

## Powerful and nostalgic messages delivered at AFMLABC Annual Dinner

By Brian Kieran

In her first address to the Association of Former MLAs of BC, Her Honour, Lieutenant Governor Janet Austin, expressed concern about “the growing influence of American political culture” and “the decline of civility in public discourse.”

Her remarks came as more than 80 members of the AFMLABC, family and friends enjoyed Her Honour’s hospitality at Government House for their annual association dinner on Sept 21st.

On a lighter note, guest speaker Keith Baldrey, Global BC’s chief political correspondent in the Legislative Press Gallery, took his audience on a compelling trip down memory lane, back to the 1980s when there was “an open bar” in the Speaker’s Office, a “beer dispensing Coke machine” in the Press Gallery, and nightly bipartisan poker games during night sittings. “Today,” he joked, “there are requests for cannabis cookies and marijuana muffins in the dining room.”

The AFMLABC’s immediate past president, Penny Priddy, said: “We are here tonight to celebrate and honour the history and the future of former MLAs who have served our province so well.

“Last year, we celebrated the legal right of women to vote in BC. We do acknowledge that it took many more years before that right was expanded to include women of colour and indigenous women and men. This year, we celebrate the first election in which BC women cast their first ballot in a byelection and elected the first woman MLA Mary Ellen Smith.

“In this year, we honour the ending of the First World War, the War To End All Wars as it was later called. Seven BC MLAs served in that war. George Pearkes was not a sitting MLA; however, he went on to become the Lieutenant Governor of our province.

“All of us were elected because we were able to stand on the shoulders of those MLAs who came before us,” Priddy said. A moment of silence followed for those MLAs who passed away this year: Rafe Mair, Dave Barrett, Barrie Clark, Lyall Hansen, Jim Nielsen and Dr. Ray Parkinson.

Her Honour began her remarks with an acknowledgement that “the aim of your organization is to provide non-partisan support for our parliamentary democracy in the spirit of community and good relations.”

“There is the need to confront the threat to democracy in the current global context,” she said. “I find myself increasingly concerned about the erosion of respect for democracy and the institutions that support it such as the free press, and about the decline of civility in public discourse.

*continued on Page 4*



Her Honour

The Honourable Janet Austin, 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.

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**(The late) Hugh Curtis**

# From the Editor's Desk

What a busy issue of *Orders of the Day*! The annual AFMLABC dinner at Government House commands a lot of attention, of course. As ever, the dinner was a great success and included the inaugural address to the association by Her Honour, Lieutenant Governor Janet Austin. Guests were also treated to a light-hearted trip down memory lane at the Leg – and some sobering insights – from Global BC's veteran correspondent Keith Baldrey.

Both Her Honour and Keith touched on two critical issues – as Her Honour put it: "The erosion of respect for democracy and the institutions that support it such as the free press and the decline of civility in public discourse."

And, in his History Page column, our resident sage Jim Hume reminds us that in 1963 President Dwight Eisenhower foreshadowed the current political incivility south of the border when he told the nation's media leaders that "devotion to the ideals of freedom and justice themselves depend (upon) the understanding and the knowledge with which our people must meet the facts of the twentieth century." Certainly, facts have been the first victim of the current U.S. presidency.

As you know, a pivotal referendum on electoral reform will take place by postal ballot between Oct. 22nd and Nov. 30th ... the third referendum on electoral reform in BC. Voters will be asked two questions: First, what electoral system should be used to determine election results – the existing first-past-the-post (FPTP) system or a proportional representation (PR) system; and second, what type of proportional voting system should be used if PR is chosen. (Turn to Page 15 for the latest Angus Reid poll results.)

We covered this extensively in an earlier issue of OTTD, and I want to have one last canvass in the November issue. I intend to go straight to the leaders of the three parties represented in the House for their final thoughts as ballots go out. And, I am hoping you, the reader, will share your thoughts with us as well. Email your submissions to [ootd.afmlabc@gmail.com](mailto:ootd.afmlabc@gmail.com).

*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.*

# The New President's Report

It is my pleasure to greet you as the incoming President of the Association of Former MLAs of British Columbia. I am truly honoured to assume this position. I take over this role from our outgoing President, Penny Priddy.

I must remark on the amazing job Penny did on our behalf over the past two years. She has worked tirelessly to ensure our fine publication *Orders of the Day* continues to provide excellent reading. She established active committees that have focussed on increasing advertising revenue for the publication and increasing our membership. I am assuming the chair of an organization in a much stronger position due to her efforts. Thank you, Penny, for an amazing job!!

I would also like to thank board members Patrick Wong for his excellent work on the budget; Secretary Ken Jones for all his work on advertising revenue and membership; and Ida Chong for her support of the Finance Committee. I would like to thank all members of the executive for their continued support of the association; their contributions are invaluable.

Finally, I want to thank all of you, our members, subscribers and advertisers. It is because of you we continue to add a non-partisan voice to the life of former MLAs. Over the next year, your executive will focus on membership growth and continued strengthening of the association's financial position.

Our OOTD team extraordinaire, Brian Kieran and Rob Lee, are keenly looking for increased participation from readers. Please contribute your thoughts, observations or recollections of your days 'in the Leg.' Member and subscriber content is the most valuable.

Any ideas or feedback are happily requested and welcome! Have a wonderful autumn!

Jeff Bray  
President, AFMLABC



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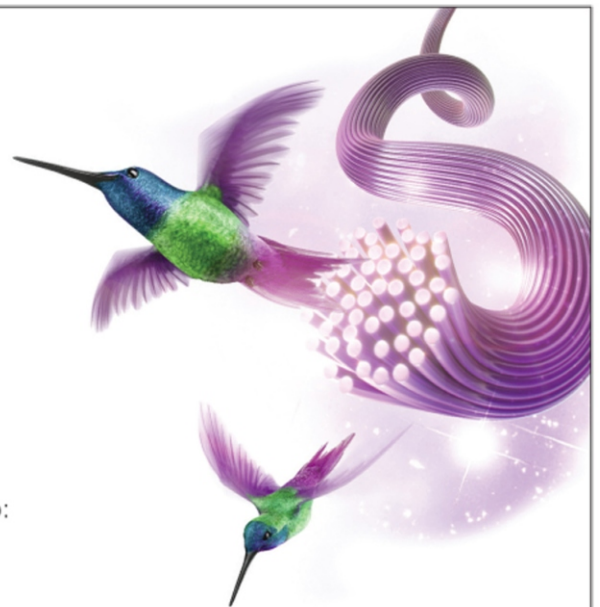
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## Government House dinner

“The health of modern democracies is undermined by factors like the rapid democratization of information and the resulting ‘echo-chamber’ which insulates us all from views that differ from our own, and frankly, by the growing influence of American political culture.

“I worry that people are increasingly disengaged from systems that require too much political management, too much inflexible and combative rhetoric, and not enough nuanced and thoughtful discussion. Sadly, these factors breed cynicism and all that goes with it.”

Her Honour cautioned that, as Canadians, we are not immune from these challenges. “But, I do believe that the stability of our country and our democratic conventions can stand in contrast to the dysfunction we see emerging elsewhere.

“My role in our system of governance provides me with a unique platform from which to encourage appreciation for our public institutions and our professional, non-partisan public service; to promote cross-fertilization of opinion among leaders from government, business and civil society; and to encourage courteous dialogue and informed decision-making based on shared facts and agreed principles of engagement,” the L-G said.

Her Honour concluded: “And so, I thank you for your service in this sometimes chaotic, often raucous, perfectly imperfect system that, despite its flaws, has ensured that we are governed in peace, that our human rights are protected, and that our institutions function objectively and evolve in a transparent fashion. I have enormous respect for all those who step up to assume the noble but often thankless task of serving in elected office.”

Global’s man in Victoria, Keith Baldrey, praised Her Honour, saying her goals are incredibly admirable ... particularly her stated goal of encouraging young people to be engaged in courteous dialogue and informed decision-making.

Baldrey expressed some initial misgivings about accepting Penny Priddy’s invitation to speak. “She was basically asking me to come out in front of a bunch of people, half of whom I have probably chased down the hallway. The odds of Dan Miller or George Abbott heckling me are pretty high.”

Life in the Legislature was often wild and woolly in Baldrey’s early days in the 1980s as a Vancouver Sun reporter. One late night sitting, a Socred cabinet minister gave a speech in which he suggested the trees in Stanley Park should be cut down. It made front page the next day, and there was huge outrage. “Next day, he asked me: ‘Why did you write that?’ I said: ‘Because you were in the House.’ He responded: ‘But, I was half cut.’”

Back in the day, there was very little concern in the Legislature about security. The security staff was largely “overweight people in uniforms.” When a protester chained himself to Environment Minister Bruce Strachan’s desk, the minister told him to “turn the lights out when you leave.”

“Today,” Baldrey said, “the guards all have guns; they are highly trained to Police Act standards; and, half the building is cut off to the public.”

Asked what the relationship between rival MLAs is really like, Baldrey said it reminds him of the cartoon about the sheepdog and the wolf. “They check into work, punch their cards and try to kill each other. At lunch they talk about their families, then go back to work and try to kill each other. After work, they say ‘see you tomorrow.’”

When Baldrey started at the Legislature, there were quality newspapers, radio and TV covering politics in a straightforward manner. That has all changed. The Press Gallery is much diminished these days, and unaccountable social media has created “a poisonous atmosphere.”

“There is so much disinformation out there; it is so disheartening. The role of social media has really inflicted a level of damage on debate.”

Summing up, Baldrey said: “When I first started I thought ‘Honourable Members ... who cares.’ But, I learned over the years that the more time you spend there covering people, the more you discover that ‘Honourable Members’ is actually what it is. You start from that premise and don’t depart from it.”



*Outgoing Association President Penny Priddy speaking at the 2018 Association Annual Dinner.*

# BCYP volunteerism defies youth stereotyping

By Sky T. Losier  
President of the 89th Parliament  
and Press Secretary, BCYP

As the 89th Premier of the British Columbia Youth Parliament (BCYP) this year, I was fortunate to be able to visit many areas of our province and meet many inspirational young people.

What continues to amaze me is how competent and hard-working youth are across BC ... taking time out of their busy personal lives to volunteer with organizations that are making their communities a better place.

Many stereotypes paint young people as lazy and entitled. Judging by the youth I have had the opportunity to meet and work with, this could not be further from the truth. British Columbia's youth are passionate, engaged and they are the leaders of today – no matter what anyone else says.



All staff and campers assembled for the official Camp Phoenix 2018 photo in late August. It was held at Camp Barnard in Sooke.

This year was a great success for British Columbia Youth Parliament. From running Regional Youth Parliaments across the province to operating a week-long sleep-away summer camp for kids who would not otherwise be able to attend camp – our members pulled it all off with ease. From Salt Spring to Prince Rupert and everywhere in between, our members hosted countless events this year that had a direct and meaningful impact on the communities in which they live.

I would like to use this last opportunity for me to thank once again the Association of Former MLAs of BC for all the support it has given the BCYP over the years. A special thank you to Past President Penny Priddy, not only for her support of BCYP but also for her advice to me personally.

As I am writing this, recruitment efforts are underway across British Columbia for the 90th Youth Parliament conducted at the Legislature at the end of December. If you know someone between the ages of 16 and 21 who is passionate about community service and politics, please encourage him or her to apply. Applications can be found at [www.bcorp.org](http://www.bcorp.org) and are open until October 23rd.

If you are interested in finding out how you can become more involved with BCYP, please contact Sheridan Hawse, Premier of the 90th BCYP at [premier@bcyp.org](mailto:premier@bcyp.org).

In conclusion, I would like to thank all the members of the AFMLABC for their public service, both past and present. I hope that some of you will join us at the Legislative Assembly from December 27 to 31 this year for the 90th sitting of the British Columbia Youth Parliament.

## BCYP ... celebrating 90 years' service

The Premier of the 90th BC Youth Parliament, Sheridan Hawse, her BCYP colleagues and several members of her cabinet attended the AFMLABC annual dinner, building on what is a long-standing friendship between the two organizations.

In 2015, the AFMLABC established a memorial fund to honour the late Hugh Curtis. Grants from the fund acknowledge Hugh's interest in youth and his commitment to the BCYP. The fund provides opportunities for broader 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.

Hawse said: "BCYP gives youth the opportunity to debate issues close to their hearts and to their communities. This year, BCYP is celebrating 90 years of serving youth throughout the province.

"As we look to the future, it's important to acknowledge the progress our organization has made in accepting those of a variety of backgrounds. We ran our 50th Camp Phoenix this year, our largest service project, which is a week-long summer camp for kids who otherwise wouldn't have the opportunity to attend camp due to social or financial reasons."



The BCYP group photo above taken at the AFMLABC dinner includes (from the left): Rhonda Vanderfluit, Registrar of the Youth Parliament of BC Alumni Society; Jason Herbert, Chair of the Youth Parliament of BC Alumni Society; Astra Lund-Phillips, Deputy Premier; Sheridan Hawse, Premier; Zara Herbert, Minister of Internet Communications; and Olivia Reid-Friesen, Minister of Sessional Affairs.

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# Images from the 2017 Association Annual Dinner

The following images are a small sample of the photographs taken during this year's Annual Dinner by John Yanyshyn of Vision West Photography.

All of the images available can be viewed in an online Google Photos album by entering the following in your web browser's address bar:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/cR6aU7bBvMDHzhueA>

If you encounter problems with this link, send an email to [roblee976@shaw.ca](mailto:roblee976@shaw.ca) with Dinner Photos Link in the subject line, and I will email the link to you.





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# 101 years of female enfranchisement in BC

**October is Women's History Month in Canada, a time to celebrate the achievements and contributions of women and girls across the country and throughout our history. This year's theme is #MakeAnImpact, in honour of the women and girls who've made a lasting impact as pioneers in their field.**

By Megan Laflin  
Legislative Library of British Columbia

From a single Member in the House to premier of the province, women have been making their mark on the political history of British Columbia since the very early days of the provincial legislature.

After British Columbia joined confederation in 1871, the first 25 Members of the Legislative Assembly were elected. Only male British subjects who were over the age of 21 and who met specific residency and literacy requirements were eligible to vote. The first bill to enfranchise certain women was introduced in the House in 1872 and was soundly defeated by a vote of 23 to two. Between then and 1916, many petitions were tabled and multiple bills on women's suffrage were introduced. All failed.

A bill in 1899 came close when the Member from South Nanaimo, Ralph Smith, moved second reading on Bill 92 – *An Act to Further Amend the Provincial Elections Act*. The vote was 17 against, 15 in favour.

Despite these early drawbacks, the women's movement in the province mobilized around issues of temperance, assistance to the poor and, with the advent of World War I, the war effort. Unlike their British counterparts, suffragists in British Columbia were not known to utilize physical tactics such as rock throwing or hunger strikes. The Political Equity League published its own monthly newspaper, *The Champion*, which was used to inform the public about suffrage successes in other jurisdictions, and to rally support. Other groups organized speaking tours featuring influential figures including Susan B. Anthony and Nellie McClung.

The Victoria and Vancouver Island Council of Women was an early suffrage group that campaigned for women as school trustees and later turned its attention to the provincial vote and office which was viewed as critical to improving women's political and legal status.

In 1916, Conservative Premier William Bowser declined to introduce a bill on the issue of women's franchise, instead choosing to put the issue to a referendum vote. The results were 65 per cent of eligible male voters choosing to extend these rights to women, and the election of a new Liberal government. In April of 1917, the *Provincial Election Act* was amended to grant women, who were also British subjects, the right to vote in elections and the right to be elected as a Member of the Legislative Assembly. British Columbia became the fourth province (behind Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta in 1916) to extend the right to vote to women. The following year, in 1918, the federal government passed legislation allowing (Caucasian) women to vote in federal elections and to be elected to the House of Commons with the *Act to Confer the Electoral Franchise upon Women*.

It is important to note that neither the 1917 amendment to the *Provincial Election Act* in British Columbia nor the federal government action in 1918 enshrined the right for all citizens to vote. The women's movement in British Columbia was made up of mostly middle-class white women, and thusly the campaign for the right to vote reflected these interests. Largely ignored in the early women's movement were the views of working-class women, First Nations, or any women of colour.

Several decades passed before voting rights in BC were granted to all:

1947 – Chinese and South Asian women and men

1948 – Mennonite and Hutterite women and men

1949 – First Nation and Japanese women and men

1952 – Dukhobor women and men

1973 – BC passed the Human Rights Code, enshrining the prohibition of discrimination based on sex or marital status.

Just one year after the amendment to the *Provincial Election Act*, the first woman was elected as a Member of the Legislative Assembly. Mary Ellen Smith won a by-election to represent the Vancouver City riding in 1918. During her time in office, Mary Ellen Smith championed the *Minimum Wage for*





*Women Act* and the *Mothers' Pension Act*, and became the first woman to be appointed minister-without-portfolio in Canada and the British Empire.

Today, 33 of the 87 Members of the Legislative Assembly are women, including trailblazers Linda Reid (longest serving woman Member), Melanie Mark (first First Nations woman Member), Mable Elmore (first Member with Filipino heritage), and Shirley Bond (first woman to serve as BC's Attorney General) – just to name a few!

Discussion of women in politics wouldn't be complete without mentioning these other important British Columbian "firsts": Nancy Hodges, first woman Speaker; Tilly Rolston, first woman Minister with Portfolio; Rosemary Brown, first black Canadian Member; Ida Chong and Jenny Kwan, the first women of Chinese heritage to sit in the Legislature as MLAs and cabinet ministers; Rita Johnston, first woman Premier; Judi Tyabji, first woman to give birth while in office; Iona Campagnolo, first woman Lieutenant Governor; Christy Clark, first woman elected premier.

Each woman Member has contributed to the success of the next, regardless of party, by her very presence in the House as well as by her work while in office. Between 1918 and today, important initiatives have made participation in provincial politics more attainable to women in British Columbia, such as allowing girls to participate in the page and intern programs, granting Members time to take parental leave, and allowing babies in the chamber.

After 101 years of female enfranchisement, the Legislative Assembly has reached 38 per cent female representation in the House. During the next 100 years, we should expect to see even more female participation in political life, as well as further engagement by other underrepresented groups.

## Women's suffrage rooted in the Person's Case

"The exclusion of women from all public offices is a relic of days more barbarous than ours. And to those who would ask why the word "person" should include females, the obvious answer is, why should it not?" – Lord John Sankey, Lord Chancellor of Great Britain (1929)



Around the globe – in the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia – Women's History Month highlights the contributions of women to events in history and contemporary society, and corresponds with International Women's Day on March 8.

Not here in Canada. Here, we celebrate the accomplishments of our ground-breaking women in October to dovetail with the celebration of Persons Day on October 18. And, we have the Brits to thank for Canada finally acknowledging the writing on the wall.

Persons Day commemorates the case of *Edwards v. Canada (Attorney General)*, more commonly known as *The Persons Case*, a famous Canadian Constitutional case decided on October 18, 1929, by the Judicial Committee of the Imperial Privy Council of Great Britain which, at that time, was the court of last resort for Canada. *The Persons Case* held that women were eligible to sit in the Senate of Canada.

*The Persons Case* honours the five Albertan women who won the fight for Canadian women's equality. This granted women the right to not only serve in the senate, but also to participate in daily activities. In 1927, Emily Murphy, Nellie McClung, Irene Parlby, Louise McKinney and Henrietta Muir Edwards went to the Supreme Court of Canada to get an answer as to why women were not included in the word "person" according to the British North America Act.

Murphy, who led the case in 1927, was the first woman in the British Empire to be appointed magistrate in 1916.

The Supreme Court of Canada debate took more than five weeks, and the court eventually ruled that the word "person" would continue to exclude women. This motivated The Famous Five even more, and their next step was to go to London to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council of Great Britain. At the time, this was the highest court appeal possible. Two years later, Lord John Sankey, Lord Chancellor of Great Britain, announced the decision of the court to include women in the word "person".

# What does the word “person” mean anyway?

By Anne Edwards

The word “person” as defined in Canadian law – all law in the British Commonwealth way back then, in fact – rested on the premise that a person in the legal context of the time was male.

Not such an unusual situation, as most woman of a certain age would tell you. Until 1929, we would do well to say women’s rights had little currency. So, I thought I would find out what is the meaning of “person” today as we find it in our dictionaries and thesauruses. Three books come to hand, the oldest printed in 1973, the next 1993, and the youngest, 2013. That gives us at least 45 years of perspective.

*Roget’s LARGE PRINT Thesaurus* is the most modern, a Dictionary of Synonyms and Antonyms published in the USA. There is no entry for “person.” Oh, yes: they have “personality,” “personally,” and “personate,” before they move on to “perspire.” But no “person.”

Who writes these fancy books anyway? Has “person” now been swept out of our world of useful words? Must we say “men and women” when we want to refer to “persons?” If we mean just men, we can say “persons.”

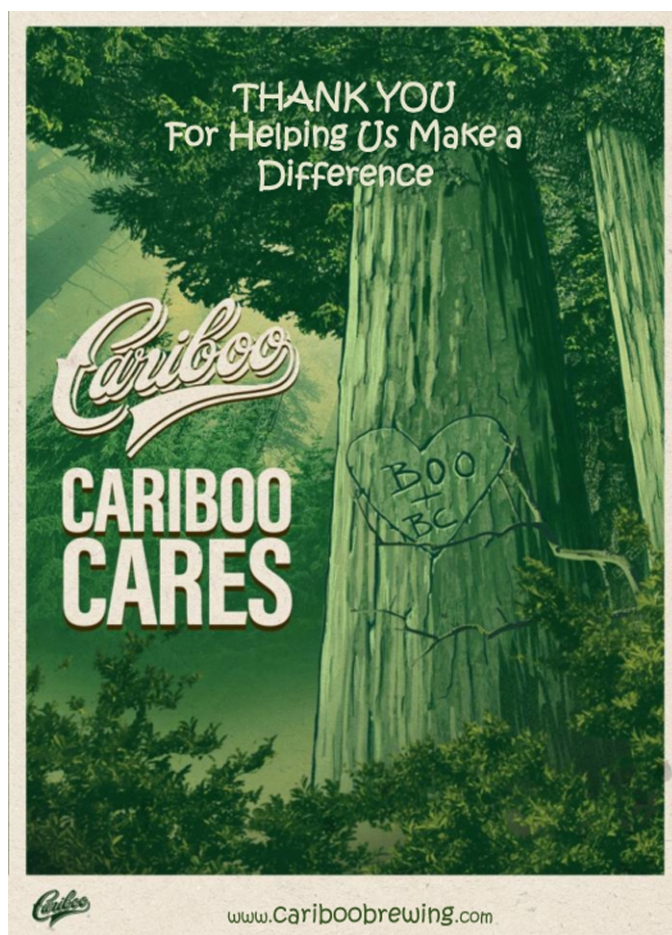
What was the situation 20 years earlier? *The Wordsworth Thesaurus*, published in 1993, a solid British reference work from the birthplace of all these words – surely we can count on it? Yes! Here we have “person” right at the top of the list. And it says: “being, bod, body, cat, character, codger, cookie, customer, human, human being, individual, individuum, living soul, party, soul, specimen, type, wight.”

“Bod”? “Cat”? That is slang, isn’t it? “Individuum”? I have never heard that word used, or read it in a book or newspaper. Certainly, I haven’t used it myself. But, maybe I’ll try it out sometime; maybe at a lengthy political meeting? “Specimen”: an insult, I think. “Wight”: out of Charles Dickens? Well anyway, “person” is there, and not made gender specific.

Last, but not least, *The Gage Canadian Dictionary*, published in 1973. “Person” is definitely there, with a full column of derivatives before it dissolves into “perspective.”

All of our children who went to schools prescribing this tome know (I’m sure) that a person is “a man, woman or child; a human being.” Hallelujah!! Our kids should need no coaching on the meaning of “person” when they see it in a definition of law, or a commercial, or a job advertisement.

Most importantly, regarding the exclusion of females, women have had to fight to win their spot; no sexist definition for we persons! And, we are persons, just as men are, in the dependable word reference books we use. Now ain’t that something?



# To inspire young activists, Waddell pens memoir

Inspired by his role as producer of the film, *The Drop: Why Young People Don't Vote*, former MP and MLA Ian Waddell QC has written a political memoir, *Take the Torch*, to pass on his own experiences and political knowledge to young activists.

Tongue in cheek, Waddell says he was also responding to political pundits who lament that, unlike their American counterparts, most Canadian politicians take their secrets and inside stories of Canadian history to their graves.

This book, to be launched next month, represents publisher Nightwood Edition's second instalment in a campaign to promote participation in civic affairs and community activism to younger generations. The first was Donna Macdonald's *Surviving City Hall*.

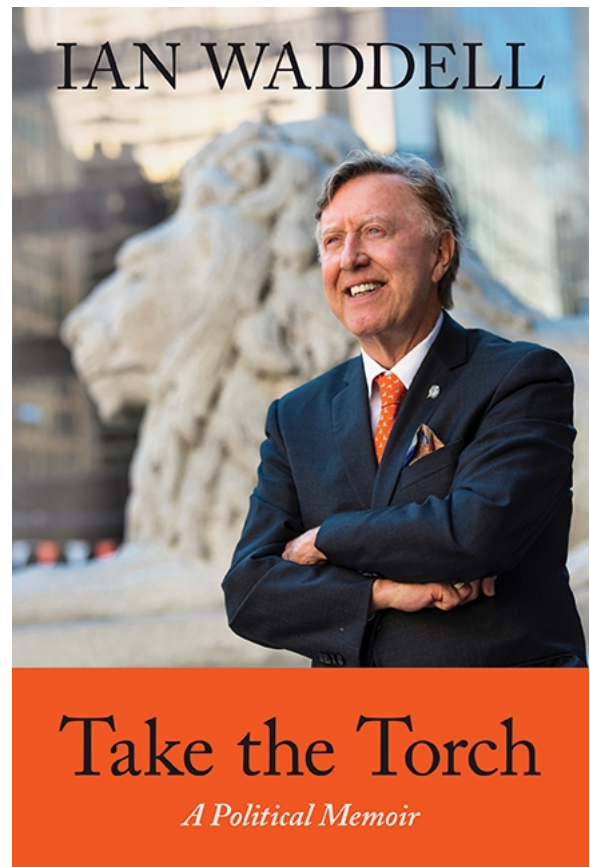
In *Take the Torch*, Waddell takes us on a journey through his life and career as a storefront lawyer, an NDP Member of Parliament, a Minister of Culture, writer, teacher, film producer and more.

The author says: "What I love about Canada is that we are still a young country and still a place where you can make change happen. In this book, I describe some of those changes. Many of them are big changes, historic events for our country and our people; others are tiny incidents that helped only one person or a small group, but they're still important. Often, I played a minor role, but my part was big enough to give me an inside look at how change happens."

Waddell has been an advocate for progressive change in Canada for more than five decades. When he ran a storefront law office in Vancouver in the 1970s, he argued and won the first class-action lawsuit in Canada. A few years later he was accompanying Tom Berger on his ground-breaking Mackenzie Valley Pipeline hearings in Canada's North.

"Almost by accident," Waddell found himself elected to Canada's parliament in 1979 and embroiled in battles over the National Energy Policy, gas exports, national park reserves, the right to die, cultural policy, and NAFTA, amongst others. He sparred with Pierre Trudeau and Brian Mulroney, often with good humour.

Mulroney remembers Waddell as "a parliamentary original ... always prepared, always effective, always thoughtful, and always acting in Canada's national interest." Former Liberal MP and cabinet minister Sheila Copps says: "The best damn Liberal in the NDP. Always a fighter for the little guy and he was nice to his mother too!"



Waddell says his proudest moment was ensuring the rights of Indigenous peoples were in the new Canadian Constitution (section 35). Defeated federally, he moved to BC politics in 1996, starting the Vancouver/Whistler Winter Olympics bid and overseeing a billion-dollar film industry.

In his memoir, Waddell endeavours "to pass on some of the lessons I learned about setting goals for social change and the methods to use to get there ... debating, protesting, and marching to 'biting dogs' at press conferences (following the old adage 'dog bites man is not a story; man bites dog is a headline'), writing op-ed pieces for newspapers, getting elected, taking on prime ministers, dictators and kings, grabbing maces, lobbying diplomats in the lobby of the United Nations, and bucking your own party."

Waddell adds: "I have always had a revolutionary idea about law; that it is about justice and that it can be used to make change in society. That's why I started as a criminal lawyer, and why I went on to be a storefront lawyer, assistant to Judge Berger, and then a member of both the federal Parliament and the BC Legislative Assembly."

# 'Ash', a great friend of the AFMLABC, has died at 71

Longtime CKNW broadcaster, Canucks hockey announcer, dear friend of the AFMLABC and contributor to OOTD, John Ashbridge died recently at the age of 71 just a few months after being diagnosed with cancer.

Former CKNW veteran George Garrett said it well: "Ash did everything well. He was great on the air and so competent at everything he did in the studio or the news booth. John McKittrick and I once talked about Ash as being one of the best news broadcasters in the market ... right up there with Warren Barker. He loved his work and it showed. Hockey fans and radio listeners lost a great voice. We lost a friend."

Ash was born in England in 1946 and his family left postwar Britain a year later, first for Ontario and eventually settling in Nanaimo, and then Victoria. At age 13, Ashbridge took to hanging around radio rooms of CJVI, the venerable station on the air since 1922 that ceased broadcasting in 2000. He was officially hired part-time at the age of 16, though he quickly moved over to CFX, where he stayed while he finished high school.

Just 18 and out of high school, Ashbridge was scooped up by CJOR, the Vancouver-based rival to CKNW. A year later, 'NW hired him and so began a 40-year association with the station that was on top of the local airwaves.

In his 20s, he moved away from 'NW a couple times: once for a three-month stint across town at CFUN in 1967, then three years up in Prince George beginning in 1970. (He also spent 1980-81 in Australia.)

Ashbridge began working with the Canucks as their public address announcer in 1987 and continued to work with the team and the Vancouver Giants of the Western Hockey League until recently.

The Canucks organization was deeply saddened to learn about his death. He was a part of the hockey franchise family for many years. "His voice and cheerful presence will be greatly missed and forever remembered. Our thoughts are with his wife Yvonne and his family," the Canucks said.

Ashbridge was with the Canucks during the team's two Stanley Cup final appearances, travelled with the team to Japan and provided public address duties for the 1998 NHL All-Star Game. He was also the PA announcer for the 2010 Winter Olympic Games at Canada Hockey Place.

John was dedicated to Royal Columbian Hospital and served as a director of the RCH Foundation. He found counselling cardiac patients to be incredibly rewarding.

In 2010, John was bestowed Crime Stoppers International's highest award, "Civilian of the Year."

He was active with the Vancouver Canucks Alumni and for that work, in 2002, the NHL Alumni awarded him its prestigious "7th Man Award."

John is survived by Yvonne, his wife of 35 years; daughters Janice and Kelli; grandchildren Alex and Bryan; great-grandchildren Kinslea and Everett. He was predeceased by his daughter Wendy.



In July, a celebration of John's life was held at the Vancouver Golf Club in Coquitlam. An estimated 200 broadcasters, Canucks and Royal Columbian Hospital Foundation representatives, family and friends were in attendance.

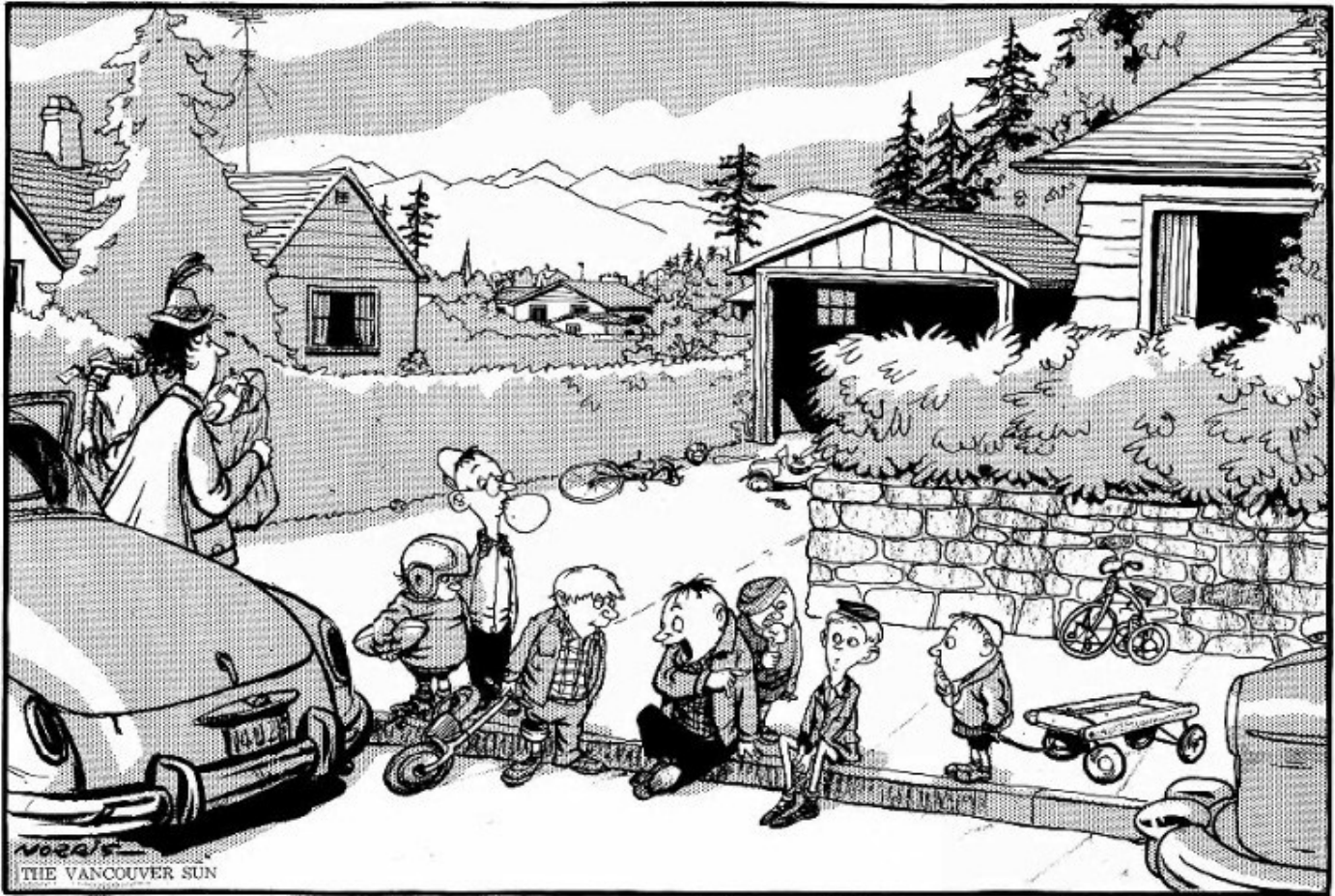
Brian Antonson was the MC and speakers included John McKittrick, Al Murdoch, Jim Robson, and Belle Puri, all speaking about the many varied aspects of the life of a humble man who gave so much to his career, to friends and family, and to his community. It was a true 'celebration' ... nobody came to 'mourn.' Singer Michael Bublé also attended to show his respect.



*"I certainly got to know John well and that voice was what everyone recognized when they came to the arena, but not a lot of people knew the man behind the voice. He was such an amazing person, had a great sense of humour, cared for people and it's a big loss. The outpouring of support has really affirmed what an incredible person he was."*

- Trevor Linden

# Len Norris



October 10, 1953

"...and my friend's a smart guy for a New Canadian ... he knows all about why we have Thanksgiving ..."

## 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:

Go to [www.victoriafoundation.bc.ca](http://www.victoriafoundation.bc.ca)

Click on the [Make a Donation](#) button and then on the "Online" link and then the [CanadaHelps](#) link which will take you to the Foundation's page on the CanadaHelps web site.

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.

You may pay with VISA, MasterCard, American Express, Interac or through a PayPal account.

After you pay for your gift, CanadaHelps.org will send you an online receipt.

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](mailto:sneely@victoriafoundation.bc.ca)

# Member News

Please send news about your activities to [ootd.afmlabc@gmail.com](mailto:ootd.afmlabc@gmail.com) for the next newsletter.

## Where are they now?

Each issue we ask a former Member of the Legislative Assembly a series of questions. What drew them to public service; what lessons have they taken away; and, most important, what are they doing now.

This month we welcome Katherine Whittred, MLA for North Vancouver-Lonsdale from 1996 to 2009. She served as Minister of State for Intermediate, Long Term and Home Care from 2001 to 2004.



### What prompted you to seek public office?

I had dabbled in politics all my adult life, working on dozens of campaigns, and holding virtually every office in local and regional political associations. In 1996, the stars seemed to align and I was prompted to seek office. There was an opening for a candidate; I was approached by a number of community leaders to run, and I was at a point in my life when I was ready to choose a new path. And so, surrounded by a capable team of people from the North Vancouver community, I submitted my nomination. It turned out to be a wild and woolly nomination battle with seven candidates and four ballots. I emerged the winner by three votes! This was, by far, the toughest election I ever fought.

### Which political figure most influenced you?

I couldn't possibly pick one. I have been influenced by every political figure I have ever worked with or read about. However, for me, one person epitomizes the qualities of leadership I especially admire – Iona Campagnolo. Iona has been a trailblazer, often way ahead of her time in championing women's issues, asserting the needs of rural Canada, and demonstrating an understanding of First Nation culture. And, she did it all with style.

### Was it hard making the transition from private life to public life?

Yes and No. The constituency work of being an MLA was essentially the same as my previous life. I was very experienced at working with community groups and was well connected with the existing network. Similarly, I was well connected with local governments, school boards, education institutions, health boards and so on. The legislative side was a bit more challenging. The partisan nature of the legislature took some adapting.

### What was your biggest challenge returning to private life?

Oddly, it was having no schedule. After a lifetime of being organized by a daily schedule, suddenly I had none. The other challenge was not having a podium. No longer did I have a newsletter or news column to voice my concerns. Now I content myself with occasional phone calls or e-mails to sitting members.

### What is the biggest lesson that has stuck with you since being an MLA?

For me, the lesson is to appreciate the good fortune and unique insights that public service has afforded me. I am able to view the daily news and evaluate issues through eyes that have been there. I learned that decision making is an incredibly complex process.

### Tell us a bit about your active or part-time professional interests.

It is hard to believe that it is almost 10 years since I retired. For the first several years, I served on the Board of Canuck Place Children's Hospice and continued to work for several community organizations. I also managed to take on that most thankless of all jobs – chair of my strata council. I have gradually loosened the ties so that now my support is vocal, but not hands-on. I think this is called passing the torch!

On a day-to-day basis, my main activity is playing G'Ma extraordinaire. I am chief chauffeur to Sarah, my extremely active 11-year-old granddaughter. Together we drive to skating, gymnastics, music, dance, track and field – you get the picture. It is a great job as I get to keep in touch with young families and other grandparents doing the same.

### Finally ... pet projects? Hobbies? And, the value of remaining involved in the Association and OOTD.

OOTD provides an important connection for former legislators. It is a tie that binds all of us and keeps us in touch, at least once in a while.

Currently, my main project is to read at least half the books I have purchased on Kindle, complete at least half of the crosswords I have clipped, and to someday finish watching Breaking Bad.

# PR or FPTP? One third of BCers remain undecided

With less than a month before ballots are mailed to voters, British Columbia's 2018 referendum on proportional representation appears to be headed for a tight race.

A pair of new public opinion polls from the Angus Reid Institute find BC residents split as to whether they prefer to keep the current, first-past-the-post (FPTP) system or change to a new system of proportional representation (PR). Significantly, fully one-third of British Columbians are undecided as to how they will vote on this key question.

While slightly more BC residents choose PR over FPTP, this advantage is well within the margin of error. Moreover, groups that have historically been more likely to vote – including older respondents and those with higher household incomes – are more likely to say they plan to vote for FPTP.

These dynamics drive the months-long campaign, with advocates on both sides having their work cut out to mobilize their bases and convince those on the fence to send in a ballot for their side before the Nov. 30 deadline. This, in contrast to a national landscape in which residents of most provinces prefer a hypothetical change to PR from FPTP when asked to choose between the two in their own provinces

## More Key Findings:

Most British Columbians (61 per cent) believe a system that more closely reflects parties' actual popular support would increase voter turnout, but they're torn on the likely consequence of this: That the province would have more minority governments in the future. Half (48 per cent) don't like this prospect

On the second question in BC's referendum, a Mixed-Member Proportional (MMP) system is the clear favourite with twice as many first-choice votes as any other option

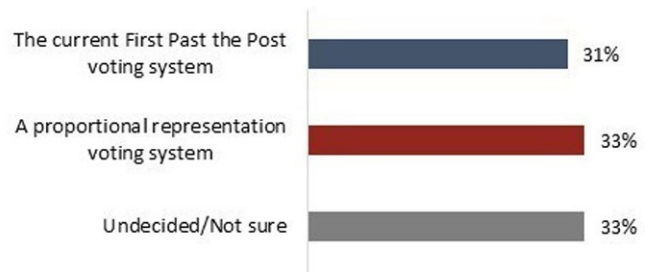
Whether they favour PR or FPTP, Canadians overwhelmingly agree that it's important for a province to have a referendum before making a major change to the voting system (80 per cent agree with this nationally, as do 80 per cent in BC.)

This fall's referendum will be the third time British Columbians have voted on changing their electoral system since 2005, but the first time a simple majority of votes is required for the system to change. Previous votes in 2005 and 2009 required more than 60 per cent of votes cast to be in favour of a new system for it to be implemented.

In theory, the lower threshold this time around makes this referendum electoral reform advocates' best chance to achieve success. That said, this poll finds far fewer than a half of British Columbians intending to vote for a change to proportional representation. Some 33 per cent say they will vote for PR, while 31 per cent say they will vote for FPTP, and 33 per cent are undecided.

In previous ARI polling, when asked a binary question about which type of voting system they would prefer, British Columbians have consistently expressed a preference for PR.

**Based on how you feel right now, if you were to receive a voting package, which way would you vote on the first question?  
(Among B.C. respondents, N=800)**



Of course, choosing between two options in a survey is not the same thing as voting in a referendum. When asked about their voting intentions, a significant proportion of BC residents say they are unsure which system they would vote for.

Many of those who are currently undecided may not vote, but more than two-thirds say they will either "probably vote" or are "absolutely certain" that they will. How these voters break will be a key factor in determining the referendum's outcome.

There are significant differences in vote intention by age group, with those aged 55 and older – who have historically turned out to vote at higher rates than younger people – preferring FPTP by a wide margin. Younger voters, who have historically had lower turnout rates, prefer PR by more than two-to-one.

Two other traditional indicators of one's likelihood to vote tell a conflicting story: Those with higher household incomes are more likely to favour FPTP while those with higher levels of educational attainment are more likely to favour PR. Each of these groups has traditionally been more likely to vote than comparable groups.

Regionally, vote intentions are less polarized. Support for FPTP is lowest in Metro Vancouver and highest on Vancouver Island, but it only outpaces support for PR elsewhere in BC.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, those who voted for the governing New Democratic and Green parties in last year's provincial election are more likely to favour PR (both parties support changing the electoral system). Those who voted for the BC Liberals, meanwhile, prefer FPTP by a wide margin.

Another potential advantage for FPTP is the fact that its declared supporters are more likely to say they are "very certain" about their choice, while those who currently support PR are less firm. Indeed, a majority of those who intend to vote for the current system (56 per cent) say there is "no way" they will change their minds before the voting period ends, while fewer than half (45 per cent) of those who plan to vote for a new system say the same.

## Ike's courageous words erased by the sitting president

By Jim Hume  
The Old Islander

It is an often-repeated theme of mine that while mankind gets smarter with each passing year, we don't seem to learn much. We make remarkable progress in the battle against disease while developing weapons to more efficiently kill enemies, real or perceived.

It was 65 years ago – in April 1953 – that then USA President Dwight D. Eisenhower touched on the dilemma in his first major speech since assuming the Presidency three months earlier – and shook the conscience of the world. But, without lasting effect.

In his speech to the American Society of Newspaper Editors, President Eisenhower urged the men and women who controlled the printing presses of North America to understand their power and use it wisely. "You are," he said, "in such a vital way, both representatives of and responsible to the people of our country. In great part, upon you – upon your intelligence, your integrity, your devotion to the ideals of freedom and justice themselves – depends the understanding and the knowledge with which our people must meet the facts of the twentieth century."

It was a courageous speech given just eight short years after cataclysmic nuclear blasts had demolished Hiroshima and Nagasaki to end World War II and touch off the great arms race. He warned that unless the world could, with newspapers cultivating understanding and knowledge, find the way to peace, the worst outcome would be atomic war leading to "a life of perpetual fear and tension."

We can be thankful we missed the worst option – even as we confirm the accuracy of Eisenhower's vision of "perpetual fear and tension" in today's world which still lacks a powerful voice urging a great nation to continue the search for peace.

The editors of 1953 didn't do much to change their ways. Society preferred to be entertained by media rather than informed. A few old-timers may remember what Eisenhower said 65 years ago in 1953: "The cost of one modern heavy bomber is this: a modern brick school in more than 30 cities; it is two electric power plants, each serving a town with a 60,000 population. It is two fine, fully equipped hospitals ... We pay for a single fighter plane with half a million bushels of wheat ... We pay for a single destroyer with new homes that could have housed 8,000 people."

Having seen war at its bloodiest, and maybe with memories of childhood in a home governed by peace and love and the security both can bring, Eisenhower said the world of 1953 was not a pleasant place as it raced for bigger and better arms.

"This is not a way of life at all, in any true sense. Under the cloud of threatening war, it is humanity hanging from a cross of iron."

Eight years later, on January 17, 1961, in his farewell speech from the White House, Eisenhower warned that while it was vital for the USA to maintain a military establishment, "we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist."

I wonder what the old soldier would say today. Would he still hold firm his belief that one day the world would see lifted "from the backs of men and from the hearts of men, their burden of arms and of fears, so that they may find before them a golden age of freedom and peace?"

Maybe, but he would surely weep at the bellicose threats issuing from the man who now holds his old job and the press much-diminished as a responsible force for good.



## Serving Every Community

Throughout BC there are thousands of insurance brokers ready to serve our community. We help families and businesses protect their most valuable assets. We're right there to help settle claims, offer the best advice and deliver helpful information to keep everyone safe. By being close by, we develop a personal relationship and intricate knowledge of every customer's needs. You can't do that on the phone or a website. That's why we're right there.



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