



Orders of the Day

The Publication of the Association of Former MLAs of British Columbia

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June 2015

Leg Library celebrates 100 year anniversary

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the Legislature Library wing. It all started in 1863 when \$1,000 was earmarked by the Assembly. In 1915, the doors to the new library were officially opened, but getting there was no small feat. Full story and pictures on Page 8.



Photo courtesy of John Yanyshyn / Visions West Photography

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Her Honour

The Honourable Judith Guichon, OBC

Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia

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Orders of the Day is published regularly throughout the year, and is circulated to Association members, all MLAs now serving in Legislature, other interested individuals and organizations.

Material for the newsletter is always welcome and should be sent in written form to:

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(The late) Hugh Curtis

From the Editor's Desk

If a picture tells a thousand words then what of a great picture? This month our front page photo opens the door to several stories.

It speaks, metaphorically, of our hard won democratic freedom in BC and Canada. The Liberation of the Netherlands on Page 16 reminds us of the cost of that freedom.

It speaks to the continuity of good governance and the efforts of BC's founding public servants to chronicle our progress. On Page 8, we celebrate the 100th anniversary of our Legislature Library.

It also reminds us of the many good men and women who have stalked the corridors of power on our behalf. On Page 4, we mark the passing of one of them.

Many thousands of visitors tour the Legislature each year to marvel at its architecture and its history. On Page 10 we wave the flag and welcome all comers with panache.

And, I must make mention of my fortuitous connection to the photographer who captured this Legislature moment. John Yanyshyn, owner of Visions West, has always had the capacity to render an image greater than the sum of its parts.

John and his work are well known to members of the Association who have attended annual dinners at Government House. Indeed, John has been the go-to photog for provincial governments going back 35 years. His camera has recorded many political events and their key players including the swearing in of new government and a rare visit by the prime minister.

I like to take small credit for helping launch John's a career as a photojournalist. In the early 1980s when I was working for the Vancouver Sun in the Press Gallery I was introduced to John and was taken by the force of his studio work. I immediately hooked him up with the Sun photo desk and the rest is history.

The Association of Former MLAs of British Columbia is strictly non-partisan, regardless of members' past or present political affiliation. Founded in 1987, the Association was formally established by an Act of the British Columbia Legislature on February 10, 1998.

Orders of the Day was conceived, named and produced in its early stages by Bob McClelland, former MLA and cabinet minister, following his retirement from office. Hugh Curtis ably helmed this publication up through May 2014.



Advance notice of 2015 Annual Dinner

Our Annual Dinner is scheduled for the evening of September 25 (Friday) at Government House.

The cost for the dinner and the guest speaker will be announced as soon as the information is available.

Please mark your calendar for this popular Association event.



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Former AG Leslie Peterson dead at 91

It can be said without fear of contradiction that Les Peterson's integrity and vision helped shape BC into the province it is today.

Leslie R. Peterson died on April 14th. The love of his life, Agnes Rose Hine, their son and daughter Raymond and Karen; along with their children Erik, Severin, Krista, Lars, Todd; and Les' sister Lorraine and her children Shirley, Alan, Carol will forever be heartened and inspired by Les.



In 2003, Hugh Curtis wrote a two-part profile on Peterson in which he said it was "a daunting task to convey all that Les has done."

"If one were to list all the memberships, associations, honours and public service of Les Peterson, over five decades and more, we would fill a complete issue of *Orders of the Day*. In fact that list covers more than four pages of his curriculum vitae - an astonishing outline of the accomplishments of this remarkable British Columbian," Hugh wrote.

Les was born on a farm eight miles or so from Viking, Alberta on October 6, 1923 and his schooling took place in that area. He also attended Camrose Lutheran

College. Les then joined the Canadian army and served overseas with the Royal Canadian Engineers, where his talents were valued to the extent that he was, for a considerable period of time, sent to the University of London at army expense. He later served in the field in Holland.

On his return to Canada, Les entered the University of British Columbia and graduated with the second law class in 1949. He married Agnes at Little Mountain Camp in 1950 and their first home was on 4th Avenue near Blanca.

Les practised law on his own for a year or two and then joined the late R.P. (Dick) Anderson in practice in the Holden Building on East Hastings Street. This firm later merged with Boughton, Jensen and McConnell in 1956 to become known as Boughton Peterson Anderson McConnell Dunfee and Jensen. This firm name lasted for a very short time as Les, who had been elected to the provincial legislature in January 1956 in a byelection, was re-elected in the general election of September 1956 and became a cabinet minister in October of that year.

Les served as Minister of Education from 1956 to 1968 and became Attorney General in 1968, a post that he held until 1972 when he, along with his party, was defeated. While serving in these two positions he was also Minister of Labour from 1960 to 1971. He served his province with distinction and had the respect of all sides of the House.

Upon his electoral defeat he returned to the practice of law with his old law firm, then known as Boughton & Co. He quickly demonstrated that his 16-year political hiatus had not dulled his legal skills. However, the practice of law was not enough to harness all his energies and he took on many other positions.

But first there was the 1975 provincial election and his law partners watched with trepidation as great pressure was put on him to run again. Finally, with some help from his partners, he withstood the pressure and the law firm was able to breathe more easily.

His areas of service are many and varied but among them are his long-time service on the board of the Terminal City Club, culminating in his becoming its president. He also served on many committees and boards of the Shriners and became its potentate as head of the BC and Yukon branches.

The alumni of the University of British Columbia elected Les to its board in 1968 and, of course, in due time he became chairman. He also served on the board of governors of the university and became its chancellor in 1987, a position that he held for six years. According to university records he "tapped on the head" some 36,000

graduates during his tenure as chancellor. He also had the honour of conferring 79 honorary doctorates.

In 1994, Donald Dunfee, writing in *The Advocate*, said: "It has not been all work, however, and Les enjoys boating, skiing, tennis and, from time to time, golf. His early days in Viking were not completely wasted and his eye behind a pool cue is pretty sharp, and, if you were to accept his offer of a small wager, you might very well see his game pick up a notch. He is also a fisherman of some renown but on outings with his partners he has, on occasion, because of his greater fame as a snorer, been relegated to the Honeymoon Cabin by himself.

"All in all, it can fairly be said that, although Les has led a very busy life, it has been a well-rounded one, and he has seldom been so busy that he missed out on the joys of family life or a little fun along the way. He has, in essence, not lost the common touch," Dunfee wrote.

(Ed. note: Les was a long time Member of our Association.)



Photo source: Peterson family collection

Above left: Les and Agnes at a Government House event during Les' early years in Cabinet.

Above right: As UBC Chancellor Les "tapped the heads" of 36,000 graduates.

Previous page: A painting of Les which hangs at the University of British Columbia.



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Premier Notley ... her parent's daughter

By Jim Hume

The toughest immediate task ahead for Alberta's new NDP Premier Rachel Notley will be harnessing the self-discipline required to resist the desire to fulfill her dreams in a hurry.

I think she has the integrity and common sense to do that. She demonstrated during her march to victory that she was a competitor with decency.

When her opponents sank to use TV attack commercials, a feature of U.S. elections and becoming prevalent in Canada, she rose well above the gutter, flashed a brilliant smile, refused to engage and stayed pleasantly on track with her optimistic promise to work for a better life in already pleasant Alberta.

She convinced voters she had a plan, that she was sincere. She convinced voters she could be trusted, and that assured her victory.



Edmonton Journal photo

Rachel Notley takes part in the 2014 30th memorial for her father Grant Notley at Grant Notley Park in Edmonton.

Rachel comes by it honestly. Her dad Grant Notley was one of the active young people preparing the political soil of western Canada for the reformation of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) to the New Democratic Party (NDP) in Alberta. He was a teenager at the University of Alberta, Edmonton, when in 1957-58 he joined what became known as "Notley's Motley Crew," a re-activated campus squad of CCF supporters. Among his young political rivals on campus were Joe Clark (PC) and Jim Coutts (Lib).

By 1961 he had moved from campus to join the province-wide organizing push to change CCF to NDP. That goal was achieved in January 1962 with the election of Neil Reimer as president of the fledging organization and Grant the provincial secretary.

It was in the late fall of 1962 when I joined the Edmonton Journal as acting city editor and first met the intense but unfailingly polite NDP activist who eventually became party leader in 1968. Those were the days when NDP members walked through audiences listening to a Notley speech "passing the hat" for funds to meet expenses.

In 1971, after repeated defeats at the polls, Grant was elected NDP-MLA for Spirit River, a lone voice in opposition but respected by other politicians and by media for his rational, constant arguments for expansion and improvement of social services. His daughter Rachel Anne was eight years old at the time, the first of three children born to Grant and Sandra (Sandy) Mary Wilkinson following their marriage in 1963.

American born "Sandy" may not have generated headlines the way her husband did, but in the family she was a character builder, the one who wove Christian principles into NDP beliefs. It was she who explained to Rachel and her brothers Paul and Stephen the social conscience of their father's politics.

And it was her mother who Rachel mentioned first in her gracious victory speech: "I know my mother would be completely over the moon about this", she told her cheering supporters. "I think my dad would be too. I'm sorry he couldn't see this, this really was his life's work."

Grant Notley died in a poor weather plane crash in 1984 – two years before the NDP sent its first shock waves through Alberta electing 16 MLAs in the 1986 general election. New Democrats held those 16 seats through the 1989 election – but lost them all and their leader Ray Martin who had replaced Notley in 1984.

Rachel - 20 when she lost her father, 34 when she lost her mother in 1998, but grounded in the values her parents had taught - began the long march back from two seats in the early 90s to a 53-seat victory and the right to govern in 2015.

The campaign isn't over for the mother of two. Premier Notley, 51, inherits a public service becalmed by many years of Conservative complacency and a politically naive crew of MLAs.

The lady is about to venture into most difficult waters. I wish her well and hope she never forgets her Plato: "The beginning is the most important part of the work."

**(Want to read more of Jim Hume's columns?
Visit The Old Islander at <http://jimhume.ca/>)**

Hugh Curtis Memorial Fund tops \$7,000

The Victoria Foundation administered Hugh Curtis Memorial Fund has topped the \$7,000 mark, reports the foundation's Director of Philanthropic Services Sara Neely.

"We are pleased to see the new contributions to the fund in memory of Hugh Curtis. The support of former MLAs, family and friends is appreciated," Neely says.

The Association of Former MLAs of British Columbia established the Hugh Curtis Memorial Fund to honour the former minister of finance, active association member, and OOTD editor who died last year.

As of May 13, the fund had reached \$7,056, Neely says. The association donated seed money of \$4,000 to get the fund started. Now members of the association and family friends are growing the fund. It must reach a minimum of \$10,000 before grants can be awarded.

Grants from the fund will acknowledge Hugh's interest in youth and his commitment to the BC Youth Parliament (BCYP). The fund will provide opportunities for wider participation in the Youth Parliament's annual sessions in the Parliament Buildings in Victoria by helping to defray travel and accommodation expenses for two youth who live outside the Greater Victoria area.

BCYP is a youth service organization dedicated to fulfilling its motto: "Youth Serving Youth." Each year, 95 individuals, ages 16 to 21, from around the province meet in the Legislative Buildings and debate legislation that outlines projects that will then be run throughout the year.

Guided by its motto – "Connecting people who care with causes that matter®" – the 80-year-old Victoria Foundation granted more than \$11.8 million to registered charities in 2014.

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100 candles shine on Legislature Library cake

By Iona Reid

Acquisitions/Serials Librarian

Legislative Library of BC

This year, 2015, marks the centennial anniversary of the Library wing of the British Columbia Parliament Buildings. On September 15, 1915, the doors to the new library were official opened, but getting to that point was no small feat.

The Legislative Library has existed since 1863 when \$1,000 was earmarked by the Assembly to build a Library for the use of the House of the Assembly. The original Library consisted of a small room off the side of the House chamber in the old Birdcage building, and a Member of the House was appointed during the session to oversee it.

The Library truly became established when R. E. Gosnell became the first Legislative Librarian in 1893 and when the Legislative Library Act was passed in 1894. Gosnell had grand dreams for the Library and began



Laying of the cornerstone, 1912

Photo source: BC Archives 455739

actively building collections that supported the legislative efforts of the Members of the Assembly and recorded the history of the province and Pacific North West.

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When the Library moved out of the Birdcages and into the Assembly building in 1898 it became quite clear that space would be an issue. Through the annual reports of the Library, Gosnell and his successor E. O. S. Schofield lamented the limited space for the Library's growing collection:

"As far back as 1898, it was found impossible to accommodate all the volumes on the shelves in the stack-room, and from that year to this the lack of space has been the most serious problem that has confronted the department. At different times shelves have been placed in adjoining apartments, and latterly it has been found necessary to invade the Committee and Members' rooms, as well as to erect book-cases in three vaults in the basement of the building." (1907 Annual report of the Legislative Library)

The dreams of a proper home for the Library became reality in 1912 when the Duke of Connaught, the Governor General of Canada, Schofield, and architect Francis Rattenbury, laid the corner stone of the Library. On September 15, 1915 the Library officially opened.

Over the last 100 years, the rooms of the Library wing have been witness to British Columbia's democratic

process and the Library has done its best to preserve BC's political history. From the sessional clipping books that begin in the 1890s to the Monthly Checklist of New Government publications that has been issued since 1935, the Legislative Library has documented BC's political milestones.

The Library's services have changed dramatically over 100 years. Between 1898 and 1919 the Legislative Library ran a Traveling Libraries service which issued boxes of books to rural towns and mining camps across the province. In 1978 the Legislative Library was the first provincial Legislative Library to offer Cataloguing-in-Publication (CIP) to government publications. While the CIP program ceased in the 1990s the library still provides ISBN numbers for BC government publications. The Library's hallmark service, reference and research support has strived to meet the information needs of the Members of the Assembly for over 100 years, but how Librarians find information has changed dramatically with technological advancements in the latter half of the 20th Century. Today the librarians communicate with Members through email and offer resources through apps. From card catalogues to Kindles the Legislative Library of British Columbia strives to meet Member's information needs.

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Library wing staff are busy writing newsletter articles and creating new Infographics and displays that feature the history of the Library, past Librarians, and historical and current services. The Library is also hoping to host a reception in either late spring or early fall. Stay tuned for details.



Library nearing completion, 1914

Photo source: BC Archives 463628



Library staff picture, 1915

Photo source: BC Archives 585228

Summer tours at the Leg

By Kimberlee Hart
Parliamentary Education Office

Every summer, more than 75,000 people participate in free guided tours of the Parliament Buildings. This summer, the Parliamentary Tour Office is excited to welcome nine Summer Tour Guides and four Parliamentary Players to help educate and entertain visiting school groups, families and international visitors.

Summer Tour Guides provide interpretive tours that highlight British Columbia's political history, legislative process, and the art and architecture of the Parliament Buildings. This summer our Tour Guides come from a variety of post-secondary institutions across Canada, including the University of Victoria, the University of British Columbia, the University of Northern BC, Simon Fraser University, and the University of Ottawa. We are excited to be able to offer free tours in English, French, German, Japanese, Mandarin, and Russian.

Parliamentary Players shine a light on important historical characters and events that helped to define British Columbia. Dressed in period costume, the Parliamentary Players appear on tours and deliver lively, historically accurate monologues and vignettes. They also walk the grounds of the Parliament Buildings and interact with visitors.



Our 2015 Parliamentary Players are students from the University of Victoria with backgrounds in Theatre and Applied Theatre, and will represent Queen Victoria, Francis Mawson Rattenbury, MLA Mary Ellen Smith, and MLA Amor de Cosmos.

Throughout the summer, the Parliamentary Tour Office provides free guided tours seven days a week, including weekends and statutory holidays. Our tours help visitors understand the role of MLAs and the Legislative Assembly as well as the history of the province and the Parliament Buildings.

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This is a good year for BC-owned Pacific Western Brewing, a major sponsor of the 2015 Canada Winter Games in Prince George.

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Jim Rhodes ... well remembered

Jim Rhodes' time in government was brief, but he is well remembered. He served from 1960 to 1963 under the banner of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation. He died in March at 87.



Jim and Norma at the Association Annual Dinner in 2001.

Writing in the *Globe & Mail* in 2009, Tom Hawthorn recalled that Jim and the late Hugh Curtis became post-partisan "bosom buddies" after meeting at an Association gathering.

At the time Rhodes said: "Hugh calls quite often for my advice. I tell him he's crazy if he takes it."

Rhodes political success was unexpected. He narrowly won election in Delta in 1960 when the

dual-member riding was a rural expanse encompassing Delta, Richmond, Surrey, Langley, Langley City and White Rock. The campaign turned on a newspaper exposé of Socred candidate Donald Riggan who was reported to have done prison time. He insisted he had done so as part of an undercover RCMP operation to infiltrate the Communist Party.

"I got elected by a stroke of luck. I'll be the first to admit it," Rhodes said.

Defeated after one term, he went into business, reviving a near-bankrupt printer. A newspaper columnist called him the only bilingual businessman in British Columbia, as he spoke fluent capitalist and socialist.

Predeceased by his wife Isobel, he is survived by his partner, Norma, and his children, Cheryl Anne and Douglas. Jim grew up on a farm in Cloverdale where he cultivated lifelong traits including hard work, perseverance, intelligence, integrity, and generosity. Jim was widely admired and respected.

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Australia's Sex Party stripped of its status

The Australian Sex Party, a tiny party known for its salacious name and election day antics, says it was deregistered after the country's election watchdog ruled it did not have enough activists.

Co-founder Robbie Swan said the party would "vigorously" appeal a decision handed down by the Australian Election Commission (AEC) that removed its official status.

Under Australian law a political party must have either an elected representative in the federal parliament or 500 members to keep its registration. The Sex Party has one lawmaker in the Victoria state legislature, but none at the federal level.

Swan rejected the AEC's finding that it had fallen below the 500-member threshold. He said the party is primarily comprised of young people who change addresses frequently, do not have home phone numbers and are much more transient than traditional party voters.

The Australian Sex Party had its roots in the adult entertainment industry. Young activists, sporting shirts emblazoned with cheeky slogans such as "We're serious about sex", have been known to follow voters for entire city blocks in a bid to secure their vote.

(Reuters, Sydney)

Woman hits Venezuela leader, gets new home

A woman who bashed President Nicolas Maduro on the head with a mango has been promised a new house for her troubles in a surreal tropical tale that has gone viral in Venezuela.

The 52-year-old president was driving a bus through a crowd in the central state of Aragua when someone tossed the fruit at him.

"It says: 'If you can, call me'," the former bus driver said as he displayed the fruit with a name and phone number scrawled on it.

"Marleny Olivo had a problem with her house. She was scared. I've approved an apartment for you,

Marleny, as part of the 'Grand Venezuelan Housing Mission'," he added, vowing to eat the mango.

Venezuela's ever ebullient cyber sphere did not miss a beat, with the president's populist gesture drawing admiration and derision, plus plenty of jokes.

"If for a mango they give you apartments, then you know what to do: throw him a pineapple!" quipped Dolar Today, a website that is hated by Maduro.

"A mango shortage is coming, let's line up to throw them at Maduro and get a new house!" one Twitter user joked.

Like his predecessor Hugo Chavez, who died in 2013, Maduro often gives away homes, appliances or pensions to low-income Venezuelans.

(Reuters, Caracas)

Mexican politician seeks stand-in body double

Renato Tronco Gómez, a federal deputy in Mexico, has launched a competition to find a team of doubles to help him bear the weight of office.

"Veracruz is a big state and it takes a long time to get from one place to another to attend events where the people want to see their deputy," he told the Guardian.

"You can send a representative who is a man or a woman, short or tall, fat or thin, white or black, but it would be a lot better to send a double."

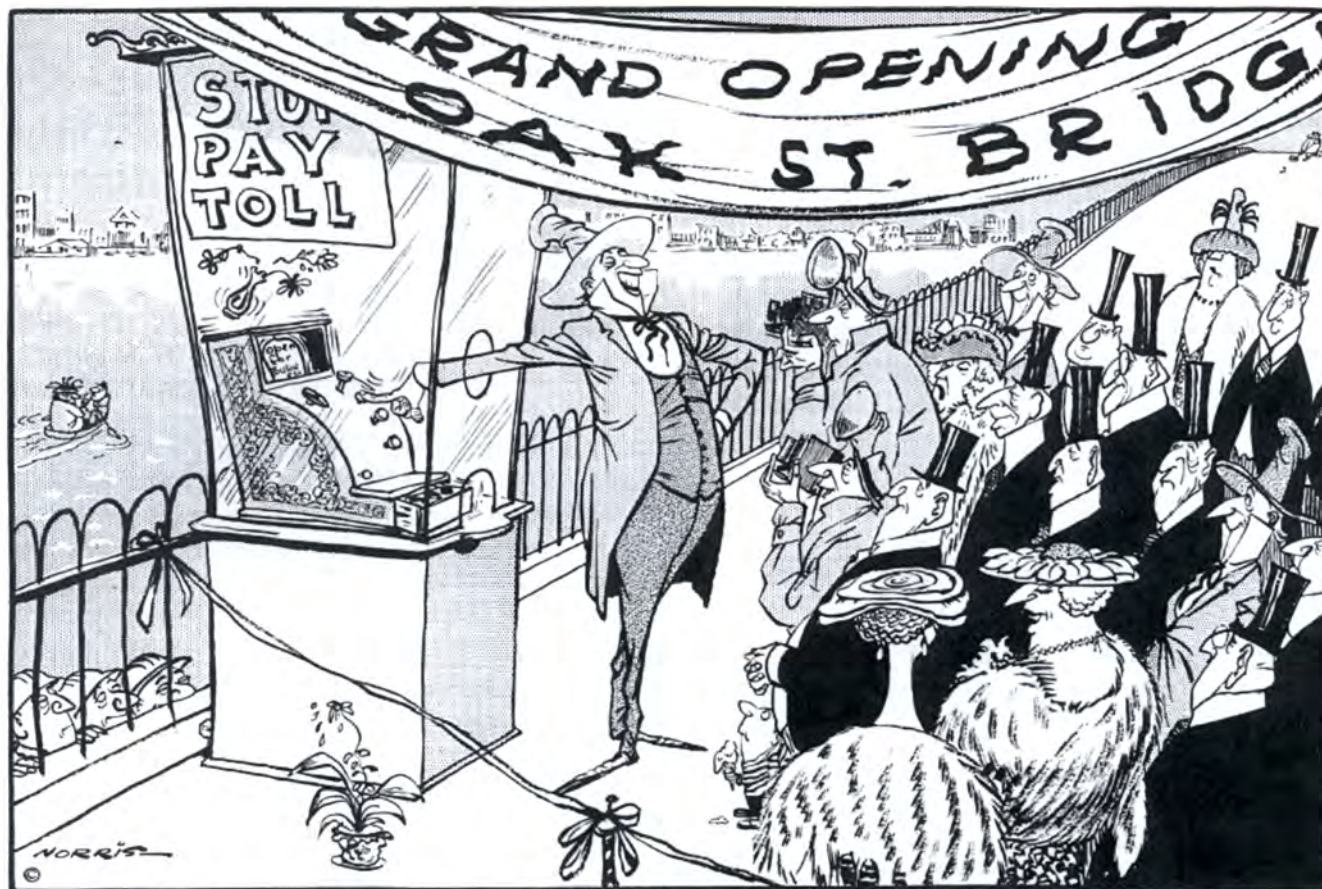
Tronco hopes to employ several doubles. The resemblance would not have to be exact, he says. A short candidate could wear platform shoes; a chubby one could go on a diet; or a skinny one fattened up.

But their contract will include strict rules of behaviour, forbidding the fake Troncos from smoking or drinking to ensure they behave as much like the original as possible. "Most importantly they will not be able to live in my home, sleep with my wife, or go to Congress – which would also be illegal," he says.

Tronco, 45, has represented several parties throughout his political career. Elected to the Veracruz Congress in 2013 for the Green party, he has since become an independent.

(The Guardian)

Len Norris



June 29, 1957

"None of your old-fashioned ribbon cutting ... this is the push button age ..."

An invitation to donate to the Hugh Curtis Memorial Fund

The Victoria Foundation looks forward to receiving donations to the Hugh Curtis Memorial Fund from all of Hugh's well wishers and friends.

By phone: Call 250-381-5532 to make a donation by credit card directly via the Victoria Foundation.

By cheque: Send cheques to the Victoria Foundation at #109 645 Fort Street, Victoria, BC, V8W 1G2. Please ensure they are made out to The Victoria Foundation. Note the name of the fund in the memo line or in a cover letter.

Online: The Victoria Foundation's mechanism for online donations is [CanadaHelps](#) and the steps are:

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- Click to indicate whether you want to donate now or monthly and you will be taken through the steps to make your donation.
- In the section for designation of your gift, click on the drop down menu to select the Hugh Curtis Memorial Fund.
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- There are several privacy permissions available. If you choose to include your name and address in the information which is sent to the Victoria Foundation, the Association will be pleased to acknowledge your gift.

If you have any questions about how to make a donation to the Victoria Foundation, please contact Sara Neely, Director of Philanthropic Services, at 250-381-5532 or sneely@victoriafoundation.bc.ca

Letters

Dear Brian:

Good for you in stepping in to keep alive the journal – it is certainly up to standard. Hugh would be pleased.

I was pleased you featured Peter Dueck. He was a fine man and an incorruptible public figure. He got a lousy deal when he stepped aside ... for a criminal investigation that involved his ministry. The investigation took so long that his career ended and was forgotten – a victim of the arcane mysteries of an interminable criminal justice process!

Brian Smith,
Victoria

Dear Editor:

Excellent publication! Thank you for sending it along. You have given me some ideas for our own publication.

Warmest wishes,

David Warner, editor
"The InFormer" Ontario Association of Former
Parliamentarians"

Please find attached a cheque to cover my 2015 dues plus a donation to OOTD production.

Take care,
Dan Peterson,
Abbotsford

Dear Brian:

Please find enclosed my cheque to cover the cost of my 2015 dues. I am glad that you have taken up the torch to carry on the good work that Hugh did for a number of years.

All the best,
Brian Kerr
West Vancouver

Enclosed is my cheque for my 2015 membership, plus a bit extra for OOTD expenses.

Sincerely,
Tony Brummet,
Osyoos

Hello:

Enclosed is a cheque for my 2015 membership fees. I certainly appreciate the efforts of the individuals organizing this group.

Thank you again.

Respectfully,
Charlie Wyse,
Williams Lake

Sir:

Enclosed please find my cheque for Association dues for the next year, with a little extra to help support the cause.

John Les,
Chilliwack

My apologies for sending this cheque so late. Keep up the good work.

Bonnie McKinnon,
Surrey

Please find enclosed my dues for 2015 and a few extra dollars to help with the production of the newsletter. I look forward to seeing the production and the pictures of past colleagues of mine, and interesting things that have happened in BC.

Keep up the good work and thank you.

Senator Richard Neufeld,
Ottawa

Keep up the good work. It's always fun to read the activities of many familiar names from time gone by.

Sincerely,
Charles and Jill Ennals,
Nanoose Bay

We welcome your letters - mail them to:
P.O. Box 31009
University Heights P.O.
Victoria, B.C. V8N 6J3

Or email to: ootd.afmlabc@gmail.com

Member News

Please send news about your activities to ootd.afmlabc@gmail.com for the next newsletter.

Membership report:

Your dues may be overdue

Currently we have 128 members in the Association of Former MLAs of BC. However, of this number 56 are overdue to renew their memberships and nine others were due by the end of May. Please contact me with your inquiries about your dues and expiry.

If you know of any former MLAs who are not members, please encourage them to join, and let me know so I can follow up. If they have any questions, ask them to email or call me.

Our membership dues for this year remain at \$60. Please make your cheque out to the Association of Former MLAs of BC, and mail it to PO Box 31009, University Heights P.O., Victoria, BC, V8N 6J3.

Your membership dues represent a major portion of the funding for "Orders of the Day."

Kenneth Jones, Membership Chair
kenjjones@gmail.com
604-535-2204

A short course on government saving

What ever happened to legal sized forms?

Well, shortly after being appointed Minister of Government Management Services I called a Weekend Retreat to lay out our objectives. We came up with approximately 20 cost saving initiatives.

On the following Monday morning my office got a call from one of the participants who had a cost saving idea but was reluctant to bring it forward during the retreat. He said it's the ELF initiative: "Eliminate legal-size forms."

He said more than 90 per cent of print on 14-inch paper could fit on 11-inch paper and that smaller filing cabinets would reduce the size of required office space, as well as generate inventory savings.

I got my cabinet book and took it home and measured the 14-inch pages and sure enough more than 90 per cent would have easily fit on 11-inch paper. I then went on to meet with Minister of Finance Mel Couvelier and Attorney General Bud Smith. Both quickly agreed to the proposal. And that was the end of the long 14-inch binders and legal size forms saving taxpayers tens of thousands of dollars.

Cliff Michael, Victoria

Former MLAs can help reverse voter apathy

It occurs to me that the Association of Former MLAs of BC could assume an expanded role. I believe that the organization's impact could be enhanced and strengthened with a defined, beneficial objective of improving public participation in the process of parliamentary democracy.

I am confident that by working together in a non-partisan manner ideas could be developed that would make the political process more accountable and relevant to the voting public. The ideas, once refined by our membership, could be shared with the public at large and, with public support, be accepted by all political parties and the government of the day.

Why? The voting public certainly hasn't put their stamp of approval on the status quo. Voter apathy is the greatest hazard to our parliamentary system. And, the lack of public engagement is reflected in diminishing voter turnout at the polls.

During our political careers each one of us was given the faith, trust and confidence of our constituents. That is a privilege that still motivates us. While we have been put out to pasture in a sense, we collectively have the knowledge, experience and wisdom to improve the process. And, we still have an obligation to our constituents to strive for a better system.

I would like the Association directors to place this matter on the agenda of our September AGM.

Colleagues, think about it!

Cliff Serwa, Kelowna

In appreciation to the Legislative Library

We extend our thanks to the Director and staff for their continuing courtesy and assistance when we seek help in research and information for this publication. It's of major importance!

The Liberation of the Netherlands

The events of the past have a direct impact on the world we know today. The warm relationship that exists between Canada and the Netherlands can be traced back to difficult days at the end of the Second World War when Canada played a key role in liberating the people of the Netherlands.

In the fall of 1944, the Allies launched Operation Market-Garden, a daring land and airborne attack behind enemy lines in the eastern Netherlands. The goal was to bring the war to a rapid end by cutting in half the German positions in western Europe. The German resistance was fierce, however, and the bold offensive failed.

The "Hunger Winter" of 1944-45 was a terrible time for the Dutch. Food supplies were exhausted; many people were reduced to eating tulip bulbs just to try to survive. Fuel had run out and transportation was almost non-existent.

In February 1945, the First Canadian Army joined the Allies in a fierce push through mud and flooded ground to drive the Germans eastward out of the Netherlands and back across the Rhine.

In early April, the First Canadian Army began to clear the Germans from the northeast of the country. Often aided by information provided by Dutch resistance fighters, Canadian troops rapidly moved across the Netherlands, recapturing canals and farmland as they drove for the North Sea. Canadians also began to advance in the western Netherlands, which contained the major cities of Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague.

Canadian forces were prepared to continue their push in the west of the country, however, there were concerns this would prompt the now-desperate Germans to breach all the dykes and flood the low-lying country. The Canadian advance came to a temporary halt. To show their appreciation to the Canadians who air-dropped food during this time, many Dutch people painted, "Thank you, Canadians!" on their rooftops.

Through great sacrifices of Canadian and other Allied soldiers, the remaining German forces in the country surrendered on May 5, 1945. All German forces would surrender May 7, 1945. The next day was declared Victory in Europe (V-E) Day.



Photo by Lieut. G. Barry Gilroy

May 9, 1945: Infantrymen of The West Nova Scotia Regiment in a Universal Carrier enroute to Rotterdam are surrounded by Dutch civilians celebrating the liberation of the Netherlands.

The Dutch people cheered Canadian troops as one town after another was liberated. This was a memorable time for the people of the Netherlands. Recalled one Dutch civilian who was a teenager at the time of the Canadian liberation of The Hague: "As the (Canadian) tank came nearer...there was a big hush over all the people, and it was suddenly broken by a big scream, as if it was out of the earth. And the people climbed on the tank...and they were crying. And we were running with the tanks and the jeeps all the way into the city."

More than 7,600 Canadians died in the efforts to free the country. Others returned home with injuries to body and mind that they carried for the rest of their lives.

Warm bonds of friendship and respect between the Dutch and the Canadians continue to this day. Evidence of this enduring connection may be seen in the tulips - gifts from the Netherlands - which bloom in Ottawa each spring and in the care and attention bestowed by the Dutch people on the burial places of our war dead. Even though the cost of lives was heavy and the sacrifice great, Canadians are proud to have been cast in the role of liberators.

(Veterans Affairs Canada)