaikie is a former MP and MLA who served as NDP member for Elmwood-Transcona from 1979 to 2008. He writes on Canadian politics, political parties and Parliament.

Our tribute to those who have passed on

By Daniel Birru, Gina Gill Hartmann, Wade Morris and Matt Reekie

Hon. Jean Bazin

Jan. 31, 1940 – Dec. 12, 2019

The Hon. Jean Bazin, the former Senator who was appointed by the Rt. Hon. Brian Mulroney, passed away on Dec. 12, 2019, just before his 80th birthday.

Jean first met Prime Minister Mulroney at the University of Laval where they became close friends. After university, in 1964, the two left Quebec City in Jean's Volkswagen and headed towards Montreal together. They continued to remain close and during his eulogy, the PM recounted a time when he ran into Jean during his honeymoon in Paris and tagged along following the couple to Southern France and over to Corsica.

"We had a wonderful time, although I at least had the decency to leave them alone at dinner time," said the PM.

Prime Minister Mulroney recalls meeting the former Senator as a young man who he described as intelligent, caring, studious and admired and loved by his friends and classmates.

The PM spoke of a time later in life when his dear friend came to him in the spring of 1984 and said, "The expectation is that you would lead the Party from a Quebec riding. If you fail to do that now, we could lose the election. If you respond properly, I think that you will lead us to a huge election victory".

Four months later, Jean sat with the prime minister when he won the largest majority in Canadian history and Quebec went from one seat to 58.

"Such were the priceless contributions of Jean Bazin," recalled the former prime minister on the significant advice he had been given.

Before becoming a senator, Jean Bazin was a lawyer with the law firm



Hon. Jean Bazin.



Réginald Bélair.

of Byers Casgrain, where he worked for 22 years. In 2011, he was awarded the distinction of Avocat émérite in recognition of his service as a lawyer. Following his career in politics, he worked with Dentons law firm. His coworker from Dentons, Jean-Claude Bachand, remembers them sharing a love of Algonquin Park, where they both had spent summers in their childhood.

"He was just ahead of me at camp, we were never there at the same time but we were so much influenced by our summers at Algonquin Park. Summer experiences created a great bond between him and I. We were clearly marked in our younger years by canoeing experiences and love of nature and the friendship in an Anglophone world for us from Quebec with many from all parts of Ontario and Canada."

Jean-Claude Bachand was truly touched to see the words of a hymn from camp placed at his friend's ceremony.

"These were the words we used to sing on the evening of the last day at camp and the flag would slowly and sadly lower for the last day of the season. There was not a dry eye on the shore."

On behalf of his staff from Dentons, Jean-Claude said, "Amongst his colleagues he is much remem-

bered for his dignity, his class, he was always very courteous and very respectful of others, whether he agreed or disagreed with the person or not, he was always respectful."

Jean left behind his daughters, Virginie and Frédérique, "the absolute pride and joy of his life," said Prime Minister Mulroney, as well as his step-sons, Paul Trudeau and Philippe Trudeau, his step-daughter, Anne-Marie Trudeau and his grandchildren.

"When McGee died in Ottawa in 1868, Sir John A. Macdonald paid tribute to him in these words: 'His hand was open to everyone. His heart was made for friendship,' said Brian Mulroney. "These words of Canada's first Prime Minister elegantly describe, as well, some of the qualities of Jean Bazin. He was a friend for all seasons. Loyalty was an integral part of his character. He stood with his friends when times were good and he was steadfast and true when times were not. In Macdonald's words, 'His heart is made for friendship'. My family and I knew this well. Salut, mon Jean. Salut et merci. Merci pour tout."

Réginald Bélair

April 6, 1949 – March 3, 2020

Réginald Bélair passed away peacefully at the age of 70, at the Sensen-

brenner Hospital in Kapuskasing, On. He had served as an MP in the Liberal Party for a cumulative 15 years, representing the Northern Ontario ridings of Cochrane - Superior and Timmins - James-Bay.

Réginald studied French Language and Literature at Hearst College, graduating with honours. He worked as a director of artistic programs at the Centre régional de loisirs culturels in Kapuskasing, and later served as a member of the town council of Kapuskasing and a constituency assistant to then MP Keith Penner.

"He did a first-rate job of running the Constituency Office" says Penner, who adds that his aide was instrumental in connecting with francophone constituents. When Réginald was elected to the Federal Parliament in 1988, he succeeded Penner as the member for Cochrane-Superior. In office, he served with distinction as the parliamentary secretary for the Minister of Public Works and the Minister of Supply and Services, before taking a well-earned retirement in 1997.

Outside of politics, Réginald enjoyed fishing and spending time at his cottage, playing cards, traveling, and watching his Montreal Canadiens. He was a fan of Québécois chansonniers, and authored two published poetry volumes. He took great pride in his heritage as a Franco-Ontarian and loved his native Northern Ontario. He will be sorely missed by family, friends, colleagues, and all those whose lives he touched.

Michael Breagh

Sept. 13, 1942 – Nov. 22, 2019

Kingston-born Michael 'Mike' Breagh passed away at the age of 77 at Lakeridge Health, Oshawa on Nov. 22, 2019. Mike represented Oshawa for the New Democratic Party.

His political career began in 1973 when he was elected an alderman in the City of Oshawa. This was followed in 1975 by a long career as an MPP in the Ontario Legislature; he would be re-elected four more times, serving until 1990. He also ran for



Michael Breagh.

his party's leadership, coming in third.

He then ran to be Oshawa's member of Parliament in a by-election held to fill the seat of former NDP leader Ed Broadbent. Mike won the seat, holding it until 1993.

Before his political career began, Mike was a teacher and principal, and served as an executive for the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association.

Years ago, Mike told the Ontario Association of Former Parliamentarians that his greatest advice to new politicians is to "enter the political arena not simply to be elected, but to accomplish something worthwhile." He was well liked and was known for his hearty laugh.

Mike will be missed for his ambition, leadership skills and dedication to his community.

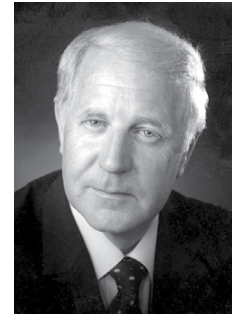
He is survived by his wife Andrea, his children Sean Michael (Philip Douglas Kerr), Erin Andrea and his granddaughter Kiera.

Hon. John Buchanan

April 22, 1931 – Oct. 3, 2019

The Hon. John Buchanan passed away peacefully on Oct. 3, 2019, at the age of 88, in Halifax, Nova Scotia. He was married to Mavis Forsyth for 65 years.

Former Nova Scotia premier (1978 – 1990) and senator (1990 -2006), John Buchanan graduated from Mount Allison, in 1954, with a Bachelor of Science and a Certificate in Engineering. He then went on to attend Dalhousie Law School, from which he graduated in 1958. He was



Hon. John Buchanan.

later appointed Queen's Counsel in 1972. John was awarded Doctorates from Nova Scotia Technical College, Mount Allison University, Saint Mary's University, St. Francis Xavier University, and Université Saint Anne.

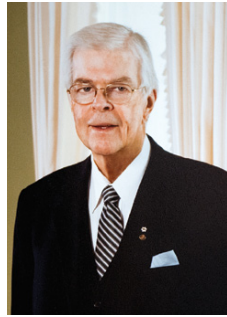
Buchanan was first elected as a member of the Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia in 1967 for the newly-formed riding of Halifax Atlantic, as a member of the Progressive Conservative Party of Nova Scotia. During that time He was appointed to the Executive Council of Nova Scotia as Minister of Public Works and Fisheries in 1969.

He was then elected premier in 1978 and won four conservative majorities, retaining office until 1990.

He was a likable and personable character, much loved by his province. He worked hard to make Nova Scotia more economically viable. Near the end of his tenure, his career was marred by unfounded allegations of which he was cleared. The Canadian Press reported that, at his funeral, his friend and former cabinet colleague, Roland Thornhill, told the gathering, "He was the finest street politician I have ever seen, and he was the best that Nova Scotia has ever produced.

"He was a gregarious person who had an exceptional ability of remembering people. Remembering their names, who they were and where they were."

"He was a true promoter of this province... We're grateful to his family for sharing him with us as long as they did," said Nova Scotia Premier



Hon. John Crosbie.

Stephen McNeil in the Legislature. "... he actually cared about the person he was talking to and how he could make that interaction better for the person that he met."

After Buchanan's term as premier, he was appointed to the Senate by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney. He retired from the Senate 16 years later in 2006.

He is survived by his wife Mavis, their five children, and his many friends and former colleagues.

Hon. John Crosbie

Jan. 30, 1931 - Jan. 10, 2020

The Hon. John Crosbie, the well-known politician with the sharp tongue from Newfoundland and Labrador, passed away on Jan. 10, 2020. He was known for his one-of-a-kind fierce, patriotic deliveries and his dedication to ensuring his province could stand on its own.

Crosbie first entered politics in 1965 as a St. John's city councillor, briefly serving as deputy mayor in 1966, before moving onto provincial politics where he served as the minister of Municipal and Housing under Premier Joey Smallwood. By 1967, he had become the minister of Health but soon resigned from the Liberal caucus in protest and ran against the premier in the next leadership race. Once defeated, Crosbie decided to cross the floor to join the Progressive Conservatives.

During his time in provincial politics, Crosbie held many portfolios and served as Government House Leader. He soon moved onto federal politics and, in 1976, won the seat

for St. John's West.

"James Joyce once wrote that 'the past is consumed in the present and the present is alive only because it gives birth to the future,'" said the Right Hon. Brian Mulroney in his eulogy to John Crosbie. "Well, John Crosbie made certain with his exemplary life and sterling contribution that the future of his Canada and that of Newfoundland and Labrador – that he had served so honorably and well – will bring opportunity and hope and happiness to all who hold our coveted citizenship, as decades unfold and Canada continues on its ongoing path to higher achievement, greatness and success."

Crosbie held many portfolios in his long career as a member of Parliament, including his time as minister of Fisheries and Oceans in which he made the controversial decision to close the cod fishery industry in Atlantic Canada. The decision led to numerous job losses and serious backlash from his home province.

His contributions are best remembered as significant progress in Canadian history. He oversaw in 1989 the Free Trade agreement with the US. He was successful in influencing the eventual development of the offshore Hibernia project.

During his eulogy, Mulroney recalled a time in office when the Hibernia project would need a significant amount of money in order to guarantee bringing the oil on-stream without any serious consequences. While it was a struggle to pitch the idea to other federal caucuses at the time, Crosbie bided with the prime

minister to help make Newfoundland a stable and sustainable province, which would be helped by the investment in Hibernia.

The prime minister recounted Crosbie stating: "You have often said that what you wanted was to give Newfoundland and Labrador a hand up, not a hand out. Well, this is the hand up we need and I think it will deeply transform the economy of the Province and give all Newfoundlanders the hope – finally – for a better day."

Crosbie had asked the prime minister to speak to the Quebec caucus to ask for their support on the project, though it was a sensitive time, but Mulroney did what he had to do.

"John's loyalty, strength and enormous contribution to Canada had brought him to this moment. And as I looked at him that day, in the fading sunlight of a lovely Ottawa summer afternoon, I knew he was right and that I had to do it."

Crosbie left behind his devoted wife, Jane, and three children, as well as grandchildren and great grandchildren. His last political position was as Lieutenant Governor for Newfoundland and Labrador.

Member of Parliament, Jack Harris remembers challenging Minister Crosbie, in 1987, when Harris was a newly elected MP. The two had known each other for years afterwards and sat as commentators on different election nights in the future.

"He is a Newfoundland and Labradorian of the highest order who made a tremendous contribution to this province and this country and he is being well recognized for having done that. That's a good example of someone who wanted to make a difference in the political life of Newfoundland and Labrador," said Harris. "I wasn't in his party, but he is someone who used his talents, his ability and determination and political courage to make positive results for Newfoundland and Labrador on the national stage in the cabinets of Brian Mulroney and Joe Clark and made a significant difference to the

country.”

Joshua Jamieson of Newfoundland and Labrador and grandson of the late Hon. Don Jamieson interviewed John Crosbie for a documentary about his grandfather: *Just Himself: The story of Don Jamieson*. Both ministers had sat in the House together for a brief amount of time.

“(I’ve heard many say that) Mr. Crosbie was fiercely proud of his home province, and he was always responsive and accountable to those who elected him. That’s a sentiment I’ve heard many express about my grandfather, as well. I think both of them hailed from a uniquely distinct era of Canadian and provincial politics, and I think the type or caliber of politician that they were is largely unmatched today,” said Jamieson. “There’s also a strong historical track record of Members of Parliament from Newfoundland and Labrador speaking strongly for their province and doing so to ensure resources and respect were brought home at that time. That becomes even more important when you happen to be invited to the cabinet table.”

Crosbie certainly took advantage of every opportunity presented to well-serve Newfoundland and Labrador and ensure the province was well positioned and highly considered within Canadian politics.

As Mulroney stated: “Fifty or 100 years from now, if Canadians stop for a moment to reflect on the leaders and builders who brought our country to such an impressive and commanding place in the family of nations, I suspect that many will whisper a special word of gratitude to John Crosbie whose nation building contributions will then be even more evident than they are today.”

Charles DeBlois

May 27, 1939 – Feb. 18, 2019

Charles DeBlois passed away on Feb. 18, 2019 at the age of 79, in his hometown of Quebec City. He leaves behind his wife, Marie Bernier, after 30 years of marriage.

After studying at the Université Laval, he worked for Radio-Canada



Charles DeBlois.

and TVA in Quebec as a journalist. He was parliamentary correspondent for the National Assembly of Quebec, of which he inaugurated the first broadcasts of provincial debate.

DeBlois was a member of the Progressive Conservative party during his career. He was elected in the 1988 federal election at the Montmorency-Orléans electoral district, in Quebec City. He was then defeated in the 1993 election. While elected, he was appointed the Assistant Deputy Chair of the Committees of the Whole.

After his defeat he was appointed commission to the Immigration and Refugee Review Board. He held this position until 2002.

A staunch defender of Quebec, Charles DeBlois once made the news, along with Suzanne Deplessis and Gilles Bernier, by participating in a letter asking that Eric Lindross be removed from Team Canada because he had refused to play for the NHL’s Quebec Nordiques.

Charles is survived by his wife, Marie Bernier, his sister Claire (the late Jean Bédard); his brothers: Robert (Henrine Pelletier) and L’Abbé (Father) Eudore; her mother-in-law Jeannine Boucher (late Gilles Bernier); his brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law in the Bernier family: Louis (Armance Côté), Paul, Hélène (Louis Raymond), Lucie (Gaston Rioux) and André; as well as several nieces and nephews, other relatives and friends.



Siegfried Enns.

Siegfried Enns

April 16, 1924 – Jan. 25, 2020.

Siegfried (Sig) Enns passed away on Jan. 25, 2020, at the age of 95, in Winnipeg.

Originally from Southern Russia (now the Ukraine), his family immigrated to Canada in 1925 while Sig was still a toddler.

Sig was very much involved with the church. His father had been the pastor of Winnipeg’s First Mennonite Church. He was active as a choir member and Sunday school teacher, among other roles.

He graduated from the University of Manitoba with three degrees: a Bachelor of Arts, a Bachelor of Education and a Bachelor of Social Work. He was a teacher in Winnipeg, a social worker in The Pas and Swan River and he worked with the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) in Poland, Ethiopia and China) after the War in the late 1940s.

He became executive director of the Children’s Aid Society of Central Manitoba in 1958.

Sig first became involved in politics by joining the school board. He then moved onto federal politics in 1962, where he served as a member of Parliament for Portage-Neepawa with the Progressive Conservative Party. He was elected three times and served until 1968.

He served on several standing committees: Agriculture, Immigration, Health and Welfare, Food and Drug and others. He was also Chairman of the annual National Parlia-



Hon. Yoine Goldstein.



Hon. Charles Hubbard.

mentary Prayer Breakfast.

Sig was full of life and energy and served the community in many capacities. He was a certified member of the College of Health Services Executives, as lay member on the Medical School Accreditation Committee and Chairman of the Manitoba Human Rights Commission. He was a charter member of the Vanier Institute of the Family. This is just a short list of his many involvements and contributions to the community.

Sig became the Regional Director for the Manitoba Department of Health and Social Services after serving in the House of Commons. He was appointed CEO of the Concordia Hospital in 1978, until his retirement in 1991. He also had a farm in the Marquette area and a general store in St. Francis Xavier. He had an extensive family network that he cherished.

He was a loyal member of the Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians, attending annual meetings right up until 2019. He loved life, people and service.

He was predeceased by his wife Vera, with whom he had been married for 62 years. He leaves behind his children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Hon. Yoine Goldstein
(May 11, 1934 – March 18, 2020)

Former Canadian Senator Yoine Goldstein passed away on March 18, at the age of 85.

After earning a Bachelor of Arts

from McGill University, Yoine earned a Bachelor of Civil Law with honours from the same university in 1958. During that time he was selected as the Articles Editor for the McGill Law Journal. He then earned a Doctor of Laws from the Université in 1960.

He was a senior and management partner with Goldstein, Flanz & Fishman in Montreal and from 1973 until 1997 was a lecturer at the Faculty of Law of the Université de Montréal. Yoine was well-known in the Montreal legal community and the only Canadian lawyer to have been elected a Fellow of both the American College of Bankruptcy and the American College of Trial Lawyers.

Yoine received the Lord Reading Law Society Human Rights Award in 1992 and the Lord Reading Law Society Service Award in 1993. An active member in the Jewish community of Montreal, Yoine was also president of the Federation CJA and a member of the Community Advisory Board of the Concordia University Chair of Canadian Jewish Studies.

“Appointed to the Canadian Senate in Rigaud in 2005 by Prime Minister Paul Martin, Yoine held that position for four years. “Yoine introduced and sponsored bills to protect refugees in Canada, to relieve Canadian students from the burden of student loans, to add a human rights element to the Investment Canada Act when a foreign investment is reviewed, and to facili-

tate the supply of Canadian medications to African and Asian countries at affordable prices,” according to a statement by Canadian Jewish News.

For many years Yoine served on numerous boards including the Jewish Agency for Israel, The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, and Canadian Jewish Congress – to name a few. Yoine worked to educate youth about tolerance and was co-founder and co-president of the Tolerance Foundation.

“While Senator Goldstein’s term of office has been relatively short, his contributions here have been impressively long. He stands as proof that one does not always have to be in a place for long to make a lasting and worthwhile contribution,” stated Hon. James S. Cowan, leader of the opposition at the time, upon Yoine’s retirement from senate.

“Senator Goldstein has made an indelible impression on us all. Who amongst us has not been moved by his pleas for tolerance, respect and social justice throughout the world, by his warnings never to forget the horrors of the Holocaust or Kristallnacht and by his description of the atrocities in Darfur? For him, human rights are not abstract concepts but rather basic values that must be promoted and protected everywhere.”

He will be missed by his wife Elaine and their two children.

Hon. Charles Hubbard
Oct. 29th, 1940 - Feb. 12th 2020

Charles Hubbard, former Liberal MP for Miramichi, passed away on Feb. 12, 2020. Charles was born on Oct. 29, 1940, in Newcastle, NB, today part of the city of Miramichi. He held a lifelong interest in the outdoors, with farming and fishing being favourite pastimes.

He was commissioned in the Armed Forces, and graduated from the Royal Canadian School of Infantry in 1961. He served a deployment to Germany as part of the 4th Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group, and would serve in the army reserve as Deputy Commander of the 2nd

battalion, The Royal New-Brunswick Regiment (North Shore), attaining the rank of Major.

Charles entered politics relatively later in life, being first elected to the House of Commons as a member of the Liberal party, at age 53, and serving as member for Miramichi between 1993 and 2008. He served as the parliamentary secretary to the minister for Indian Affairs and Northern Development in 2003, and as parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Transport in 2005-2006.

In civilian life, Hubbard was a teacher, teaching at a number of schools in his community before becoming the first principal of Miramichi Valley High School. He was active in many professional and community organizations, such as the New Brunswick Teachers Association, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the Newcastle Rotary Club, and the Northumberland Cooperative Dairy Ltd.

He is survived by wife Patricia, née Johnstone, his daughter and three sons, and many grand-children, nieces, and nephews. His loss will undoubtedly be felt by his family, friends, and those closest to him, as well as those members of his community who felt the effects of his dedication and service.

Maurice Johnson

Jan. 17 1929 – Jan. 24, 2020

Former MP Maurice Johnson passed away at age 91 on January 24, 2020 in Montreal. Maurice represented the Chambly—Rouville riding in Quebec as a Progressive Conservative between 1958 and 1962. Outside of Parliament, Maurice had a successful career in the legal field, serving as a judge in Municipal Court and the Court of Quebec.

His obituary stated in French, that he will be remembered for his concern for the search for the truth in order, to deliver impartial justice.

Husband of the late Rita Giroux, he will be remembered by his brother Jacques, his sister Doris, his faithful friend Gérard Grugeau, his brother-in-law, Bernard Codère and many nieces and nephews. He is the



Maurice Johnson.

both of the late Daniel Johnson, Quebec's 20th premier.

“Nous tenons à vous témoigner nos sympathies pour le départ de Maurice, que j'ai toujours beaucoup, toujours cordial, drôle, cultivé,” said formal politician for the National Assembly of Québec, Raymond Bachand.

Maurice will be remembered for his generosity and dedication to justice in both the courtroom and the House of Commons.

Merwyn (Merv) Johnson

May 9, 1923 – July 14, 2019

Merwyn (Merv) Johnson passed away on July 14, 2019 at the age of 96.

Merv was a member of Parliament under the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation party for Kindersley, Saskatchewan. He first won his seat in the 1953 federal election and was re-elected to the House of Commons in the 1957 election. Merv was defeated in the 1958 election. Though he ran a few more times as a member of the NDP, he never re-entered Parliament.

Aside from defeat, Merv continued to play a significant role in Canadian politics. He was president of the New Democratic Party of Canada from 1963 to 1965 and also served several years as president of the Saskatchewan CCF-NDP. Merv was appointed to serve as Saskatchewan's agent-general for the UK and Europe in 1977. Merv and his wife, Elaine resided in London until his retirement from that position in 1983.



Merwyn (Merv) Johnson.

Merv was a World War II veteran, a member of the Royal Canadian legion and Kindersley Masonic Lodge. He had degrees from the University of Saskatchewan and before becoming a member of Parliament, worked on the family farm at Beadle. He continued to speak on behalf of farmers while serving in Parliament.

Merv leaves behind his four children: Merlayna, Morley, Gordon, Janice and was predeceased by his wife, Elaine.

Hon. Leo Kolber

Jan. 18, 1929 – Jan. 9, 2020

Senator Leo Kolber passed away peacefully on Jan. 9, 2020, just days shy of his 91st birthday. He served as a Liberal member of the Senate from 1983 to 1993.

Leo was born in 1929 in Montreal, a city which joins in mourning of a pillar of its civic community. Kolber left a lasting impression on the city as a prominent businessman, a generous philanthropist, and a luminary in a proud Jewish community.

Leo attended McGill University in the late 1940s, and would eventually attain a degree in Law from McGill. He was called to the Quebec bar in 1952. These would be formative years for the aspiring lawyer, and his fondness for his Alma Mater would be reflected in his patronage for the university. Among his many other worthy causes were included the Jewish General Hospital, where he would serve as president between 1997 and 1999, and the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal.

It is also during that time that



Hon. Leo Kolber.



Hon. Léonce Mercier.

he met his lifelong friend, Charles Bronfman. Samuel, Charles' father, who is said to have recognized Leo's potential and disposition for business, encouraged the friendship. Leo would stay close with the family throughout his life, as president of Cemp investments, the family's investment conduit, and as a close friend of both Charles and Samuel. Though Leo's father passed away when he was a teenager, he found a mentor and role model in the elder Bronfman, and their relationship was said to be akin to a father and son.

As president of Cemp, he was instrumental in the diversification of the family's portfolio and in the development of the Toronto Dominion Center, extending his legacy beyond his native Montreal and leaving an indelible mark on Toronto's skyline. He also served in an executive capacity on the boards of a number of different organizations throughout his career.

Though never serving in elected office, Kolber nevertheless played a key role overseeing Liberal Party finance as a chair of its national revenue committee and is credited by former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien with helping the party re-establish its finances in the early 1990s. He was appointed to the Senate in 1983, and would serve for over 10 years, including a stint as chair of the Standing Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce. He resigned, as is convention, on his 75th birthday. Another key political legacy of Mr. Kolber's was his role in deep-

ening Canadian-Israeli ties, being, in Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's estimation, a "key contributor" to the friendship between the two countries. For his many political, economic, and humanitarian contributions to Canadian society, he was initiated as an officer to the order of Canada in 2007.

In a statement edifying Leo's passing, Justin Trudeau offered the following remarks:

Mr. Kolber was a distinguished business leader, lawyer, and philanthropist, who dedicated his life to serving his community and his country. [...] Mr. Kolber will be remembered as a loving husband, father, grandfather, and friend, and a pillar of his community. On behalf of the Government of Canada, Sophie and I offer our condolences to his family and many friends. He will be sorely missed.

Few could offer so dignifying an epitaph as the sitting Prime Minister.

Hon. Léonce Mercier
Aug. 11, 1926 – December 27, 2019

The Hon. Léonce Mercier passed away at age 93 on Dec. 27, 2019. Born in Quebec, he was a businessman and party organizer.

He was a longtime activist and organizer for the Liberal party, going back to the Pierre Trudeau days. He played a key role in the campaigns of Pierre Trudeau, Jean Chrétien, Jean Lesage and Robert Bourassa.

He co-organized Jean Chrétien's campaign in Quebec for the leader-

ship of the federal Liberal Party in 1984 and 1990 as well as Jean Lesage's campaign to lead the Quebec Liberal Party.

He was in charge of the Action Canada National Unity Campaign in 1995 and promoted the No side in the 1995 referendum.

In 1996, he was appointed to the Senate of Canada, where he served as Whip for the Liberal party in the Senate. He retired in 2001.

Upon retiring in 2001, Léonce was praised by colleagues for his firm allegiance and his display of congeniality.

The Hon. Lucie Pépin said Léonce "spent decades in the shadow of many members of Parliament and ministers who owe a part of their success to his staunch loyalty and limitless enthusiasm."

He will be missed by his wife, Micheline Côté and his children: Pierre, Danielle (Bernard Renald), Louise (late Paul Marcil), Andrée (Rick Burns), Jean; his grandchildren: Sébastien and Marie-Hélène Renald (Simon Legris), Matthew and Nicolas Burns, Stéphanie-Pier Marcil; his great grandchildren: Jacob and Félix Legris and many other family members and friends.

Hon. Bill McKnight
July 12, 1940 – Oct. 4, 2019

The Hon. William (Bill) McKnight of Saskatchewan passed away on Oct. 4, 2019, at the age of 79.

Bill served over 14 years as a member of Parliament, from 1979 to 1993, with the Progressive Conservative government of Brian Mulroney. He held numerous cabinet portfolios, including minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and minister of Defence.

At the end of his political career, he was appointed Treaty Commissioner of Saskatchewan, a position he held from 2007 to 2012.

"As treaty commissioner, he understood the importance of the office as a body that advocated for the treaty. He took great pains to understand the treaty at a greater depth than most people would in Canada. He studied, he talked, he read, he dialogued with people on treaty and

I could see the growth in him as time went on. He understood what it meant to be,” said Muskeg Lake council member, Harry LaFond. “A phrase coined by a previous treaty commissioner was “we are all treaty people” and he understood that and he spoke to it regularly.”

Harry was brought on to work with Bill as executive director when he was treaty commissioner and met him when he served as minister of Indian Affairs in 1988, and his involvement to purchase property in the city of Saskatoon as part of the treaty of land.

“I recognized his strong commitment and belief that this urban reserve was the way to move forward. It was intended to have a good commercial purpose and economic development strategy. He believed that was a good option for Muskeg Lake but also the city of Saskatoon. He worked with that frame of mind.”

Lafond got to work with Bill on a daily basis during his time as treaty commissioner.

“What I quickly realized and understood about him, was that he was very committed to helping people help themselves. He was committed to understanding that people needed to work and the economic community needed to recognize that,” said Lafond, who was the former chief of Muskeg Lake. “In some instances he would take extraordinary steps to make sure opportunities existed for people to work. He was especially concerned about young Indigenous people and creating an environment where they could find their first job.”

In 1988, Muskeg Lake made Bill Honorary Chief *kiihiw miikwan*, which is Cree for “eagle feather.”

“He was made honorary chief as an appreciation and recognition of his commitment to the community. He honoured that appointment. He honoured it by staying active in Muskeg Lake. He was involved in special events, any time we invited him, he was there and taking on that leadership role that had been passed on him by the community.”

Even later in life when Bill was



Hon. Bill McKnight.

struggling with his health and mobility, he came to the 30th anniversary in 2018 on the urban reserve.

“He spent the whole day with us and we could tell he was having a really great time connecting with old friends and the people he worked with.”

His involvement was no surprise to Lafond who said that Bill was not one to sit around no matter what age. “He was more indigenous in his thinking than I see in a lot of people. He believed as long as you’re healthy and you can contribute, you should stay active.”

Lafond stated that a lot of people came to the office to talk to Bill and they were never dismissed.

“He had a huge heart. He lived that way. He cared for people. He listened to everybody and he believed every person he came into contact with had something to offer. It was up to him to sit, listen and respond in a kind of positive way toward that person. He looked for good things in people, he looked for the good in a person and worked with that to establish relationships,” recalled Lafond.

“He had a lot of good friends. A lot of people came just to visit him, to sit and talk and in some cases plan with him steps forward. People came for his advice. He had a lot of experience internationally. A lot of people, many indigenous people, but also business people came for his advice on international issues and strategies.”

Bill will be missed by his wife, Beverly and their two children, as



Hon. John Lang Nichol.

well as his grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Hon. John Lang Nichol (Jan. 7, 1924 - Feb. 24, 2020)

Former Senator for Lion’s Gate, BC, The Honourable John Lang Nichol passed away on February 24, 2020.

John was the president of the Liberal Federation of Canada from 1964-1968 and was a co-chairman of the Liberal Campaign Committee for the 1968 federal election. He was appointed as Senator from 1966 to 1973 by Lester B. Pearson.

In 1980, John was awarded the Order of Canada and awarded to champion in 1996.

“His devotion to his community and his lifelong experience have contributed to his reputation as a most exceptional Canadian. He was the driving force in founding the Movement Disorder Institute at the University of British Columbia, to carry out research and provide high-quality care for patients with neurological disorders,” said a statement of his promotion in the Order of Canada.

John’s dedication to the Movement Disorder Institute stemmed from a personal place, as his first wife of 59 years, Marjorie, died of Parkinson’s disease in 2000. He also became the founding chairman of the Pacific Parkinson’s Research Institute at the University of British Columbia.

Before entering politics, John served as a Lieutenant in the Royal Canadian Navy in the North Atlantic, in World War II.

He was described in his obituary as



Hon. Nathan Nurgitz.



Jean Payne.

someone who will be “deeply missed by his friends of many generations at Savary Island and Hernando, where he was legendary as a skilled fisherman, amuser of small children, splendid storyteller, wit, and gifted mixer of martinis. Another favourite place was Sun Valley, Idaho, particularly the Warm Springs downhill run on a sunny day. He loved his dogs. If a man’s life can be measured by how many loved him, there could have been no bigger life.”

He was founding Chair of the Lester B. Pearson College of the Pacific.

“Mr. Nichol shared his advice and experience freely and never hesitated to offer supportive and, when needed, critical comments – always aligned with the original vision that resulted in the creation of Canada’s only United World College,” was said in a statement by the Pearson College.

John is remembered his beloved wife Rosann Cashin. Children Majorie, Barbara, Sarah, his six grandchildren and his great-grandchildren.

Hon. Nathan Nurgitz

June 22, 1934 — Oct. 19, 2019

The Hon. Nathan (Nate) Nurgitz of Winnipeg passed away on Oct. 19 at the age of 85. Nate started his career in politics as an alderman of the City of West Kildonan from 1963 to 1969.

Nate was born in 1934 in Winnipeg. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1954 and a law degree in 1959. He had a distinguished career with the firm of Thompson,

Dorfman, Sweatman. In the 1970s, Nate served as the president of the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada.

The Rt. Hon. Joe Clark named Nate to the Senate in 1979, where he served until 1993. His time as a Senator was active and productive. He served as Chair of the Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs. He was Co-Chair of the Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons on Scrutiny, and on numerous committees related to, agriculture and forestry, foreign affairs, banking, trade and commerce, and national finance.

In 1987, he was elected Chair the Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, where he served three terms.

After resigning from the Senate, Nathan was appointed as a judge with the Manitoba Court of Queen’s Bench and he served as a deputy judge of the Nunavut Court of Justice. Upon retirement from the bench, he was welcomed back to his old firm where he worked until his ultimate retirement in 2012.

Commenting on his public obituary, former colleague and roommate in Ottawa, Léo Duguay, MP, stated “He was an extremely diligent Senator often returning to the apartment after 9 pm. He and I shared hours of serious discussion but more importantly hours of fun.....In his quiet way he contributed enormously to Canada. He never asked for much but he gave a lot.”

He was a warm person who cared for others. Political colleague and

friend, Graham Gork stated “He was my mentor, advisor and great friend; the hardest working, loyal, funniest guy and best lunch companion. He is deeply missed.”

He is survived by his children, Marshall and Grace (Burdett) Roben, and Robert Mcgugan; and grandchildren Jesse, Lisa and Maia.

Jean Payne

(May 12, 1939 – March 04, 2020)

Born in Aquaforte, Newfoundland, Jean had represented the St. John’s West riding in the House of Commons, from 1993 to 1997 for the Liberal party. Before politics she worked in the public relations and marketing field for some time in Toronto and afterwards returned to Newfoundland where she started several businesses in personal services, executive search and legal support services.

“From childhood Jean was intelligent, ambitious and determined -traits that shaped her life to the very end. She excelled in school, graduating at fifteen and setting off into the world,” stated her obituary. “Jean was a force to be reckoned with. She was a trailblazer in business and politics, never daunted by the barriers facing women of her time. Her strength of will and her indomitable spirit made her a fierce adversary – and just as fierce a friend.”

Her passion for advocacy was her reason for entering politics and with a husband who was a fisherman, she was dedicated to the fishery and the people of Newfoundland and Labrador who deeply depended on it for their livelihood. She ran for politics following the closing of the fishery in 1992.

“Forty four years after Confederation, Jean Payne became one of the first women we elected as Member of Parliament. When I knock on doors, people still talk about her — her passions for rural communities, the fishery and our Province. She is remembered. And she will be dearly missed,” stated the Honourable Seamus O’Regan, current MP for St.

John's South.

After politics she returned to private business.

She was predeceased by her loving husband, David to whom she was married for over 50 years. She leaves behind her sisters Eleanor Powell (Sandy) of Greenfield, NS; Madonna Dalton of Cape Broyle, NL; and Esther Barrett (Richard) of St. John's, NL, her many nieces and nephews, as well as great-nieces and nephews.

George Proud

April 9, 1939 – Oct. 23, 2019

George Proud of Charlottetown, PEI passed away on Oct. 23, 2019. George first entered politics as a Liberal MLA in Prince Edward Island. He served as a councillor for the 5th Queens provincial electoral district, from 1974 to 1979.

By 1988, George had moved onto federal politics, where he represented the Liberal party and served three terms from 1988 until 2000.

"I was saddened to hear of the passing of George Proud this morning. He was a proud Islander with a passion and deep-rooted commitment to serving his community that was unwavering. To his friends and colleagues, George was always a source of kindness and wisdom," said PEI Premier Dennis King in a statement.

"His years of hard work and public service to advance the interests of Prince Edward Island will not be forgotten. Our province is better for having his service and our deepest condolences are with his family and loved ones."

He left to mourn his wife Ann, children, grandchildren and great-grandson.

Hon. Gerald Regan

Feb. 13, 1928 – Nov. 26, 2019

The Hon. Gerald Regan, PC, QC, passed away peacefully at age 91 on November 26, 2019. He is survived by loving wife Carole, their six children, and numerous grandchildren.

He served in the House of Commons as a Liberal member from 1963 to 1965, when he resigned to pursue a provincial career.



George Proud.



Hon. Gerald Regan.

Gerald was born in Windsor, Nova Scotia. From an early age, he became known in his community for selling peanuts to spectators at local ball games. This enterprising spirit would guide him through an extraordinary life that would ultimately lead him to an accomplished career in law and business, as well as federal office and the premiership of his beloved province.

Before his entry into politics, Gerald rose to prominence as a provincially renowned labour lawyer. As he practiced law, he honed his oratory skills in the courtroom and became a skilled mediator, traits which would serve him well later in life. He tried four times to enter politics in his native Annapolis Valley, but would not be successful until invited to run for the Liberal party in Halifax.

He represented his Halifax riding for two years in Ottawa before being called to serve in his native Nova Scotia, where he would sit as leader of the opposition before ascending to the premiership in 1970, a time he would look back on with pride. As premier, he upheld his vision for the potential of Nova Scotia and championed the development of the province's natural resources and human potential.

Another career highlight included his time as minister of International Trade, where he would engage in early talks with the United States on the elimination of trade barriers. Though he would not remain in office to see the work through, subsequent administrations would eventually finalize the North Ameri-

can Free-Trade Agreement. In politics, he is remembered fondly by allies and opponents alike for being bi-partisan, fair, and open-minded to different perspectives, perhaps a reflection of his many years' experience in labour mediation.

"He made a lot of friends in politics, on both sides of the aisle... He would invite people from other political parties to come for dinner at home," recalls his son Geoff, a current sitting member of Parliament.

Gerald was a lover of sport throughout his life. Earlier on, he channeled his interest into hockey, and later branched out into skiing, golf, and tennis. He would pursue the latter to the finals of the Nova Scotia Junior Men's championship. Though he came up short of a title, he would not be discouraged, and being a lifelong athlete, he would finally win his first tennis title at age 77. Not content to simply play the game, he also made a name for himself as a local sports commentator during his time as a student. Ever the entrepreneur, he managed in his early 20s to organise several post-season tours of Atlantic Canada for NHL teams that had been eliminated from the playoffs, bringing Canada's game to a region underserved at the top level of the sport.

To those closest to him, however, he is remembered above all for his kindness and dedication to his family. "Despite how busy he was as premier, whenever he possibly could, he would come to my minor hockey games," Geoff recalls. "When I look back, I marvel at how he managed to



Hon. David Smith.



Blaine Thacker.

do that with all the kids.” Though an accomplished lawyer, politician, and businessman, Gerald nonetheless made time in his life for the things that mattered most to him. He will be sorely missed by family, friends, and peers of all parties.

Hon. David Smith

May 16, 1941 – Feb. 26, 2020

The Hon. David Smith, praised for his work and dedication to persons with disabilities, passed away on February 26, 2020.

He started his career in politics as an alderman on Toronto City Council in 1970, where he served a part of his time deputy mayor and president of city council.

After leaving municipal politics, he entered the House of Commons as a member of Parliament in 1980. He remained in office representing the riding of Don Valley East from 1980 to 1984. During his time in the House he was Government House Leader and was minister of State for Small Businesses and Tourism.

David continued working in politics after he left the House, he served as a Liberal party senior backroom adviser to Jean Chrétien.

During his time as MP, Smith advocated for the equalities of persons with disabilities as a constitutional right. In 1981, David chaired the committee The Special Committee on the Disabled and the Handicapped, which identified obstacles faced by persons with disabilities in Canada and proposed solutions to overcoming particular barriers. The committee was the first of its kind

and it was a catalyst for the federal government to produce programs and services for persons with disabilities.

After politics, David worked for Dentons law firm and in 2002 he was appointed to the Senate by Prime Minister Chrétien, representing Cobourg, Ontario until 2016. During this time, he also served as the Liberal party’s National Campaign Co-Chair.

“From his work on the Hill to his time on Toronto City Council, the House of Commons, and the Senate, David dedicated himself to building a better, more inclusive Canada. A true champion of equality, David’s proudest legacy was his work to have the rights of people with disabilities included in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms,” said Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in a statement to David.

David is survived by his wife of nearly fifty years, the Hon. Heather Forster Smith, their children; Alex Smith (Samantha Marks), Kate Smith (Leif Mallings), and Laura O’Connor (Dennis O’Connor); five granddaughters.

David was well respected by his community, and considered a kind and generous man to many.

As stated by Prime Minister Trudeau: “David had a lifelong passion for politics. He worked his entire life to support a strong and healthy democracy, and to help others who aspired to public office. He understood that the most precious thing a Member of Parliament could earn is the trust of Canadians.

It is a testament to his wisdom and good humour that he was respected and liked by people of all political stripes.”

Blaine Thacker

Jan. 11, 1941 – Feb. 17, 2020

Blaine Thacker, former Progressive Conservative member of Parliament passed away on February 17, 2020.

Born in Taber, Alberta and raised on a farm, Blaine received a Bachelor of Science and a Bachelor of Law before moving onto politics.

Blaine was first elected into the House, in 1979, to represent the Lethbridge Foothills constituency. In 1988 the riding was renamed the Lethbridge, which he represented until 1993.

He held many positions during his fourteen years in Parliament. He was parliamentary secretary to the minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs from 1987 to 1989, and the minister of Transport from 1987 to 1991, when he was named parliamentary secretary to the minister of the state Agriculture. He was appointed Chair of the Standing Committee on Justice and Solicitor General, Chair of the Special Committee on Access to Information, and Chair of the Special Committee on Canadian Security Intelligence Service.

The Blood Band irrigation project and the Animal Disease Research Institute, now the

National Centre for Animal Diseases Lethbridge are considered to be his legacies.

After Parliament, Blaine returned to his law profession. Previous to his time in the House of Commons, he was the University of Lethbridge’s second Chair of the Board of Governors, serving from 1974 to 1978. The University presented Thacker with an honorary Doctor of Laws in 2006.

Premier of Alberta, Jason Kenny tweeted that Blaine was “a pillar of the community.” followed by his condolences to the former MP’s family and friends.

He is survived by his wife Sue and Political Passages continued on page 47.



Geoff Scott.

Mr. Assol's "fouled" up chickens and other stories

By Geoff Scott

Geoff shares some files from his Speech Bank Funny File

Over more issues of *Beyond the Hill* than I care to remember, I've shared some of Parliament Hill's strange and funny moments. Thanks to 20 years in the Parliamentary Press Gallery, immediately followed by 16 years as a member of Parliament, both professions have afforded me a lot of casual access to the men and women in power with many off-guard, let-your-hair-down moments. These have yielded some wonderful anecdotes. Over the 36 years on The Hill (and since) I have made a hobby of tossing these true stories from across Canada into my Speech Bank Funny file. All anecdotes are true; some of them are quite public. Herewith, a few samples.

Covert operation

From one long-forgotten Speech Bank folder, came this 1974 classic encounter with the very funny former Nova Scotia Premier Robert L. Stanfield, said to be The Best Prime Minister Canada Never Had.

RLS, as he was known around the Hill, was holding a media scrum outside his Opposition Leader's Office.

Venerable Southam News columnist Charles Lynch bellowed over the rest of us journalists: "Mr. Stanfield, is it true you recently entered hospital to have a droopy eyelid raised?"

RLS glared at Lynch and said, sternly, "No, Charles, that's not right at all. You fellows always get your facts buggered up. I didn't enter hospital to get my droopy eyelid raised a'tall." (Long typical Stanfield pause.) "I had the rest of my face lowered a half an inch."

Lost in translation

Green-stetsoned Eugene Whelan, Essex County's favorite son, had to be one of Canada's most beloved ministers of Agriculture, ever. One of

Mr. Whelan's most endearing qualities was, famously, his almost incomprehensible syntax when responding to reporters. A typical Whelanism (delivered quite possibly with his tongue gently nudging the inside of his cheek, although maybe not) was: "I ain't never in no way said that wasn't the case before the present situation ceased to apply." But the farmers loved it!

A floral screw-up

Then there was Tahsis. This still stands as one of my all-time memorable true stories from one of Canada's far-flung regions. Tahsis is a tiny village on North Vancouver Island. Back in the '70s, it was a lumber company town, but they had a day of celebration when Tahsis achieved its new status as a village. (Understandably, the old-timers remain tight-lipped and noticeably peeved when I raised the Canadian Press changeover incident, but the younger ones in Tahsis municipal offices chuckle, it's totally true.) You couldn't make this stuff up:

All the usual suspects turned out for Inauguration Day: the Reeve, the local MLA, Vancouver Island's member of Parliament, the police chief, several members of nearby Campbell River town council, the weekly newspaper reporter, and, oh yes, Tahsis' entire population, circa 175.

The Reeve explained to his august audience that his staff had planned on a gorgeous flower arrangement from a Campbell River florist to show up promptly at noon to commemorate the occasion, but to their horror, there arrived a funeral wreath. "I was a little upset," the Reeve told the audience, "so I phoned the florist, and he was equally upset. He said, 'You

think you got problems? Somewhere at the Campbell River Cemetery, there's a lovely floral arrangement with an inscription which reads 'Lots of Luck under the New Administration!'"

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker

Time for one more from the Speech Bank, and this one is verifiable by Hansard.

Anyone remember Victor Assol's cannibalistic chickens? Those of us who were in the Commons Chamber late one October evening will never forget the solemn involvement of a young NDP MP from Selkirk, Manitoba, name of Ed Schreyer (he eventually rose to become Canada's Governor General.) Mr. Schreyer, was participating in what was called The Late Show, the after-debate period when MPs can expound on constituency matters.

Poor Victor Assol

Enter poor Victor Assol. He had a thriving, six-figure chicken farm business in Mr. Schreyer's Selkirk riding, when, as the ever-earnest MP intoned to the House, the federal Department of Transport suddenly installed a series of microwave towers up and down the length of Mr. Assol's chicken farm. Almost overnight, the chickens became cannibals, violently killing each other off, and, as the last feathers flew, Mr. Assol filed for bankruptcy. All manner of scientific experts from both federal and provincial agriculture and transport departments (probably stifling laughs throughout) tried to figure out the weird relationship between Victor Assol's cannibalistic chickens and the microwave towers. Mr. Schreyer dead-panned to the House he expected some answers now.

It fell to the hapless, but very de-

Tales of a covert operation, a floral screwup, and an Assol's hapless chickens!

cent Manitoba Minister, James R. Richardson, who happened to be Acting Agriculture Minister and was on deck to answer MP Ed Shreyer's dilemma.

What happened next stands, in my books, as a classic non-answer with an unforgettable punchline: "Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker," began the smiling Minister Richardson, "there are very few people in the Department of Agriculture who know anything about microwave towers. Equally unfortunately, Sir, there are even fewer electronic geniuses in the Department of Transport who know anything at all about chickens. In any event, Mr. Speaker, It would appear that Mr. Assol's fowl are all flocked up."

If the red-faced, very straight-laced Minister was yelling anything to correct himself, there was no way he could be heard over the guffaws and hoots of laughter from the few members in the Chamber, but also those of us in the Press Gallery, the House of Commons Protective Staff in the public galleries, the House of Commons pages, and even the Hansard reporters, who were seen frantically checking their notes (and each other) to verify what they'd just heard.

The Deputy Speaker wisely gavelled adjournment of that day's proceedings. Postscript: The following day's Official Record quietly amended Mr. Richardson's indiscretion to read: "Mr. Assol's flock are all fouled up." But, at the time, it was still one of Parliament's funnier moments.

Geoff Scott served as a Progressive Conservative MP for the riding of Hamilton-Wentworth, Ontario from 1978-1993.

Political Passages continued from page 45



Hon. Greg Thompson.

his children, Todd Cameron and Tynan Leigh.

Hon. Greg Thompson **March 28, 1947 – Sept. 10, 2019**

The Hon. Greg Thompson passed away on Sept 10, 2019, at the age of 72 in his home province of New Brunswick. Greg, born in St. Stephen, was admired for his successful election record as a member of Parliament for both the Progressive Conservative and the Conservative party, as well as his dedication to veterans' affairs.

Before entering politics, Greg was a high school teacher and businessman. He would eventually win his first election in 1988, running to represent the Carleton-Charlotte riding in New Brunswick. Despite a narrow loss for re-election in 1993, he would run again – and win again – in 1997, beginning a streak of five more victories. During his time in the House of Commons, Greg served in many other roles, most notably being appointed the minister of Veterans Affairs in 2006. In this role, he debuted the Veterans' Bill of Rights under Prime Minister Stephen Harper in 2007. The bill would guarantee rights and benefits for veterans and their families.

Greg eventually retired before the 2011 federal election, but demonstrated his dedication to New Brunswick by returning to politics at the provincial level, becoming the MLA for the Saint Croix electoral district in 2018. He would also serve as the provinces' minister of Intergovernmental Affairs until his passing.

Greg is remembered as a devoted, hardworking leader. Following his



Jean-Noël Tremblay.

passing, many gathered at the All Saints Anglican Church in St. Andrews, New Brunswick, to celebrate Greg's life. Among them was Andrew Scheer, who described Greg as a "solid person" to reporters.

"[Greg] was the kind of person that didn't speak a lot, but when he spoke, he listened, and if he was really passionate about something, you knew it," added New Brunswick Premier Blain Higgs.

Our thoughts are with Greg's wife, Linda, their sons, and those who had the pleasure of knowing Greg.

Jean-Noël Tremblay **June 7, 1926 – Jan. 24, 2020**

On January 24, 2020 Jean-Noël Tremblay passed away at the age of 93, at his home in Quebec City.

Jean-Noël served the Progressive Conservative Party as the member of Parliament for Roberval from 1958 to 1962.

He later joined the Union Nationale in his home province of Quebec, where he represented the riding of Chicoutimi from 1966 to 1973. Here he became minister of Cultural Affairs, from 1966 to 1970, under Premier Daniel Johnson.

He served in several positions attached to public service, as an aid to the Hon Jeanne Sauvé and the Hon. Marcel Masse. He participated in several missions abroad.

Jean-Noël had a bachelor degree in Theology, specialized in linguistics and a graduate in law. In 1990, he was made a member of the Order of Canada.

He was named to the order of Canada in 1990.



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