



Orders of the Day

The Publication of the Association of Former MLAs of British Columbia

Volume 22, Number 9

November 2016

Lest we forget



Top: Virtual poppy drop in Ottawa.

Centre: Ypres, 1916

Bottom: The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge lay a wreath at the Victoria Cenotaph last month.

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Her Honour

The Honourable Judith Guichon, OBC
Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia

Thank You and Miscellany

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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Association Membership (former MLAs) dues are \$60.00 per year. Annual subscription rate is \$40.00 for those who are not Association Members.
Payment can be sent to the above address.

Commonwealth Youth Parliament At Legislature, November 6 to 10

The Legislative Assembly is hosting the 8th Annual Commonwealth Youth Parliament from November 6 to 10.

Youth parliamentarians aged 18 to 29 from across the Commonwealth will have an opportunity to learn about the work of parliamentarians, the legislative process, parliamentary procedure, and media relations.

Former Members are welcome to observe the proceedings from the public galleries. Please come down to the Legislature and support these future parliamentarians.

More information about the youth parliament is available at www.leg.bc.ca/cyp8. You can also find more information using hashtag #cyp8 on social media.

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(The late) Hugh Curtis

From the Editor's Desk

I was born one year before the Germans surrendered to the Allied forces in Reims, France in 1945 and 15 months before the Americans flattened Hiroshima and Nagasaki with A-bombs. I was too busy getting fed, burped and changed to pay much attention.

When I became a teenager I joined the Royal Canadian Sea Cadets - "RCSCC Iron Duke" - in Burlington, Ontario and became a member of the Honour Guard. I marched proudly in several Remembrance Day ceremonies and met hundreds of veterans whose memories of the terrible conflict were still quite fresh.

In this issue Ken Jones reminds us why we must never forget and shares a little of the story of his Grandfather's First World War experiences near Ypres in 1915 and 1916 as taken from his daily diary.

On the History page (P-16), I took Remembrance Day in a new direction. In Italy, they observe a new Remembrance Day as the conflict in Syria rages and the bodies of refugees continue to wash ashore.

Also in this issue we pay tribute to a veteran of the political variety, Don Phillips, who died in Australia in October. Our thanks go to Jim Hume, who was Don's close friend, and to Bob Plecas, who was here on the ground with Don through the fractious Public Sector Restraint Act debate.

In 1981, I did a profile on Don for the Vancouver Sun in which I described him as "the Cheshire grin on the face of the Social Credit Party" and "a hot air balloon tethered to the government benches." Covering Don was just too easy.

In 2009, Don told Jim: "I love Australia and the Australian people. But, I was born Canadian and I shall die Canadian. Canada is my country and I really miss the seasons. It's summer all year round here and it's wonderful, but ..." Jim said Don's voice trailed off as though recalling autumn mists in the Peace River while enjoying a brilliant hot summer day on Gold Coast.

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.

This is to notify all Members of our AFMLABC AGM in Vancouver this year

**Official Notice of 2016 Annual General Meeting
for the Association of Former MLAs of British Columbia**

Thursday, November 17, 2016

Place: Telus Garden, 510 West Georgia Street, Vancouver

Time: 1:30 p.m. (sharp) to 4 p.m.

NOTE: Members planning to attend should RSVP to Association Secretary Ken Jones at kenjjones@gmail.com or call him at 604-535-2204. Members planning to join the AGM by teleconference should contact Ken Jones for call-in information. Ken will be pleased to forward minutes from the 2015 AGM.



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At the November 17 AGM Gillian will take a bow

The November 17th Association of Former MLAs of BC AGM in Vancouver will be Gillian Trumper's last as the association's tireless president.

She has decided to lay down her velvet gavel and welcome new leadership. As several of her colleagues have written in this issue, Gillian's leadership through a difficult period after the passing of Hugh Curtis was nothing less than remarkable.

Association Secretary Ken Jones says: "Gillian has been superb stepping up to the plate and keeping things going, as well as growing."

Gillian was first elected as MLA for Alberni-Qualicum in the 2001 general election and served until 2005.

She was a tireless MLA at home and in the Legislature. She was chair of the Legislative Standing Committee for Aboriginal Affairs, and served on the following Standing Committees: Parliamentary Reform, Ethical Conduct, Standing Orders and Private Bills; and Legislative Initiatives. She also served on the Special Legislative Committee to Review the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

She was the chair of the Women's Caucus Committee, and sat with her colleagues on the Vancouver Island Coastal Caucus. She was also a member of the Government Caucus Committee on Communities and Safety as well as the Land Use Planning Committee.

Gillian served on Agenda and Priorities and on the Core Review and Deregulation Task Force. She was also a former member of the Government Caucus Committee on Government Operations.

She came to provincial public service with a strong municipal track record. She was mayor of Port Alberni from 1983 to 2001. She was the Union of BC Municipalities president and its Fisheries Committee chair, West Coast Treaty Advisory Committee chair, and Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District Board chair. As well, Gillian was Community Economic Adjustment Initiative Committee co-chair for the federal government, and a member of the Advisory Council to the Law Commission of Canada.

Gillian's lengthy record of community service includes memberships in the Western Vancouver Island Heritage Society and the Port Alberni Friendship Centre, and honorary memberships in the Port Alberni Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs. Gillian was named Port Alberni Citizen of the Year in 1993, and in 2002 was made a Freeman of the City of Port Alberni.

Born in Croyden, England "many years ago", the widowed mother of four was one of two daughters.



Gillian at the 2014 Association Annual Dinner

Trumper's earliest childhood memory has to do with the Second World War. The family lived near an airfield that was often the target of German bombers.

"We used to sit in the cupboard under the stairs during the bombings and then go and pick up shrapnel on the street after it was over," Trumper told the Alberni Valley News in 2013.

"Our neighbour's house took a direct hit and the family — the children we played with — were killed."

The family moved around London a lot and Trumper attended several different schools. She enjoyed Latin, which was taught by a teacher who she still remembers, Mrs. Lansdowne.

"She was wonderful and was patient with people who struggled with the course," Trumper said.

After high school graduation, Trumper attended nursing school for four years then worked as a nurse in London and Denmark before coming to Canada with her then-boyfriend Michael whom she eventually married.

The couple lived in Alberta, where their children were born, for four years. Her late husband liked the sea and wanted to sail so they set their sights on living in B.C.

"An opportunity came up in Port Alberni and we came out," she said. Trumper first saw the Alberni Valley on a warm July day in 1969. "It looked as spectacular as it could ever have looked," she said. Her first job in the Valley was teaching swimming lessons at Echo Centre. She worked at a series of jobs and served as a school board trustee before she set her sights higher.

Gillian – We're grateful for your leadership and goodwill

Ken Jones: Gillian has been superb stepping up to the plate and keeping things going as well as growing.

As vice-president, she stepped into the presidency of our association without much time on the board, due to the sudden passing (in office) of Bill Reid. Then in the following year, our illustrious Secretary-Treasurer/Editor Hugh Curtis passed on, creating the need for a massive reorganization of how we operated as a functioning entity.

Gillian coordinated the transitions from her home office in Port Alberni, with many trips to Victoria to meet with Rob Lee, Government House staff, the Victoria Foundation, the BC Youth Parliament, the Speaker's office, the bank and others.

It has been a delight working with Gillian, and I hope she will continue to guide us in her role as Past President.

Darlene Marzari: I first met with Gillian when I was a city "alderman" in Vancouver through the Golden Age of the 70s. A few women counsellors and mayors, led by the intrepid Mayor Audrey Moore of Castlegar, met at the UBCM every year and had lunch to talk generally about women's issues in our communities and to plan a little strategy around the resolutions on the floor.

We had no intention of being revolutionary. But, the fact that we did meet for lunch certainly created a buzz through the various conventions and I'm sure we were labeled a 'lefty women's caucus.'

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Gillian was always there, a steady hand at the helm, always constructive and untiring, and our friendship formed. When I retired from provincial politics in the mid-90s, Gillian came to my retirement dinner and talked about our exploits together in 'the old days.'

Her respect for parliament, her admiration for our Hugh and for the association, her competence at getting things done and her goodwill sometimes under difficult conditions have made her a wonderful president to see our association through its last three years.

Val Roddick: Gillian has been a 'brick'... prodding us gently along (and not so gently when necessary) during a challenging time. As a result our association is motoring along smoothly.

Thank you Gillian for seeing us through! This is a good time to be passing the baton and asking our growing membership to seriously consider joining the board of directors - which is a fun, active (and not remotely onerous) group. All the best Gillian.

Penny Priddy: The wise and wonderful Gillian Trumper. She will, of course, deny it but it really is true.

I have gotten to know Gillian better over these last two years and I really like the person that I have gotten to know. She's smart and she's funny (in a very British way, of course). She is respectful of the history of our organization and of the legacy that Hugh left to us.

She sees a job that needs to be done and figures out how to make that happen. When there is a task waiting Gillian nudges us gently but persistently until it is accomplished. She believes that former politicians have an ongoing role to play in the lives of their communities and she demonstrates that every day in her hometown of Port Alberni.

She has helped to bring this organization through a difficult time and I would ask everyone to raise their glass and offer a toast to our retiring President Gillian Trumper with our thanks and our gratitude.

Jeff Bray: Gillian did an amazing job, stepping in so fully after the passing of Hugh Curtis. She showed tremendous leadership and was one of the key reasons the association was able to transition after the loss of our driving force Hugh.

We are eternally grateful for all she did over the last couple of years! A well-deserved rest!

Speaker Linda Reid: I have always admired the sheer tenacity of Gillian Trumper. This is a woman who gets the job done. She has been absolutely fearless and yet utterly kind. She puts families first and gets it all done before breakfast!

Stay in touch with us Gillian Trumper. You are a keeper. Thank you for your service. After all it is the rent we pay for our time on this earth.

A peak into the 1916 diary of Sapper Ernie Jones

(Editor's note: While this 100 year old wartime diary contains abbreviations and references that will be unknown to many readers, Sapper Jones' grim account of his ordeal comes through loud and clear.)

By Ken Jones
Surrey-Cloverdale MLA (1991-1996)

Ernest A.D. Jones, my grandfather, decided to serve his newly adopted country, Canada, during the First World War.

Leaving his wife and two small children in Port Alberni, he enlisted in Victoria on September 15, 1915, trained in Winnipeg, and was in France (via Ottawa and England) on March 9, 1916.



He was a Sapper in the 1st Canadian Pioneers Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. This Battalion became the 9th Battalion, Canadian Railway Troops on March 1, 1917.

Ernie, as he was known by many, received an honourable discharge due to health in New Westminster on April 30, 1918, returned to his family in Port Alberni to serve that community as a house builder, carpenter and long term city alderman. He received several service medals for his time overseas.

The following are glimpses from his war time diaries covering 1916 and 1917:

April 8, 1916:

Party of D. Coy (Company) came under very heavy shell fire on Lille Road at Thrapuel Corner. One shell killing three, wounding seven others. Time 8:30 pm

April 20, 1916:

Tunnelling at R.E. dug-outs

THE BLUFF - continuously working 4 tunnels in 4 successive shifts

Party No. 1 arrives 9 pm, commences work. Work on arrival and ceases work at 3 am, returning to Ypres. Party 2 arrives 3 am, commences work at once, ceases work at 9 am and rests in dug-outs until dark, when they return to Ypres. No. 3 party arrives at 3 am, rests until 9 am, works from 9 am until 3 pm and then rests until dark, when they return to Ypres. Party 4 arrives at 3 am, rests until 3 pm, works from 3 pm until 9 pm, then returns to Ypres.

Rest billets near the tunnels are comfortable dug-outs called SALT TERRACE. This locality was shelled a short time ago, but if the men are reasonable careful not to show themselves there is no likelihood of this occurring again

May 17, 1916:

Near Battersea Farm excavating trench and laying cable 3n co. 86 men. Lieut. G. H. CAMPBELL was in charge and was KILLED AT 11 pm C. Coy

June 13, 1916:

1st C.P. (1st Canadian Pioneers Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force) loses in Battle at Ypres : wounded 4 of 51 O.R., Missing 6 O.R., killed 12 PETE MONTEITH & MUIR

August 19, 1916:

Died of Sickness	1 (Casualty Report)
Sick	111
Killed	27
Died of Wounds	20
Wounded	125
Missing	5
Transferred	26
Total	318

Dec. 15, 1916:

Left Battalion to join staff of ADLRR at Wanquetin

March 31, 1917:

Marocuil shelled, many casualties

April 4, 1917:

Bombardment started, April 5, 6, 7: Bombardment Continued

April 9, 1917:

Willie Neighbour Killed at Arris -----

April 16, 1917:

Proceeded to Beaumitz Cor, in tents (no floor), very wet night

On parade 7:20 am, dismissed tho', bad weather

April 18-23, 1917:

Worked in chalk pit, pick and shovel

April 24, 1917:

Proceeded to Arras; No. 5 & 6 Platoons fixed up tents on territory previously occupied by Fritz

June 8, 1917:

Attended dentist, had 3 teeth extracted, and the same on June 9th, 3 teeth, lower front extracted

June 19, 1917:

Reported to dentist, received card saying no frontal teeth supplied by Imperial Army

July 13, 1917:

Dressing Station very busy, 900 men gassed, over 2000 gassed at Ypres, on gas guard day & night, 2 hrs on, 4 hrs off

Don Phillips ... the photo on the get-it-done poster

By Bob Plecas

They don't make 'em like that no more! Hear that when old timers get together at the annual Retired MLA's dinner at Government House. This guy, Don Phillips, is the photo on the poster, the picture in the dictionary of sayings.

Some folks would say thank God, even on his side of the aisle, but even these folks would laugh after a moment, and say, yes, it is true.

Bill 3, the Public Sector Restraint Act, the infamous "without cause" bill in the dark days of restraint, a horrible piece of legislation, completely unworkable as drafted and never proclaimed. I was brought in the night before tabling in the Legislature to shepherd its passage through the House by giving technical advice to my Minister (another of those characters - Jim Chabot).

The Opposition divided itself into A, B, and C teams, splitting the caucus into thirds to fight the all night legislation agenda. On second reading of Bill 3 the debate started after Question Period, went over night, adjourned for QP, went back at it until the late evening. There were 67 divisions. But what really had to happen to get it through the House was dozens of closure motions. Very rarely used, but simple to do.

Don Phillips had returned from Tokyo after one of his innumerable trade missions, and just hours before entering the House. Around 8 p.m. He sat for 30 minutes, stood up,

said: "Mr. Speaker, I find the debate tedious and repetitious, and move the question be put." Closure. The first one. The cat was out of the bag. Debate turned acrimonious. A night of infamy in the BC Legislature.

But that was Don Phillips - no patience; process was for cheese. Never saw a brick wall he did not think he could run through to create a door. And why waste time on details.

He would not stand for any obstacle in the way of his vision for BC, at least not one he couldn't overcome, and if that failed, out talk, out shout, out holler, out last any foe. At the end of his time in office he had driven 43 different projects, as controversial as N.E. Coal and fish farms, to hospitals and bridges in his beloved Peace River Country.

A Sacred true believer - without the white shoes and belt - but in a business suit and tie, fanatical in the knowledge that BC's future lay in the Pacific Rim, where he drove the opening of our look westward.

You could question his politics, his bombast, his free enterprise party politics, but never his energy, or commitment to the province he loved. For that he would put his nose to the grind stone, and his shoulder to the wheel, knowing he would drive forward, fighting the NDP for power, until the leopard changed its 'stripes.'

No, they don't make 'em like that no more!



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Leather-lunged, silver-tongued - Phillips was unstoppable

By Jim Hume

Close to 50 years ago a brash politician preparing to face a television panel of three hard-nosed Legislative Press Gallery reporters was introduced by moderator Andy Stephen as the "leather-lunged, silver-tongued orator from the Big Sky country of the Peace."

It became the politician's cherished trademark for the next half century and was a featured phrase in most Canadian newspapers recording his death in Australia on October 5, 2016. He was 87.

"The Peace" was his treasured Peace River District of British Columbia, a land almost as vast as Australia's Outback but with rolling grasslands stretching from horizon to horizon beneath a sky – a big sky – that takes the breath away.

The politician was Donald McGray Phillips, first elected MLA in 1966. After one term he declined to run in the 1969 election, but returned to the fray in 1972 to again win South Peace River and become one of 10 Social Credit members to survive the great NDP triumph of that year.

He spent the next three years working with a handful of other party survivors to re-build the shattered Socreds and prepare for the next election. It came surprisingly early with voting day December 11, 1975, a day that ended with the return to power of Social Credit and a new Premier W.R. "Bill" Bennett, son of W.A.C. Bennett, in command.

Don Phillips had nominated the son to replace his father after "the old man" stepped down.

As a reward for his efforts to rebuild the party and for his loyalty to father and son, plus his feisty energy in any project undertaken, he was appointed to Bill Bennett's first cabinet with economic development his priority. Although honed by three years in opposition where MLAs can attack government with scatter gun noise and inaccuracy – and Don often did with sound and fury signifying nothing – he was still a rookie as a cabinet minister when facing for the first time the challenge of knowledgeable reporters with the unforgiving eye of a television camera waiting to capture every slip of the tongue or error of fact.



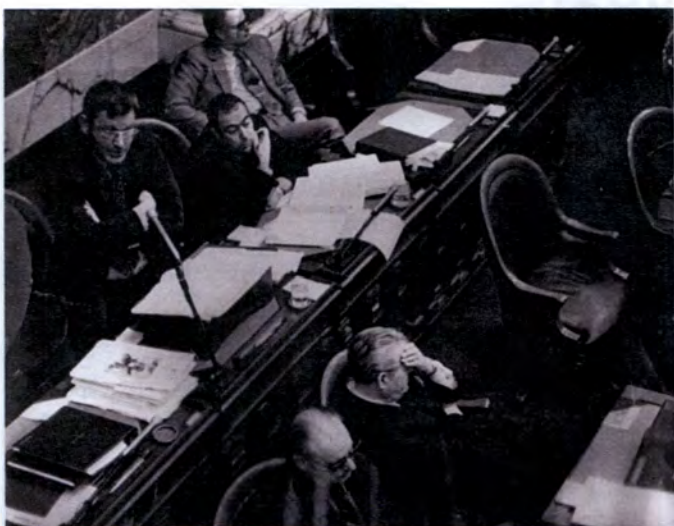
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Don Phillips speaks in the House. Seated to his left are Bob McClelland and Newell Morrison. In front are Frank Richter and WAC Bennett, holding his left hand to his forehead.

(Steve Bosch photo supplied by Jim Hume)

He was meat for the media grinder. Or, should have been. But questions designed to embarrass or intimidate the new minister were swept aside by a tidal wave of verbosity. The man from the Peace had no intention of changing his style.

People who knew him in youth say he was always like that – outspoken, confident, energy driven, determined to succeed. Those were the qualities he took to the Ford Motor Company when he joined the firm on the lowest rung of the company ladder, a ladder he eventually climbed to outright ownership of a full service car dealership in Dawson Creek plus other business interests.

He took those same qualities to high office. His achievements in economic benefits to his province and country have long been recorded.

Among his heroes were Norman Vincent Peale, of Power of Positive Thinking fame, and W.A.C. Bennett, Premier of BC for 20 years from 1955 to 1975. Like his political hero Don was a big project thinker, always positive his ideas would work and endowed with the energy and determination to make sure that for the most part they did.

Like Bennett, he was a politician from the old school, a barnstormer on the hustings, not too sure of his grammar and often with suspect phraseology – but in a strange way, always clear in his message. Listeners knew what he meant even when he described socialist rivals as “leopards who couldn’t change their stripes.” He may have spoken in fractured English – but there was never any doubt about what he meant.

It seems ironic that the two failures in his body that brought his death on October 5 were in the heart and lungs, the two organs that brought him so many triumphs in business and in politics. Maybe he just wore them out.

Don was not a militant Christian or a regular church goer. But, he held firm to Christian principles and teachings and, in his quieter moments, confessed he believed in their greatest promise.

Christina Rossetti put that promise into a poem 150 or more years ago. She wrote that death was just that: Rest: “...a stillness that is almost Paradise....a darkness more clear than noonday...a silence more musical than any song....(where) the very heart has ceased to stir until the morning of eternity...the rest will not begin, nor end, but be.....and when he wakes he will not think it long.”

So, old “leather lungs” R.I.P – and be long remembered.

(Fans of Rossetti will notice my minor tweak to her words – and will hopefully approve.)

(You can follow Jim Hume’s wordsmithing adventures at www.jimhume.ca.)

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Don Phillips through the years

September 12, 1966

Meet Your Social Credit Candidate
for SOUTH PEACE RIVER CONSTITUENCY

Donald PHILLIPS



Active young businessman Don Phillips is well known throughout the South Peace River area for his interest in community affairs. A long-time member and past president of the Dawson Creek Chamber of Commerce, his administrative ability was proved when he organized and served as president of the Dawson Creek Centennial Band, Chairman of the Board of Stewards of First United Church in 1960, Director of Dawson Creek Rotary Club and member of a Masonic Lodge and Mile Zero Shrine Club. Don has gained a deep insight into the needs of the South Peace River constituency. He has the energy to provide South Peace River with strong representation in Victoria. Don, who was born in Woodstock, N.B., is married, with four children.

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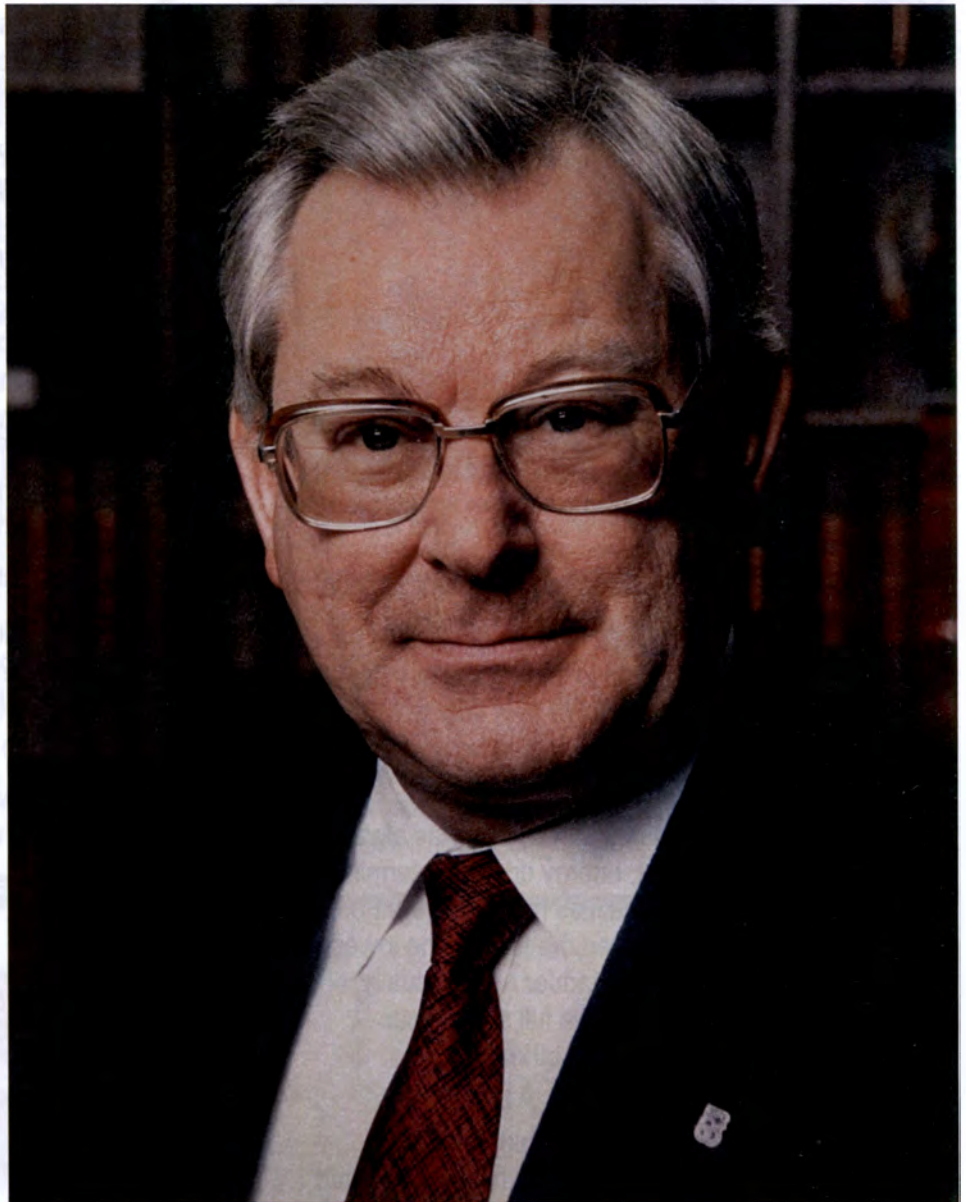


Photo Credit: John Yanyshyn/Visions West Photography



September 12th 1966 WE WCN Coony Carlson—Larry Lewin



Legislature pilot program for students launched

By Esther Rzeplinski
Parliamentary Education Coordinator

This fall the Legislative Assembly of BC and the Royal BC Museum (RBCM) are partnering to offer BC elementary schools an integrated, day-long program on governance.

Geared towards BC’s new curriculum, “Governance and Beyond” explores the different ways of governance, beginning with indigenous ways of knowing and being. The day-long program starts with a Learning Lab at the Royal BC Museum and finishes with a guided tour and “Governance Hunt” at the Parliament Buildings.

The program grew out of dialogue between the Parliamentary Education Office and the RBCM’s Learning Department. The majority of elementary school groups already visit both the RBCM and the Parliament Buildings, and there has long been a desire to complement each other’s school programming.

This pilot allows for a sharing of knowledge and resources between the two institutions, while also improving the quality of programming that students and teachers receive. Students are able to experience firsthand their museum discussions of democracy when they visit the Parliament Buildings, as well as delve into deeper discussions of First Nations governance at the RBCM.

During the months of October and November nine school groups from around Victoria and Vancouver are piloting this new, inquiry-based program. So far, Grades 5 and 6 students from Selkirk Montessori, Christ Church Cathedral School and Prospect Lake Elementary have participated.

Students meet at 10 a.m. in the Royal BC Museum and explore the Our Living Languages exhibit within the context of pre-contact, post-contact, and modern Indigenous governance. After lunch, the students cross the street to explore how our elected provincial government interacts and intersects with municipal, federal, and First Nations governments. We finish the day outside (weather permitting, of course) reflecting on how the students can participate in their democratic systems.

The sessions have been well-received and Prospect Lake Elementary had the pleasure of meeting with the MLA for their school. This particularly impressed their teacher who sent us the following email:

- *“I cannot thank you enough for the wonderful and informative experience. As a teacher, field trips are judged by how excited your students are to share what they have just experienced. Let’s just say my head is still ringing from all the information that was excitedly spouted out at me. What a treat to have had [our MLA]*



come and say a few words as well. Many thanks again for the opportunity to see and learn about the history of our province and to see where important decisions about our province are made.” – Teacher

The ability to experience the processes of governing through a diverse lens, across multiple institutions has been popular with both teachers and students. We sincerely hope this program will continue and we look forward to continued support from the MLAs.

- *“I thought this day was going to be kind of boring because of the subject, but I learned so much and really, really enjoyed myself.” – Student*



Next year marks the 100th anniversary of women who qualified as British subjects being granted the right to vote in British Columbia. In honour of this centennial and to mark Women's History Month, in October the Legislative Assembly launched an exhibit highlighting a number of significant 'firsts' for women elected to the Legislative Assembly. These milestones form part of the broader contributions of women to public life – contributions that would not have been possible without the hard-won success of the suffrage movement. The exhibit includes portraits of 21 featured women and interactive kiosks with information about the suffrage movement in BC, biographies of the featured women, an historical timeline, archival photographs, original poetry and a look at women's representation in the Legislative Assembly today.



Len Norris



November 5, 1965

"Whose facts do you want to substantiate your firm convictions?"

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Where Are They Now?

Iain Black guides Greater Vancouver Board of Trade

When Iain Black took the helm of the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade in 2011, the organization was struggling with a \$1.6 million deficit and its membership had fallen dramatically.



After he was with the organization 90 days, he took a restructuring plan to the board. The plan would turn things around, he said, completely restructure the organization and eliminate its deficit within five years. Under Black's leadership, the board managed to do it in two.

This is one of the achievements that led to the Canadian Chamber of Commerce Executives of Canada (CCEC) awarding Black with the CCEC Executive of the Year award last year.

The CCEC was also impressed with Black's reinvention of four Signature programs that targeted small business, women in business, young professionals under 35, and a Leaders of Tomorrow mentorship program for post-secondary students.

"It's evident that Iain's energy and enthusiasm have earned him the acclaim of his board, staff and peers, and he has definitely positioned the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade as a progressive and dynamic organization leading the business community," said Shelly Morris, Executive Director of the CCEC.

Before accepting his role as President and CEO, the former technology CEO served as the MLA for Port Moody-Westwood (2005-2009) and then the newly formed riding of Port Moody-Coquitlam (2009-2011). During that time, he held three cabinet posts, including Minister of Labour and Citizens Services; Minister of Small Business, Technology, and Economic Development; and Minister of Labour.

In his five years at the Board of Trade, Black has led several policy initiatives critical for economic growth in the region. This includes the May 2016 launch of an unprecedented 144-page report, Greater Vancouver Economic Scorecard 2016, which measured and compared Greater Vancouver to 19 other regions around the globe.

Under Black's leadership, the Board of Trade has also reasserted itself as one of the leading events platforms in the country. Last year alone, the organization hosted 143 events, for a total audience approaching 23,000 people. In recent years key speakers have included Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, former Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Premier Christy Clark, Bank of Canada Governor Stephen Poloz, Canadian Minister of Finance Bill Morneau, Virgin Group founder Sir Richard Branson, and more.

However, the event that most stands out in Black's mind as being his biggest undertaking is the one at which the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade hosted Secretary Hillary Clinton, "likely the next President of the United States."

"It was an enormous undertaking. It took a year to pull it off. It started out being an hour or two a week for me about a year before the event and in the last 60 days, it was fully four days a week of my time, never mind my entire events team," says Black. "It was the largest event in our history, 2,850 [attendees], and we fully sold out the Queen Elizabeth Theatre."

As for the future of the Board of Trade, Black said they are just getting started.

In recent GVBOT's latest membership drives, Black said, 45 per cent of all potential members were under 35 in age, and more than 60 per cent were women. The programming focus is building on its Signature Program success, and is looking abroad as it examines how to meaningfully increase exporting amongst BC's small and mid-size businesses.

"You're also seeing a real shift in the identity of who we are, our attraction to a younger audience – a more gender-balanced audience," he said, pointing to the fact GVBOT was the first business organization of any kind in North America to announce last year a board of directors with more women than men.

"We have our eye on the future," Black said. "We are no longer looking behind us, and we are no longer looking around us. We're looking forward."

(With files from Business in Vancouver newspaper.)

Letters

Dear Editor:

Reflecting on how one-time Cranbrook Daily Townsman reporter-turned-MLA Anne Edwards was able to get a 1973 interview with former Premier W.A.C. Bennett (Letters/OOTD, Oct./2016), a recollection posted in response to your outlandish claims to having actually captured a few quotes from him while you were toiling at the Penticton Herald prompts me to see you both and raise you one: An actual for-the-record interview with the venerable Socred that turned into a week-long 'exclusive.' And by a radio reporter, no less. Horrors!

It was 1971 when the Premier arrived in Prince George to embark on a BC Rail tour of the remote Dease Lake Extension. Your humble servant thought it worth a shot thrusting a microphone in his direction before he overnighted aboard his private rail car in the local BCR yards. Remember, our elected leader for nigh on two decades was loath to give interviews (except at election time) and that he also preserved for himself the finance portfolio. On this railway sojourn there was no entourage of indentured fart-catchers or slathering media. The Premier's party included just himself and a singular companion ... who may well have been his recently-appointed ministerial aide and trusted personal friend, L.J. (Laurie) Wallace.

Trackside on that warm Monday evening, I was ushered into the parlour of the carriage, mindful of the Premier's insistence that I wasn't to stay long and was to ask only 'general questions.' Perhaps he reasoned that this small-town reporter couldn't grasp political issues better understood by the Legislative Press Gallery wretches sequestered in Victoria.

Thrilled at such access, I lobbed a few 'softballs' and managed to get W.A.C. talking about the wondrous development opportunities created by this new railway extension, the years of prosperity that would accrue to the region and to the rest of BC, all the result of the economic vision shown by the only political party that could lead us into the next decade and beyond ... blah, blah, blah.

During the course of this diatribe, the Premier offered a vague admission that the road to this promised land might have a few financial potholes. He hinted that British Columbians should not be surprised to find that the next financial review or budget might include, for the first time, some less than spectacular fiscal results. Were this to come to pass, no doubt the responsibility would lie not with the prudent economic practices of Social Credit, but naturally with BC's Godless Socialists, their greedy pals in the trade union movement and those penny-pinching Feds who continued to avoid sending our fair share of the national wealth over the mountains.

Interview over, I retired to my newsroom to review the ramblings on my new-fangled cassette recorder and the more I listened, the more it struck me the keeper of our fiscal fortunes might have actually tilled some new political ground right before my microphone! Still unsure of exactly what I had, I called my old colleagues at CKNW in Vancouver who thought I might, indeed, be onto something. Sufficiently encouraged, stories were prepared, tape edited, reports produced and the word went forth.

So did the Premier. His one-car train left the station the next morning before anyone else could contact him, scheduled not to return from the most remote corner of BC for more than a week. These were the days before cellphones when communication with his northwest-bound express might be spotty radio-telephone or via BC Rail's private radio communications network. But W.A.C. never answered calls anyway ... certainly not from reporters.

The major - and minor - market media ran with my reports of the Premier's budgetary forebodings, lifting direct quotes from audio secured by a virtually unknown scribe who had managed to ingratiate himself aboard the Premier's Pullman.

They had almost no way of contacting the author of the quotes, short of chartering expensive transportation and traversing almost as far as the Yukon border with no guarantee that W.A.C. would repeat his warnings for their benefit. Days later they were out in full force to greet the great man upon his arrival back in the "Centre City" eager for him confirm the words he uttered a few moons prior.



For somewhat-smug me, it was old news by then ... the result of a set of conditions that produced this reporter's "perfect storm."

John Ashbridge

We welcome your letters - you can mail them to:

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A new Remembrance Day born of tragedy on Italy's shores

By Catherine Edwards

October 3rd 2016 marked three years since a shipwreck off the Italian island of Lampedusa killed 368 migrants, a tragedy seen by many as a key moment in Europe's migrant crisis.

It is also the first official Remembrance Day for the migrants - officially titled 'National Day of Remembrance for the victims of immigration' - which saw workshops, talks and film screenings across the country but particularly in Sicily, to raise awareness of those who make the journey across the Mediterranean and those who do not survive the crossing.

Recently, around 1000 people marched to the Gate of Europe, a five metre-high monument built in Lampedusa in 2008 which is dedicated to migrants who come to Sicily in search of a better life.

Those marching, including survivors of the 2013 shipwreck, carried a banner reading 'Protect people, not borders.' After the march, a ceremony took place at sea aboard an Italian Coastguard boat.

Islanders rushed to help the drowning migrants, helping those who had fallen overboard onto their own boats and to shore.

Over the weekend, a variety of commemorative events took place with talks on subjects from hate speech to music and 'What it means to be a migrant/refugee and arrive in a foreign country.' There were also talks raising awareness about how search and rescue efforts work and on the topic of human trafficking.

Students from all over Europe participated in a workshop called 'Europe starts at Lampedusa,' a project co-funded by the European Union, which involved talking to survivors and families of victims to learn about the journey to the southern port.

Lampedusa's mayor Giusi Nicolini reminded participants that the shipwreck led EU Commissioner Jean-Claude Juncker to say "no more deaths in the Mediterranean."



Jason deCaires Taylor's "The Raft of Lampedusa" - a grim nod to Théodore Géricault's 1818 painting *The Raft of the Medusa* - sits in Museo Atlantico, the first underwater art museum in Europe.

"But between then and now, another 11,000 have died: 3,500 have lost their lives in 2016 alone. It's a continuous stream," said Nicolini, adding that multiple deaths at sea are now considered almost normal.

Some of the victims of the October 3rd shipwreck have still not been identified, and while two smugglers have been charged with crimes relating to the shipwreck, an investigation is still ongoing to determine if the Coastguard failed to react to cries for help.

Those rescued said people on board had set fire to a blanket to attract the attention of coast guards after the boat began taking on water, and when the flames spread, panicked passengers rushed to one side of the vessel, flipping it over.

Islanders rushed to help the drowning migrants, helping those who had fallen overboard onto their own boats and to shore.

(Catherine Edwards is the Stockholm-based assistant editor of *The Local*, the largest English language news network in Europe.)