

Another great Government House dinner

Words of wisdom from the young and the well-seasoned

By Brian Kieran
OOTD editor

It was another evening to remember: A veteran newsman sharing his insights after a long and distinguished career; a BC Youth Parliament premier at the start of an exciting adventure in politics; the good company of two former premiers, many former MLAs and friends; and, the unexpected ... a host missing in action.

I'll start with the later. The evening was going fine until someone asked: "Where is the L-G?" Indeed, Her Honour, Lieutenant Governor Janet Austin, was nowhere to be found. I can assure you she probably wished, profoundly, that she could have taken her place in the receiving line and at the head table.

Days earlier Her Honour was on board the HMCS Calgary sailing from Prince Rupert to Alert Bay. Just ahead of this northern tour she said: "I'm excited that I will be joining the Royal Canadian Navy from September 13 to 17 to sail on the HMCS Calgary from Prince Rupert to Alert Bay. The HMCS Calgary will make stops in the City of Prince Rupert, the Village of Queen Charlotte on Haida Gwaii, and the Village of Alert Bay on Cormorant Island. I'm very much looking forward to exploring these communities and meeting the British Columbians who call these beautiful places home."

However, while in Haida Gwaii, Her Honour slipped on the ship's gangway and seriously dislocated her shoulder. As we made ourselves at home in her official residence on Friday, Sept. 20, she was mending in Vancouver. Her amazing staff rose to the challenge and received many kudos from association guests.

Our guest speaker this year was veteran radio reporter George Garrett who came with many more great tales than there was time to tell. Garrett said: "In my 43 years of covering the news beat for CKNW I have always had respect for those of you who have served the public in elected office ... whether it was park board, school

board, municipal or city council, the Legislature or Parliament. As you all know, it means hard work and sacrifice to serve. I take my hat off to you and your partners in life. As you well know it can be very difficult for relationships and family life.

"Only you who have served can understand those challenges but also the adrenalin rush that goes with being in public office. My guess is that many in the public do not understand the common bond that joins you ... no matter which party you represent. The fiery debates ... we all remember the leather lungs of Don Phillips and the keen wit of Alex Macdonald who once poked fun at the member from Vancouver-Point Grey Pat McGeer ... 'He has a fine brain, why does he keep it in a jar?'" Turn to Page 4 for more of George's speech.



George Garrett



Ranil Prasad

As usual, the association was pleased to host members of the BC Youth Parliament, including incoming 91st BCYP Premier Ranil Prasad who reminded the gathering that we live "in an age when democracy is falling out of fashion in favour of strong-man, authoritarian, populist, 'might makes right' regimes. Supporting those advocating for the advancement and, most importantly, the expansion of our democracies and our institutions is more valuable than ever before." For Ranil's complete remarks turn to Page 6.

Her Honour

The Honourable Janet Austin, OBC

Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia

Thank You and Miscellany

Thank you to those of you who, when sending in your Member dues or subscription renewals, add a donation to help cover production costs for the newsletter.

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

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

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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.

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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.

From the Editor's Desk

The AGM of the AFMLABC – held Sept. 20 ahead of the annual dinner – was an opportunity for me to be accountable to the executive and to share some thoughts about initiatives we can pursue that will make this publication even more relevant to our many subscribers.

For former MLAs belonging to this association, retirement from the daily cut and thrust of life in the partisan trenches is not the end of the world. They have not been relegated to No Man's Land (make that No Person's Land). They roam a landscape made more appealing by the luxury of bipartisanship. It is a landscape characterized by comradery, by reflections on lessons learned that remain in focus in the rear view mirror and by the prospect of continuing to contribute to the public discourse around good governance.

Ever since I was asked to take over where Hugh Curtis sadly left off, I have felt that one of my responsibilities as editor of OOTD has been to help bring those reflections and prospects into focus ... to find ways to encourage ongoing engagement in the pursuit of good governance and the lofty goal of public service that brought so many of you to the table in the first place.

At this year's AGM, I proposed a new monthly series of articles by association members to be presented under the title: "The Art of Good Governance." In the coming months I will be approaching individual members to contribute an article that reflects on their service in the Legislature and proposes innovations and improvements that would foster maximum inclusion in the process of governance. Hopefully, these articles will spark some dialogue and debate in OOTD's letters section.

Veteran political persuader Hugh Segal recently articulated part of the problem afflicting our political system. "The ability of an (elected politician) to make a difference in the lives of an individual is not as enhanced as it used to be or as freely engaged as it used to be years ago. Our political parties are so focused on the survival of an issue, winning seats, organizing, finding candidates and raising money that we don't spend anywhere near the amount of time we should on policy and policy development."

I am beginning this editorial initiative on Pages 10 and 11 with an examination of some of the governance issues raised by former MLAs and other stakeholders in support of the Speaker's "Forum on the Role of Members." This initiative by Speaker Darryl Plecas is an important one that we will continue to follow closely.

The dinner photos in this issue were shot by John Yanyshyn, Visions West, a great photographer and a steadfast supporter of the AFMLABC. You can find all his pictures at www.formerbcmla.com.

President's Report

Fall is in full swing, and that means the Association of Former MLAs of BC have recently had its AGM and Annual Dinner. I would like to thank those directors who completed their terms for all their efforts in support of the Association: Doug Symons, Gillian Trumper, Anne Edwards and Darlene Mazarri. I am very pleased to welcome Ian Waddell and Harry Bloy as new directors for 2019/20. We still do have openings on our Board of Directors and we have the ability to appoint additional members should someone wish to volunteer.

Sept. 20 was our very enjoyable annual dinner at Government House. Unfortunately, Her Honour, the Lieutenant Governor, was unable to attend due to a serious injury she suffered two days prior; however, George Garrett was an amazing guest speaker! Government House was done up in splendid style, and a great time was had by all.

Going forward, your Association will be exploring how we can increase our efforts to support our objectives as set out in our enabling legislation, specifically:

- To put the knowledge and experience of its members at the service of parliamentary democracy in British Columbia and elsewhere;
- To serve the public interest by providing non-partisan support for the parliamentary system of government in British Columbia;
- To foster a spirit of community among former MLAs;



- To foster good relations between current and former MLAs; and
- To protect and promote the interests of former MLAs.

We look forward to eliciting conversation among members and others on the pages of this newsletter on how we might achieve this. It is felt by the Executive that in these days when many feel democracy is under attack, an association like ours can add a valuable and positive voice to the narrative.

The 2019/20 AFMLABC executive is: President Jeff Bray, Vice President Dave Hayer, Secretary Ken Jones, Treasurer Jim Gorst, Past President Penny Priddy, and Directors Harry Bloy, Tim Stevenson, Patrick Wong, Ian Waddell and Cliff Serwa.

President Jeff Bray

The Association Executive 2019-20



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Finally, George Garrett does not have to sneak into Government House

By George Garrett
"Intrepid Reporter"

I can't tell you how much it means to actually be invited to this magnificent place. I've been here before ... but not always welcomed.

Back in the 1980s when the Bill Bennett government was in office and when BC and Alberta were actually friends ... the Alberta cabinet was invited here to Government House to meet with their BC counterparts. There were no burning issues at the time ... it was long before the pipeline issue. It was probably just a free junket for the Alberta politicians ... a trip to beautiful Victoria.

For some reason the Bennett government decreed that the meeting was off-limits to the media. We were not allowed to know what they talked about. That gave me an idea. I phoned my bosses and told them I wanted to go to Victoria, rent a limousine and see if I could crack security. They said: "Go ahead!" I wore my finest three-piece dark blue suit, carried a large catalogue case (with a tape recorder inside) and came here to Victoria where I hired a limo.

On the way to Government House, I told the driver I was really a reporter and might be turned away. I told him to wait for a signal from me before leaving.

As we pulled up to the portico, the driver smartly got out, came around to my side and opened the door for me. I was greeted by a commissionaire who said: "Good morning sir." I said: "I'm here for a security check before the meeting." Please come in, he said. With that I told the driver: "You may go." I was now inside Government House. The meeting room was open to me. All the documents for the meeting were neatly laid out. But, I did not read them. I was not there to snoop ... simply to prove a point that it was possible to breach security.

I made my way to an upstairs bedroom where I made several calls to CKNW and went on the air telling listeners I had breached security at a top level meeting. Finally, at the noon adjournment, I decided to show myself, staking out the men's room until I saw Premier Bennett enter. When he came out I approached with microphone in hand saying: "Mr Premier ... could you tell me about the meeting." Mr. Bennett was startled. He asked: "How did you get in here George."

I replied: "Surrupiously sir". He said he could not tell me anything about the meeting. I understood. I said: "Would you like me to leave?" "Yes," he said, "please leave." With that Deputy Minister Laurie Wallace was at my side. He asked: "I don't suppose you can tell me how you got in here?" "No sir," I said, "I cannot." He escorted me to the door.



In 1983, it was widely predicted ... that Dave Barrett would defeat Bill Bennett and the Socreds. I was with the Barrett campaign when it was really on a roll. The party rented an old DC-3 as a campaign plane owned by Yellow Bird Air. We took off to the sound of the Mills Brothers singing Yellow Bird Up High in Banana Tree. My reports reflected how well it was going to the point that management at CKNW sent a message to me that I was making the NDP and Barrett sound too good. I was furious. I sent a message back: "You tell management that when Dave Barrett falls on his sword, I'll be the first to report it."

It happened that night in Cranbrook when Barrett suddenly announced that the restraint program, that still had a year to go, would be cancelled. His star fell overnight.

I moved on to the Bill Bennett campaign which had not been going well. In a panic, the Socreds named Bud Smith of Kamloops as the wagonmaster of the campaign bus. Bud looked the part with a cowboy shirt and boots. Things did begin to turn around except for an unfortunate incident in either Smithers or Terrace. At one rally an indigenous man heckled Bennett all night long. Unwisely, Bennett reached into his pocket and came up with a twenty dollar bill he offered to the man. It was a mistake of the first order. Condescending to say the least. All of us in the media did stories that were critical.

The next morning, I had a chance on a talk show to describe how Bennett was rattled by the heckler before offering the twenty dollars. The next event on the campaign was a luncheon in Burnaby. As I passed by the head table, Mr. Bennett called me over. He said: "I heard your report this morning George. It was very fair. Thank you."

The best story in all my years covering politics was the 1986 convention at Whistler. Bill Bennett was retiring. Many thought Grace McCarthy would win the leadership and become premier. There were many candidates ... the so-called Smith brothers, Brian from Oak Bay and Bud from Kamloops. And, of course, Bill Vander Zalm who had earlier resigned from cabinet.

Rafe Mair was doing his show live from the convention and I was a floor reporter. Suddenly, I saw Bud Smith's whole delegation moving to Vander Zalm. I called Rafe's producer and said: "Put me on the air quickly ... Bud Smith is moving to Vander Zalm."

Rafe said on the air: "That's impossible. It will never happen." Well, of course, it did happen and the Zalm won. A few months later I got an incredible tip that Vander Zalm would call an election the next day.

My source said Vander Zalm would come here to Government House at 11 a.m. I told my boss Warren Barker. He said to go ahead and record the story ... but when he ran it the next morning he hung it on me. He said: "George Garrett says Premier Vander Zalm will call an election today."

Sometime later, the Zalm's chauffeur and right hand man Bill Keay said he was driving Vander Zalm somewhere that morning when the news came on. Bill said that the premier pointed at the radio and said: "That guy knows!" That day I did.

I am a very lucky guy. It's a long way from the farms and small towns of Saskatchewan to be speaking to you here at Government House.

In closing I want to pay tribute to people who did so much to shape our history. Premiers W.A.C. and Bill Bennett and Dave Barrett. As Premier John Horgan said of Barrett: "Dave had an ability to capture your heart, mind and soul."

And, I want pay special tribute to that most passionate British Columbian, Rafe Mair, who made the transition from politics to broadcasting, often tilting at windmills.

I like to think of radio as theatre of the mind. It is up to the reporter to describe to listeners and readers what it was like. Perhaps my admiration and respect for Rafe showed in my account of his funeral service at Christ Church Cathedral in Vancouver. Rafe died Oct. 9, 2017, just over two years ago. He was 85.

As I wrote in my book: "It was a beautiful October morning. A sunny day with clear blue skies. The sound of church bells echoed down Georgia and Burrard streets to remember this very special British Columbian. The sun shining through the beautiful church windows was reflected by the brass plates on crosses carried by white-robed clergy. The bells tolled for the last time. Rafe Mair's voice was silent. His presence remains."

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We are partisans for the rights of democracy

By Ranil Prasad

91st Premier of the BC Youth Parliament

The BCYP is an officially non-partisan, secular, and non-profit organization. While we may not be partisans for the NDP, the BC Liberals, or the BC Greens, we are partisans. We are partisans for the rights and privileges of parliament, of parliamentarians, and of democracy.

In an age where democracy is falling out of fashion in favour of strong-man, authoritarian, populist, “might makes right” regimes, supporting those advocating for the advancement and, most importantly, expansion of our democracy and our institutions is more valuable than ever before.

Fundamentally, we believe that our democracy is a “use it or lose it” proposition, which makes it even more important than ever to bring young voters into our institutions. If they don't see democracy as a way to solve their problems, they will find another, more troubling, and perhaps a more violent solution instead.

Something that I have been impressed with is that our membership looks like British Columbia, whether it be regionally, culturally, or based on gender identity, or sexual orientation. In fact, we are one of the few parliamentary institutions to over represent women, people of colour, and the LGBT community without the need for a quota system.

Perhaps this is due to our history of leadership on issues that the rest of the province has not caught up with yet. In the 1920s, we almost lost the use of the Legislative Precinct as we had the gall to accept people from Asia into our ranks, something that was unheard of in a time of the Chinese Head Tax.

While talking abstractly about our democracy and our institutions is something that I enjoy greatly, the BC Youth Parliament is a registered charity with real charitable goals that reach beyond the very cold and drafty walls of the chamber.

In your professional lives, you balanced the needs of your caucus, the people of BC, and your constituents to make the province better for the people that gave you the honour of serving them. To summarize this thought a bit, the life of a parliamentarian is two-fold: The first is to pass laws; the second is to serve your constituents.

Rick Mercer called us “model, model parliamentarians,” which is something that I take great pride in. We talk about all the hot topics in BC, whether it be the Trans Mountain Pipeline, the Site C Dam, proportional representation, or ride-hailing. While we rely on backbenchers to bring forward the hot topics in BC politics, my cabinet is focused on serving the youth of British Columbia.



The second aspect of public life that I mentioned previously is serving constituents, something that we take very seriously. We aren't a dress up club that shows up at the Legislature to mess around for five days pretending to be politicians. We use the Legislature annually to launch our legislation, which is reflected in our logo, a phoenix attempting to take flight on top of the dome of the Legislature. Next year, we hope to bring back this signature service project, Camp Phoenix, with the passage of the Camp Phoenix Act.

Camp Phoenix is a five-day sleepaway summer camp for children who would otherwise be unable to afford such an experience. We are able to provide an almost 1:1 staff to camper ratio, something that is almost unheard of in the summer camp world, and are able to provide free registration and cover the cost of travel for the 40-plus children who will be joining us, thanks to the diligent fundraising that we do every year.

We also run smaller, Regional Youth Parliaments across the province to help spread our message to younger, high-school age students on Vancouver Island, in Vancouver, Richmond, the Fraser Valley, and the Northern and Southern Interior.

Images from the 2019 Association Annual Dinner

An Evening Made Possible Through The Courtesy Of The Honourable Janet Austin, Lieutenant Governor

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

A wide selection of the photographs can be viewed online. Visit the Association website at www.formerbcmla.com and click on Photo Gallery.





More photographs can be viewed online at www.formerbcmla.com



How do we enhance the effectiveness of MLAs

In “The Speaker's Forum on the Role of Members,” the Honourable Darryl Plecas said: “As we approach the 150th anniversary in 2021 of British Columbia’s entry into the Canadian federation, it is timely to explore how to support Members of the Legislative Assembly in carrying out their important roles and responsibilities in a rapidly changing society.

“I launched the Speaker's Forum on the Role of Members in December 2017 to engage with a variety of representative groups from different backgrounds to provide input on ways to support the work of Members. Since then, the Forum has featured a series of roundtable discussions on the roles of members with academics and political scientists, media, Legislative Assembly interns, educators, youth, former MLAs, and representatives of Indigenous communities. The themes and issues raised in these sessions are summarized in this report. These findings will inform consultations on potential areas for change, reforms and improvement in the year ahead.”

The Forum adopted a nonpartisan framework to explore how political culture and dynamics may affect members' parliamentary responsibilities and their representative role and how members may empower themselves to enhance their effectiveness as representatives of their communities.

Discussions on how to provide MLAs with a strengthened voice to represent their constituents and thereby enhance public perception of the role of parliamentarians, and consequently encourage robust and diverse political engagement of citizens, supported the central objectives of the initiative.

British Columbia is one of many jurisdictions around the world that sees more meaningful political engagement as central to parliamentary reform and an engaged citizenry. From a national perspective, several Canadian legislatures have started to look for new ways to increase the role of the legislative branch and bring more relevance to the work of parliamentarians and parliamentary institutions. The Speakers' Forum is motivated in part by these conversations in various jurisdictions around the globe and the opportunity for British Columbia to be a leader in these types of reform efforts.

Legislatures are the central democratic institutions, however, like other Canadian political institutions, legislatures have fallen into disrepute, in part because they are widely perceived as unresponsive and unrepresentative.



The stakeholder groups were selected as key informants in the discussion of parliamentary engagement and participants were selected in an effort to gather a range of perspectives. The sessions were recorded by Hansard staff in order to produce internal transcripts in order to prepare key themes and ideas to be shared online and employed in the thematic discussion captured in this report. Themes and findings emerging during each session shaped discussion topics in subsequent sessions.

Importantly, the Forum feedback will inform the framing of Year Two discussions with a wide variety of new and returning participants and groups as these discussions focus on possible opportunities, and more specifically, strategies for change. Year Three will focus on implementation and monitoring of selected strategies for change developed in Year Two, with subsequent years structured to assess the strategies employed to support a best practices blueprint moving forward.

Speaker Plecas said: “As specific Speaker's Forum strategies emerge during Year Two of this undertaking, I am confident that core values will continue to guide our next steps in support of all Members. I look forward to continuing the work of the Speaker's Forum to address and fulfill the expectations, demands and institutional aspirations of all British Columbians.

continued next page

Key issues raised by stakeholders; here is a sampling ...

Former MLAs:

Private members have a minimal role in government and like other members have inadequate opportunities to speak on behalf of their constituents due to party politics and associated party discipline.

New Members have minimal knowledge regarding their role and relationship to government processes including the basics of what it means to be part of a representative and responsible government.

Question Period is simply a performance and the posturing has the consequence of acting as a deterrent to women and others who find these tactics unappealing and unproductive.

The Media:

There is a need to provide timely and accessible information to the public and stakeholders that is both event/issue specific but that also takes advantage of those opportunities to provide more general information highlighting the ongoing need for public engagement.

The public is disillusioned and the subsequent lack of engagement is fueled by the perception that politicians are working within party defined boxes characterized by a lack of transparency, very few "work days," and seemingly ill-advised policy decisions.

Question Period is not designed in a manner that supports meaningful debate and encourages the theatrics that are associated with heckling.

Youth:

Young people, and the public in general, do not understand the structure and importance of provincial politics and generally hold negative and relatively uninformed and oversimplified views of politicians. One of the most consequential aspects of these perceptions is that young people conclude that politics is irrelevant to their lives.

Engagement efforts need to reach youth where they are, recognizing that their involvement often takes the form of social media activism and alternate forms of political representation.

Voice is central to politics yet young people often do not have an official voice as it is embodied in the vote and, too often, they feel their opinions and ideas are marginalized as coming from less education, little life experience, and intense emotions.

Educators:

There is a public perception that young people are apathetic in relation to political engagement; however, there is evidence that in fact young people are politically invested and the misperception is connected to a cultural gap in relation to the role of social media and alternate settings of civic engagement.



The importance of connecting students and parents to civic engagement in sustainable ways is critical with ... the development of strategic partnerships between school districts and local MLAs being pointed to as models for change.

Progress would be made by maximizing educators' efforts to utilize curricular opportunities to promote civic engagement. In response to that challenge ... there is tremendous value in making the legislature "real" to students through tangible experiences.

Legislative Interns:

It is difficult to understand how the legislature works without insider status.

Party discipline is an impediment to collaborative and creative approaches to policy development across party lines.

There needs to be more attention paid to decorum in the Legislature as heckling and even word choices and tone contribute to the alienation of "outsiders."

Indigenous People:

There needs to be integration of Indigenous and non-Indigenous processes and structures as they relate to legal, political, environmental, familial and other spheres of influence. This integration has the potential to create "ethical spaces" that are foundational.

Canada, like many jurisdictions around the world, is engaged in governmental reform efforts as adversarial systems are in many ways contrary to inclusive, collaborative decision-making.

It is extremely challenging to engage individuals in political processes, particularly when they are oppressive by their nature, when these individuals are struggling with many basic needs.

(Source – Speaker's Forum on the Role of Members: Current Challenges.)

Engagement: The road ahead for former MLAs

By Ian Waddell, QC

As the new Chair of the Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians Foundation, I just completed a whirlwind two-week trip from Vancouver to Newfoundland with stops in Halifax, Toronto and Victoria.

I met with former MPs and senators, major bankers, union leaders, even former premiers and prime ministers. What we talked about was democracy; the ways in which it is under attack in Canada and abroad, and how the Former Parliamentarians of Canada are determined to do their part to defend it.

In Victoria, I attended the AGM of the Association of Former MLAs of BC, since I was fortunate enough to be both an MP and an MLA. Across Canada, there are similar provincial associations. I once attended a meeting in Manitoba, led by their then-President Linda Asper, and found they were dealing with some of the same issues we are dealing with in BC; namely, how to involve our members, with all their experience, in promoting democracy in the province, and in the country.

I was able to report to Association President Jeff Bray at our provincial meeting in the Legislature in Victoria that the former MPs and senators almost unanimously expressed to me a concern about the present state of democracy in the world, and the fact that Canada is not immune from some of the threats.

Generally, the former MPs and senators feel that their foundation should come up with programs that meaningfully involve our members by leveraging their knowledge and expertise to provide non-partisan support for Canadian democracy, and democracy elsewhere in the world, as set out in the Act that incorporated the association in 1996.

My BC board colleagues – Cliff Serwa, Dave Hayer, Doug Symons, Ken Jones, Joan Barton – expressed similar views at the BC former MLAs' meeting and offered up interesting ideas. Actually, the act which sets out the creation of the AFMLABC is quite similar to the federal act. The federal act says one of the object of the national association is “to put the knowledge and experience of its members at the service of parliamentary democracy in Canada and elsewhere,” and secondly, “to serve the public interest by providing non-partisan support for the parliamentary system of government in Canada.”



The Canadian Association Foundation is planning to re-start a Parliament-to-Campus program to target young people and to get them involved in the political process. This is an initiative our provincial association might want to take up. I note that the Speaker's Forum on the Role of Members, established by Speaker Darryl Plecas, reported that there's been a general downward trend in voter turnout, especially amongst young people.

Both the Canadian foundation, and the BC association have financial challenges. I found during my travels that there were private sources interested in funding credible organizations that are tackling the issue of healthy democracies.

Finally, at the end of October, the Association of Former Members of the National Assembly of Quebec is meeting in historic Quebec City. They have invited former members of the legislatures from all provinces. Our association here in BC has designated me to represent them at that meeting. I think I can do this wearing two hats, one nationally and one provincially. It would be helpful to hear from any former members here in BC who have any ideas I can bring forward to the Quebec meeting.

Norm Jacobsen remembered for his quiet strength

Former Social Credit MLA and cabinet minister, Norman Jacobsen, passed away earlier this year on his 89th birthday.

Norm was a logging company owner who represented the riding of Dewdney from 1986 to 1991. He served in the provincial cabinet as Minister of Labour and Consumer Services and as Minister of Social Services and Housing. He ran for the leadership of the Social Credit Party in 1991. He was Mayor of Maple Ridge from 1976 to 1981.

Norm was born in New Westminster in 1930, the son of Johannes Jacobsen and Elida Ericson, and was educated in Mission. He is remembered for his many years involved in logging including the Truck Loggers Association and Pacific Logging Congress. He is also remembered for his love of sheep and horses but most of all for his unfaltering love, guidance, quiet strength.

He is survived by his wife Launi, son Tore (Tammy), daughter Heidi (Eric) and his beloved grandchildren and his niece Elaine (Carlos) and family.



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Member News

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

Andrew Petter invested in the Order of Canada

Andrew Petter, the President and Vice Chancellor of Simon Fraser University (SFU) and professor in its School of Public Policy, has been invested into the Order of Canada in recognition of his commitment and leadership in advancing university-community engagement and higher education throughout the country.

The OC citation reads: “Andrew Petter’s visionary leadership has shaped the political and academic landscape of British Columbia. As a provincial cabinet minister, he contributed to the development of innovative public policies, including the BC Treaty Commission, the Forest Practices Code and recognition of same-sex rights. As president of Simon Fraser University, he has led efforts to promote university-community engagement and to advance higher education in Canada. He is frequently sought after by national and international education organizations, including Universities Canada and the Talloires Network, a global movement of socially responsible and engaged institutions.”

Prior to joining SFU in 2010, Andrew was a professor in the Faculty of Law of the University of Victoria where he served as dean from 2001 to 2008. He previously taught at Osgoode Hall Law School and practiced law with the Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice.

From 1991 to 2001, Petter served as an NDP MLA representing Saanich South and held numerous cabinet portfolios including Intergovernmental Relations, Advanced Education and Attorney General.

He has written extensively in areas of constitutional law and public policy, including works on the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and Canadian federalism.

He holds an LL.B. from University of Victoria and an LL.M. from Cambridge University, and is a member of the British Columbia and Saskatchewan law societies.

Since becoming SFU’s president, Petter has overseen the development and implementation of a strategic vision that seeks to distinguish SFU as a “leading engaged university defined by its dynamic integration of innovative education, cutting edge research, and far-reaching community engagement.”



Petter has served on local, national and international organizations with interests in higher education, and is frequently sought after by media to speak and write on topics relating to university-community engagement.

His contributions in this area include sitting on the Board of Universities Canada, the national umbrella organization representing Canada’s universities. This organization is the voice of Canada’s universities at home and abroad, advancing higher education. It is a membership organization providing university presidents with a unified voice for higher education, research and innovation. It provides a forum for university leaders to share ideas and address challenges in higher education and it supports students by providing online information on university study and offering scholarships on behalf of private sector companies.

Petter also serves as a member of the Steering Committee of the Talloires Network, an international association of institutions committed to strengthening the civic roles and social responsibilities of higher education. It implements the recommendations of the “Talloires Declaration” and builds a global movement of engaged universities.

The Talloires Network believes that higher education institutions do not exist in isolation from society, nor from the communities in which they are located. It envisions universities around the world as a vibrant and dynamic force in their societies, incorporating civic engagement and community service into their research and teaching mission.

Here's nine ways to make democracy work

On the eve of this year's federal election, the Samara Centre for Democracy is asking the next federal parliament for a commitment to initiate immediate, concrete change.

The nine actions outlined here are practical and simple. They can be accomplished in the first year of a new parliament. They should have cross-party support. They require minimal public spending. Most don't even require legislation. All that's needed is political will.

- 1 - Liberate debate by ending the use of whips' lists of approved speakers, and creating a parallel debate chamber.
- 2 - Free committees to do non-partisan work by changing the standing orders to elect committee chairs in the House, and elect committee members in caucuses.
- 3 - Empower MPs to scrutinize government by changing the standing orders to end omnibus bills, and committing government to more transparent accounting.
- 4 - Respect Canadians' privacy by bringing parties under meaningful privacy legislation with external oversight.
- 5 - Clean up nomination races by requiring greater transparency, stronger rules, and public reporting.
- 6 - Reduce the power of the party leader by opting into the provisions of the Reform Act to make caucus decision-making more democratic.
- 7 - Empower citizens to set the agenda by requiring parliamentary debates on petitions that gather enough support.
- 8 - Invest in lifelong civic learning by supporting local and national community groups to educate and empower citizens.
- 9 - Enable a true two-way conversation between citizens and their representatives by creating new supports for MPs to encourage community democratic engagement through permanent constituency offices.



The Samara Centre for Democracy is a non-partisan charity dedicated to strengthening Canada's democracy. The Samara Centre produces innovative, action-oriented research that illuminates the evidence and reforms needed to make Canadian politics more accessible, responsive, and inclusive. Through original engagement programming, it provides active citizens and public leaders with tools and resources designed to engage Canadians in their democracy.



150 years ago

Métis feared for their land, religion and culture

In 1869, the Red River Rebellion was sparked by the transfer of the vast territory of Rupert's Land to the new Dominion of Canada.

A colony of farmers and hunters, many Métis, occupied a corner of Rupert's Land and feared for their culture and land rights under Canadian control. The Métis mounted a resistance and declared a provisional government to negotiate terms for entering Confederation. The uprising led to the emergence of Métis leader Louis Riel – a hero to his people and many in Quebec, but an outlaw in the eyes of the Canadian government.

The Red River Colony, located at the confluence of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers (what is now downtown Winnipeg), had been a rendezvous location for the fur trade for many years. By 1812, the area was also home to Ojibwe, Cree traders and Métis buffalo hunters. Most Métis were the descendants of French and English voyageurs and coureurs des bois who had come west in the fur trade and settled among Indigenous communities.

After 1836, the colony was administered by the Hudson's Bay Company and populated mainly by Métis. By the 1850s, the company's rule was under attack and by the 1860s it surrendered its monopoly over Rupert's Land.

During negotiations to transfer sovereignty to Canada, Protestant settlers from the East moved into the colony, and their aggressive ways led the Roman Catholic Métis to fear for their religion, land rights and culture. The Canadian government – with no appreciation of the Métis – made no effort to ease these fears.

In August 1869, Métis concerns were made worse when the Canadian government attempted to re-survey the settlement's river-lot farms – typically long, narrow lots fronting the local rivers, which had been laid out according to the seigneurial system of New France. The government preferred square lots, which limited access to river water. Many Métis did not have clear title to their land, and although Ottawa intended to respect Métis occupancy rights, no assurances were given by the government that this would be the case.



In early November 1869, Louis Riel emerged as the Métis' spokesman and leader. Métis opposition caused the Canadian government to refuse to assume control of the territory as had been agreed. This encouraged the rebels who had seized Upper Fort Garry – the main HBC trading post.

Armed conflict persisted over the winter, but Riel seemed in control until he made the colossal blunder of permitting the court-martialling and execution of a prisoner, Thomas Scott, an English-speaking Ontario settler who opposed the rebel government. Amid the turmoil, Scott and some fellow Ontarians had been captured and imprisoned at Upper Fort Garry. Scott's subsequent death by firing squad, despite outside pleas to Riel not to carry out the execution, inflamed passions among Protestants in Ontario.

The provisional government organized the territory of Assiniboia in March 1870. Although the Canadian government recognized the “rights” of the people of Red River, the victory was limited. A new, postage-sized province called Manitoba was created, however, within Manitoba public lands were controlled by the federal government. Métis land titles were guaranteed and 607,000 hectares were reserved for the children of Métis families, but these arrangements were mismanaged by subsequent federal governments.

The Métis nation did not flourish after 1870 in Manitoba. And, Ottawa granted no amnesty for Louis Riel and his lieutenants, who fled into exile just before the arrival of a column of British and Canadian troops in August 1870.

(Source – The Canadian Encyclopedia)