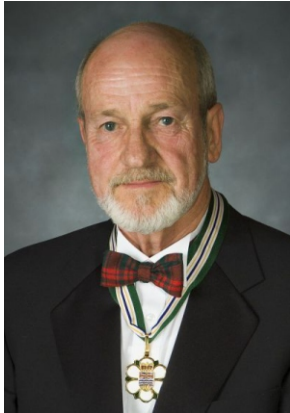


Sadness and tributes – MacMinn, McGeer, Tanner, are gone

Over the past several weeks, British Columbia has lost three loyal servants in the cause of good governance.



They are: Former Legislative Clerk George MacMinn, a senior parliamentary officer who served 14 BC speakers, 10 premiers, and hundreds of MLAs over 47 years; Dr. Pat McGeer, a former Social Credit cabinet minister acknowledged as a leading UBC researcher on Alzheimer's and other neurodegenerative diseases; and, Clive Tanner, a former Liberal MLA and well-known bookseller in Sidney.

MacMinn, named to the Order of BC (OBC) in 2005 and regarded internationally as a pre-eminent expert on parliamentary law, practice, and procedure, died Aug. 30th at 92. His opus, *Parliamentary Practice in British Columbia*, is widely used throughout the Commonwealth. The book is considered the authority of choice in the BC Legislature.

MacMinn was appointed to Queen's Counsel in 1993 and awarded the Queen's Medal for Outstanding Service to the Legislative Assembly in 2003.



Dr. Patrick McGeer, also named to the OBC in 2005 – pictured here with his wife Dr. Edith McGeer, a co-OBC recipient – served as MLA and cabinet minister until 1986, aiding in efforts to make British Columbia a major centre for research and development. He died on Aug. 29th at age 95.

In 2004, McGeer was awarded the Henry Wisniewski prize, given to the top Alzheimer's disease researcher.

Pat and Edith are among the world's 100 most highly cited neuroscientists, beginning their work at the University of British Columbia in 1954. Their joint honours include Honorary Doctors of Science degrees from UBC, the Medal of Service from the Cam Coody Foundation, and the Clarke Institute of Psychiatry Prize from the University of Toronto. The McGeers were appointed as Officers of the Order of Canada in 1995 and Fellows of the Royal Society of Canada in 2002.



Former MLA Clive Tanner contributed to the growth and development of Sidney on Vancouver Island through his public service and bookselling career. He died Sept. 9th, at age 88.

Tanner, who was born in 1934 in the Greater London area, first came to Canada as a child evacuee during the Second World War. He remained after completing his service in the Royal Marines in the 1950s.

He was the first elected MLA for the newly created riding for Saanich North and the Islands, serving from 1991 to 1996, after serving as the minister of health in Yukon's territorial government during the 1970s.

Tanner established himself as a professional in the bookselling industry, where he worked for nearly 50 years. Tanner's Books that he and his wife founded in Sidney in 1982, is his legacy in the industry.

Full coverage and tributes begin on Page 5.

Her Honour

The Honourable Janet Austin, OBC

Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia

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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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.

Thank You and Miscellany

We recently learned of the passing of **Jim Sawyer**, former Port Alberni city manager and a prominent community member. He was a long time subscriber to OOTD and a decades-long friend of **the late Jim Hume**. Our condolences to his wife **Erika**, children and family, and his many friends in the Alberni Valley.

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

Dues, Subscriptions and Donations

David Anderson, Victoria
Richard T. Lee, Burnaby

From the Editor's Desk

The executive of the AFMLABC held its AGM on Sept. 24th and there is a new president at the helm. Dave Hayer returns to the leading role after a year's absence. He stepped aside as president in 2021 when the Conservative Party of Canada nominated him to represent the riding of Fleetwood – Port Kells in the federal election. He did well, but not well enough. That election loss has turned out to be our gain.

Dave was elected president by acclamation, replacing now-past president John Les who stepped back from the top job because of upcoming commitments. John was great to work with, and I know he will be there when we need his wise counsel.

A fresh face on the 2022/23 executive is former Speaker and MLA Linda Reid. What a great addition. I know she will energize us all. Linda ran successfully as the BC Liberal Party candidate for the riding of Richmond East in 1991. She was re-elected in 1996, 2001, 2005, 2009, 2013 and 2017. She was the longest-serving woman in the Legislative Assembly.

Look for the complete 2022/23 AFMLABC board lineup on Page 4.

How sad to have to chronicle in a single issue of OOTD the passing of three fine parliamentarians – Clive Tanner, Pat McGeer and George MacMinn. I want to thank all those who offered tributes and historical vignettes to mark their passing and the passing of Queen Elizabeth II.

And, even more sad news ... just as we were going to press, we learned that Audrey Bennett died Aug. 30th at age 88. Her husband, former Premier Bill Bennett, died in 2015.

AFMLABC director Bruce Strachan offers this rare glimpse into Audrey's sharp political wit: "One day Bill Bennett is walking back to the Harbour Towers Hotel where he stayed while in Victoria and a seagull did a number on his shoulder. He got back to his suite and asked Audrey to help him clean up the mess. She asked: "Oh, can Marjorie Nichols fly?"

In those days, Marjorie was the Vancouver Sun's acerbic political columnist. (As a newcomer to the Press Gallery, I worked in her shadow in the early 1980s, and I can attest she took no prisoners.)

Bless you, Audrey; Marjorie took herself far too seriously.

The President's Report

I was elected president of the Association of Former MLAs of BC (AFMLABC) at our AGM on Sept. 24th.

First, I would like to thank our members who elected me as well as: Our immediate past presidents John Les and Jeff Bray; V-P Diane Thorne, Secretary Bruce Strachan, Treasurer Patrick Wong and Membership Chair Ken Jones.

Thanks also to our team: Directors Harry Bloy, Ida Chong, Penny Priddy, Tim Stevenson and Linda Reid; Honorary members Joan Barton and Ian Izzard; Orders of the Day Editor Brian Kieran, Rob Lee in charge of Production/Research and AGM secretary Donna Hains. Finally, thanks to Legislature Speaker, the Hon. Raj Chouhan, for your support.

On a flight to Ottawa, I learned that Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II had passed. I sent a message of our deepest condolences to King Charles III and all the Royal family.

As we mourn her passing, we should remember the Queen's grace, warmth, wisdom and legacy of service for more than 70 years. In 1953, a Canadian law formally conferred the title of Queen of Canada upon Elizabeth. The Royal couple completed 22 Royal Tours in Canada, and Her Majesty was a patron of more than 36 charities in Canada.

I met Her Majesty and Prince Philip on Oct. 7th, 2002, at GM Place. They seemed humble and genuinely caring. I was struck by the Prince's acknowledgment that he was also an immigrant, born in Greece.

As our COVID pandemic seems almost over, we are planning our Annual Former MLAs' Dinner at Government House for the end of September 2023. We hope to see all the former MLAs and their guests attend. It's been a long time since we have been able to convene and reconnect with our AFMLABC friends. We will keep you posted!

If you have any suggestions, advice or just want to talk, please contact me any time at: Dave.S.Hayer@gmail.com



Dave Hayer
AFMLABC President

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Lots of familiar faces as AFMLABC acclaims new board at AGM

The post-pandemic era is just around the corner; nevertheless, the executive of the Association of Former MLAs of BC erred again on the side of caution and conducted its Annual General Meeting Sept. 24th via Zoom.

The meeting started on a sombre note with a moment of silence for several members who have died in the past year: Honourary members Jim Hume and George MacMinn; and former MLAs Cliff Michael, Jack Weisgerber, Pat McGeer, Clive Tanner and Bob Skelly.

By acclamation, the AGM returned Dave Hayer to the presidency. Hayer had stepped aside in 2021 in a bid to return to the political arena. John Les stepped up to fill his shoes and has relinquished the post to attend to personal commitments.

Here is the new board lineup: President Dave Hayer, Vice President Diane Thorne, Past President John Les, Secretary Bruce Strachan, Treasurer Patrick Wong, Membership Chair Ken Jones. Other directors include Harry Bloy, Ida Chong, Penny Priddy, Tim Stevenson and – new this year – Linda Reid. Joan Barton, who has served the association for years as an Honourary Member, was named an Honourary Director.

John Les thanked everyone for their support over the past year. He reported that Government House will be pleased to host the annual AFMLABC dinner in 2023. A date in late September will be nailed down when the new



President Dave Hayer and Association members during the Zoom AGM

executive has its first Zoom meeting on Oct. 29th. The annual event has been cancelled for the past three years because of the pandemic.

In other business, Joan Barton reported that the Hugh Curtis BC Youth Parliament Fund – managed by the Victoria Foundation – has an account balance of close to \$40,000, enough to support two annual grants of \$500 to assist deserving BCYP members with travel expenses to the December parliamentary session in Victoria. Ken Jones reported that AFMLABC-assisted scholarship funds at UVic and UNBC stand at \$39,000 and \$66,000, respectively.

The Association Executive 2022-23



Dave Hayer
President



Diane Thorne
Vice President



Bruce Strachan
Secretary



Patrick Wong
Treasurer



Ken Jones
Membership



John Les
Past President



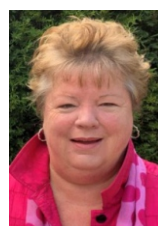
Harry Bloy
Director



Ida Chong
Director



Penny Priddy
Director



Linda Reid
Director



Tim Stevenson
Director

Clive Tanner – MLA and bookseller – dies at 88

By Wolfgang Depner
Peninsula News Review

The Saanich Peninsula and Greater Victoria communities have been mourning the death of former MLA Clive Tanner, who helped transform Sidney and the region through his extensive public service and professional career in the book-selling industry.

“Clive was a giant in our community for some 40 years,” said Sidney Mayor Cliff McNeil-Smith, a close personal friend of Tanner and colleague on countless community boards.

“He had an enormous passion for Sidney and the area. While he was successful in different businesses, he gave a huge amount of his time to the boards of innumerable community organizations. I really learnt the meaning of community involvement working with Clive. He wanted to see individuals succeed to their absolute full potential.”

McNeil-Smith said Tanner showed great interest in people from all walks of life. “He could and would cajole, provoke, and debate and ultimately inspire people in ways that helped you become a better person. Sidney is a better place because of Clive Tanner. I’m a better person from the time we had together, and he will be dearly missed by his family, my wife and I, and many others.”

Tanner died Sept. 9th at the age of 88 in his home in Sidney, where he has lived for some four decades. He leaves behind his wife Christine, whom he married in 1961, three children (Rebecca, Peter, and Marc Tanner), six grandchildren, countless friends and a legacy of local service that saw him serve and support multiple organizations whose very presence has come to define the Saanich Peninsula. They include, among others, the Sidney Business Improvement Association, Shaw Centre for the Salish Sea, Sidney Museum and Archives and Mary Winspear Centre.

He also spoke for the people of the region as the first elected MLA for the newly-created riding for Saanich North and the Islands between 1991 and 1996, after serving as the minister of health in Yukon’s territorial government during the 1970s.

Tanner made his professional mark in the book-selling industry, where he worked for some 50 years. His most visible legacy is Tanner’s Books, which he and his wife founded in 1982.

“We bought the business when it was just a small little corner thing,” Christine Tanner said. “We always thought Sidney needed a good bookstore because we used to like the ones in Victoria. So, we thought we will make it go.”



Christine and Clive Tanner

That love continues to live on through the used bookstore Beacon Books and, of course, Tanner’s Books, which McNeil-Smith purchased in 2001 after having worked in the industry for a national book retailer.

“It was just a very unique experience to see the community so front and centre ... and I learned that early on working through the bookstore,” McNeil-Smith said. “It was a great introduction to the community and one thing led to another and that is how we got involved in community organizations.”

Tanner, for example, had been pushing for what would become the Sidney Business Improvement Association in the 1990s, well before its actual creation in 2012. “He never gave up on a good idea,” McNeil-Smith said. “He had big ideas and always found ways to forward them.”

Perhaps the best idea was the concept of marketing Sidney as Booktown, a concept launched in 1996 and modelled after Hay-on-Wye, England, a town of 1,800 people with 40 bookstores. “They (the Tanners) said, ‘why can’t we do this in Sidney?’ At one time, we had 12 different bookstores under 12 different names under several different owners. Some people thought Clive owned most of them.”

Local retail expert Richard Talbot, who also knew the Tanners well, said Sidney was very much in what he called the “doldrums” before the Tanners arrived.

Talbot also remembers Tanner as a passionate person. “You couldn’t get out of that store (Beacon Books) without having an endless conversation about politics, downtown, military history, whatever,” he said.

Socred gamechanger Pat McGeer dies at 95

By John Mackie
Vancouver Sun

Pat McGeer changed the course of BC politics in 1975 when he left the BC Liberal party to join Bill Bennett's Socreds along with colleagues Garde Gardom and Allan Williams.

The new right-wing coalition defeated Dave Barrett's New Democrats in an ensuing election, and McGeer became one of Bennett's most powerful cabinet ministers, serving as Minister of Education, Universities, Science, Communications and International Trade.

McGeer died on Aug. 29th at 95 in his Point Grey home. No cause of death was announced.

A scientist and UBC professor outside politics, McGeer was known for his big ideas and penchant for controversy.

He made major changes to ICBC, criticized the federal government's plan to push Canadian content through the CRTC, and advocated building a bridge to Vancouver Island.

"He was probably the brightest person to ever run for politics (in BC)," said his former executive assistant Jane Burnes MacKeen. "He was absolutely full of ideas. I'd been working for Premier Bennett, and Pat had approached him and said, 'Can Jane come work for me?' (Bennett) said: 'Pat will have 10 ideas every week, and your job is to make sure I don't hear about the five bad ones.'

"It was like that, every day, another idea. Very creative, outside of the box."

Patrick Lucey McGeer was born in Vancouver on June 29, 1927, into one of BC's most prominent political families – his uncle Gerry was Vancouver's mayor for several years during the Great Depression.

He was a basketball star in his youth, good enough to make the Canadian team in the 1948 Olympics. After obtaining a chemistry degree at UBC, he went to Princeton, where he got a doctorate in chemistry.

He worked on plastics research for DuPont in Wilmington, Del., where he met his wife Edith. The couple returned to BC in 1954, when Pat went to medical school at UBC.

The couple would do medical research at UBC for decades, even when McGeer was a cabinet minister. They were internationally known for their research into Alzheimer's disease.



The three Liberal MLAs who defected to Bill Bennett's Social Credit party to form a right-wing coalition pose with Bennett. Left to right, Allan Williams, Pat McGeer, Bill Bennett and Garde Gardom. Photo by Gordon Sedawie.

McGeer entered politics in 1962 when he was the successful Liberal candidate in Point Grey. He became the provincial Liberal leader in 1968 but resigned in 1972, the year he published a book, *Politics in Paradise*.

After a decade as a Social Credit cabinet minister, he left politics in 1986 to go back to medical research at UBC. But he still had some pet projects he wanted to see through, like the bridge to Vancouver Island. McGeer still had the engineering model on the top floor of his home.

He remained athletic into his 90s, playing tennis on a grass court he built in his backyard. He was also an avid skier.

He is survived by his wife Edith and three children, Rick, Tad and Victoria.

Praise from UBC athletics historian Fred Hume ...

During his UBC career, McGeer had the distinction of playing on two UBC Hall of Fame basketball teams – the 1945/46 Pacific Northwest champions and the 1947/48 Canadian Olympic playoff champions.

With the 1945/46 team, McGeer was the one who led UBC in scoring the night the "Birds" defeated the Harlem Globetrotters 42-38. McGeer had an established reputation as a scorer. In the year previous, the 17-year-old UBC Thunderbird freshman was the Vancouver Lauries' leading scorer during their quest for the Canadian championship.

Pat McGeer was a wonk always ahead of the curve

By Les Leyne
Victorian Times Colonist

1980s-era Social Credit cabinet minister Pat McGeer was known for speaking his mind regardless of the consequences.

Pat McGeer's defence of his decision in the late 1970s to double ICBC rates was a masterpiece of legislature oratory. He painted the corporation as being technically in receivership, unable to meet that month's payroll, hours away from bankruptcy. Into that nightmare strode a lone hero, determined to do the right thing, who happened to be McGeer himself, the chairman of ICBC's board.

His rescue mission prompted a revolt. It heightened when he told broadcaster Jack Webster that if people couldn't afford it, they should sell their cars. Thousands of people jammed the PNE Agrodome in Vancouver and the legislature lawn to protest. He got death threats decades before that became part of the political norm.

"Stick it in your ear, McGeer" was the rallying cry.

In response, the nonchalant cabinet minister read a letter from the Canadian Hearing Society into the legislature record. "We wish to inform you that sticking anything in your ear can be very dangerous ..."

McGeer died at 95, hyper-fit to the end and only recently going grey. He leaves behind a mountain of political memories. Research scientists don't turn up in politics very often. Polymath geniuses with a knack for being ahead of the curve and speaking their mind regardless of consequences are even rarer.

He entered politics as the product of an established Vancouver family and a scientific wizard who was deep into brain research. He was high scorer for the UBC basketball team that beat the Harlem Globetrotters and a member of Canada's team for the 1948 Olympics.

He continued his research, particularly into Alzheimer's, through a rock 'em sock 'em political career that spanned the 1960s to the 1980s. He was an ardent critic of W.A.C. Bennett's Social Credit government when he was Liberal leader. (They retaliated once by having an operative phone in to an open-line show McGeer was on and inquire: "Hey doc, are you still sticking needles into monkey's brains?")

He was an even more enthusiastic critic of Dave Barrett's NDP government. Then he converted to the Socreds and served three terms as a cabinet minister in Bill Bennett's government, generating headlines every other day.

He was a wonk of the first order. His friend and colleague Alan Williams once said: "To Pat, Lawrence Welk is a psychedelic experience."



McGeer at UBC

McGeer was also wickedly funny at times in the Legislature.

The NDP used to go crazy over Socred Phil Gaglardi's penchant for private jets. Once in power, they bought two Citation jets themselves.

"Two Citations, Mr. Speaker!" thundered McGeer. "Those are the only two citations they're ever going to get."

His decision to abandon the Liberals bulked up the Socred vote enough to win several elections. The extra boost he gave Bennett entitled him to run wild and free on whatever topic captured his fancy.

Once in cabinet, he devoted time to thinking of BC's future in high-tech and scientific research and development at a time when resource extraction was still the main game. He was perpetually spinning ideas for BC's future, and many of them did take hold. Someone once called him the "Minister of Science Fiction."

McGeer's name comes up in the origin stories of many BC intellectual endeavours. The old card index at the Legislature Library lists hundreds of newspaper stories about him.

He once ridiculed the BC wine industry, saying it all tasted like jet fuel. That led to a blind taste testing at the Empress, where he identified eight different wines correctly, including Calona, Andres and Uncle Ben's.

(He picked the entries himself, which may have been a cheat. But he made *Time* magazine nonetheless. And BC vintners did raise their game.)

It's a tribute to his personality that he's best known for an idea that never went anywhere — the bridge to Vancouver Island.

Seven years ago, I wrote a column about how the idea is physically impossible and will never happen. McGeer called from his lab at UBC and barked: "Complete nonsense. Narrow-minded, unimaginative thinking. You can quote me."

Who knows? Maybe he was just further ahead of the curve than usual.

His service recognized by the Queen; MacMinn dies

By Cindy Harnett
Times Colonist

Former clerk of the BC legislature E. George MacMinn, who served 15 speakers, 11 premiers and hundreds of MLAs in 54 years as a senior official with the legislature, died Aug. 30th at 92.

MacMinn, who rose through the ranks to become clerk of the house in 1993 and retired in 2011 when he was replaced by Craig James, wrote a book on parliamentary practice in BC and was regarded as an expert on parliamentary law, practice, and procedure.

When MacMinn became an Order of BC recipient in 2005, he was the longest-serving table officer in any Commonwealth parliament. In 2008, his service was recognized by the Queen.

Alan MacMinn, one of four children from MacMinn's first marriage to Francette Destrubé in 1957, said his father always put his children first. His blended family grew to seven children after he married a second time, to Louise Roy, whom he knew in high school.

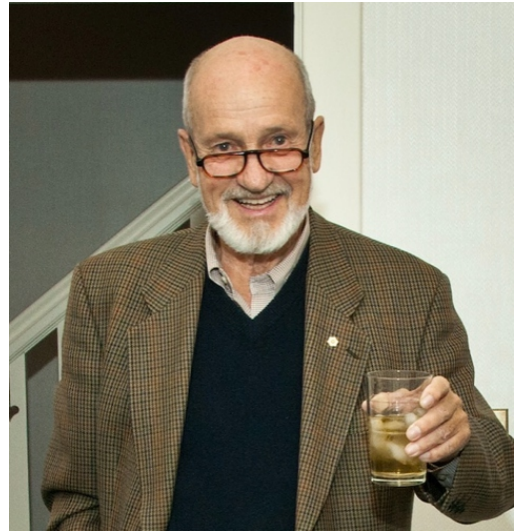
"Anytime one of his children called the clerk's office, he was to be immediately interrupted," said Alan MacMinn. "Even if he's meeting with the premier."

Born in 1930 in New Glasgow, N.S., MacMinn was descended on his mother's side from United Empire Loyalists from Connecticut who settled in Boylston, N.S. in 1785.

MacMinn's father, Earle George MacMinn, a bank manager, moved the family from New Glasgow to Sydney and Halifax before relocating to Victoria in 1943 to work at the main branch of the Royal Bank of Canada, in the building that's now home to Munro's Books.

Just six years after their move to Victoria, however, the senior MacMinn drowned in Somenos Lake north of Duncan. Seeing his father's hat and an overturned boat, George Jr., 18 at the time, ran for help. Mother Hope MacMinn was left to raise three children.

"He would say it impacted him hugely," said Alan MacMinn, who speculates that the experience might have contributed to his father's attentiveness to his children. "The fact that, you know, his father never had the chance to see fatherhood through, perhaps that's why he went a little extra out of his way to cherish those moments."



MacMinn attended Victoria High School, then Victoria College (now Camosun College), and eventually the University of BC, where he studied law. He graduated in 1953 and was called to the bar in 1954.

As a lawyer, he worked for several firms, but found his calling when approached by Ned deBeck, then the clerk of the legislature, to serve as clerk assistant in 1957.

BC Liberal Leader Kevin Falcon posted on social media that, as the longest-serving table officer in the Commonwealth, MacMinn "leaves a long and lasting legacy in our province."

Liberal MLA Shirley Bond expressed condolences to his friends and family: "George certainly was a presence in the Chamber and Legislature."

MacMinn planned to donate a controversial two-year post-retirement consulting contract of \$500,000 – minus the income tax paid – to the legislature's library when he died.

The clerk's office confirmed MacMinn left a codicil leaving the donation to the library, which will be addressed by the executor of the will.

MacMinn was a member since 1966 of the Union Club, where he enjoyed Wednesday evening poker for decades as well as fine Scotch whisky. He and his second wife settled in a waterfront house in Oak Bay, where the tennis-loving MacMinn built a grass court in the backyard. Over 25 years, he attended most Wimbledon tennis tournaments.

MacMinn: A dedicated parliamentary powerhouse

Kate Ryan-Lloyd, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly:

E. George MacMinn, OBC, QC, former Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, dedicated his working life to strengthening the Legislative Assembly and the practice of parliamentary democracy in British Columbia. He promoted the visibility and the identity of the Legislative Assembly as an autonomous legislative institution with unique constitutional and representational responsibilities.

George exemplified a deep understanding and concern for the needs of the Legislative Assembly, the rights of its Members, and role of the Speaker, earning him the admiration of many colleagues domestically and internationally. In 1981, George prepared the first edition of *Parliamentary Practice in British Columbia*, the procedural authority of choice in our Legislative Assembly. With its publication, British Columbia became the first provincial parliamentary jurisdiction in Canada to have its own annotated procedural authority. George's work in the following years produced the next three editions of this authority, ensuring that British Columbia was widely recognized as a leader in parliamentary procedure and practice. Indeed, his vast parliamentary knowledge and extraordinary contributions live on in our most recent fifth edition, now available to all as a free digital publication.

I was fortunate to have been encouraged and mentored by George at the outset of my career. As a new clerk, it was a joy to be in his company. On my first day as a Committee Clerk, he dropped by my office unexpectedly to welcome me and took me down the hall to introduce me to Speaker Gretchen Brewin. I learned to stay on my toes, just in case he dropped by unexpectedly to place a new procedural question on my desk, requesting a written response within a few hours.

As former Members will recall, the Legislative Assembly sits from Monday through Thursday. On the final sitting evening of the week, George would frequently welcome Members into his office for a modest touch of scotch. Although such happenings do not continue today, George recognized the importance of connecting with Members individually and valued these personal relationships.

In September 2021, George returned to the Parliament Buildings for the first time since his retirement 10 years earlier. (As this photo shows) we sat in the Legislative Chamber and I explained the new hybrid proceedings to him. He was keenly curious about our new processes and his sharp wit was evident that day. He is deeply missed.



Joan Barton, Retired Legislative Librarian, Honourary Director of the AFMLABC:

"The sad news about George MacMinn's passing came as such a shock.

On reflection I can't recall when he was not a part of my professional life in the British Columbia Parliament Buildings. He was there as Clerk Assistant when I arrived in 1968 and there was an immediate affinity between us.

George taught me most of what I know about our parliamentary practice and procedure. Most of all he set me on a path of understanding their importance and how as a traditional member of the staff I had to be sure to get the traditions right!

I will always remember that twinkle in his eye when he reminded me (often) how significant were the roles of the Clerk and the Librarian in our system. He loved to refer to the "nine hundred year tradition" and stress the role of the Clerk's Papers and all that they embody in the Westminster tradition. He instilled in me a love of the Chamber and the important role played by all the Members who sat there.

I remember his wit, the tennis matches and the joy it gave him when our team of MLAs and staff beat our opponents. I am so grateful that I had the privilege to work with and learn from him. His passing is a loss for the Legislative Assembly and all those who served with him.

Rest in Peace, Mr. Clerk.

By-elections that changed our political landscape

(Editor's note: There was a by-election in Surrey South on Sept. 10th. It came as no surprise to poll pundits on all sides of the political bleachers that the seat remained in Liberal hands with a novice MLA, Elenore Sturko, a sergeant and popular media spokesperson on leave from the RCMP. Below, political researcher and historian Mike McDonald asks: "What happens in a by-election, anyway?" Mike's canvas of 50 years of BC's most important by-elections is extensive. I have picked a few that I had the good fortune to cover for the *Vancouver Sun* and *Province*. The rest of the story can be found on Mike's *Rosedeer Blog* at: <https://rosedeer.blog/>.)

By Mike McDonald

For a brief time (during a by-election), all political parties are focused organizationally on one place because someone resigned, died, or, worse yet, was recalled. By-elections usually have low voter turnout and may appear to average voters to be of little consequence in their daily lives. The host riding is deluged with professional campaigners and out-of-town volunteers who door-knock the riding like never before. Then, when it's over, they all go home. By-elections are a pulse taker, a message tester, and a get-out-the-vote drill – a

political laboratory for parties to try new things they may apply in the next general election.

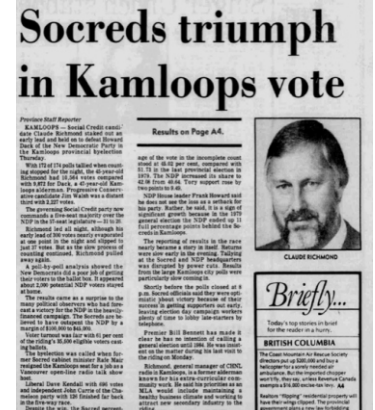
1981 – The Roadmap to Victory

Midway through Bill Bennett's second term, the Socreds were flagging. The 1979 election win was the most polarizing result in BC electoral history, and Bennett realized his party would need to regroup and retool. Bennett dispatched his friend Hugh Harris to survey the landscape outside BC with a view to modernizing how the party fought elections, eventually gravitating toward the "Big Blue Machine" approach of the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party.

Harris brought back his learnings in time for the 1981 Kamloops by-election created when Socred MLA and cabinet minister Rafe Mair resigned to pursue a career in talk radio. The smart money was on the NDP picking up the then-bellwether seat of Kamloops ("So goes Kamloops; so goes the province.").

As Bob Plecas describes: "The political machine that Bennett had built using Hugh Harris's advice was ready for a test drive ... For most of the by-election, NDP leader Dave Barrett was in New Zealand attending a world conference on socialism. Every weekend of the by-election, Bennett was in the riding, spending day after day in the small towns that surround Kamloops." The modernized campaign model was coupled with the efforts of thousands of volunteers, many of whom travelled up to the 'Loops' for the weekend. They organized the NDP and worked door-by-door on the ground. Bud Smith, who had worked closely with Harris rebuilding the party, ran the local campaign.

Local Socred candidate Claude Richmond was propelled into office, aided by Harris's blueprint, with a win that was arguably a template for the forthcoming 1983 general election. The 1981 by-election win remains a part of free enterprise lore.



1989 – Alex Fraser's death marks Cariboo turning point

The Cariboo by-election was caused by the death of long-time MLA Alex Fraser, an institution in the region. Cariboo was a two-member seat, an oddity of our system until 1986.

continued next page



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HELPING WHEN LIFE CHANGES



Fraser's seatmate was Socred MLA Neil Vant. Expecting to retain the riding, the Socreds had a hotly contested nomination meeting between auctioneer and Vander Zalm-loyalist Joe Wark and Quesnel Mayor Mike Pearce.

Wark won by a one-vote squeaker (337-336) at the Williams Lake curling rink and remarked: "We have no room in the Social Credit party for rebels and that sort of thing." Pearce, who self-described as representing a new style, was probably more electable, in part because he was endorsed by Alex Fraser's widow, Gertrude. Wark was a "Zalmoid" bedevilled by Premier Bill Vander Zalm's decision to remove Alex Fraser from cabinet while he was battling throat cancer.

During the by-election campaign, Fraser's widow suggested strongly that the NDP candidate, Dave Zirnhelt, would be just fine as MLA. Zirnhelt, a rancher and horse logger, had run as a Liberal in the 1969 provincial election before migrating to the NDP. He would go on to wallop Wark with 56 per cent of the vote and serve as a senior cabinet minister in the 1990s.

Pearce tried again. He got the Socred nod in the 1991 election in Cariboo North (the riding was split) but lost to the NDP's Frank Garden. The Liberals were confined to a meagre three per cent in the by-election despite their authentic and good-humoured candidate Darwin Netzel.

1994/95 – The remaking of the free enterprise coalition

The 1991 general election remade BC politics, with the BC Liberals jumping to Official Opposition and the Socreds declining to third-party status. While the BC Liberals now had the advantage, the question was not settled as to which party would lead free enterprise forces going forward. By 1993, each party had a new leader. BC Liberal leader Gordon Wilson had lost his leadership to Vancouver Mayor Gordon Campbell, while Socred legend Grace McCarthy took on the task of rebuilding the party she had helped save with Bill Bennett in the 1970s.

A pair of by-elections in 1994 and 1995 would settle the question of who would lead free enterprise – for the most part.

One of the seven Socreds elected in 1991, Matsqui MLA Peter Dueck, decided it was time to force the issue and resigned his seat after having spent time as an Independent MLA. Meanwhile, BC Liberal MLA Art Cowie (Vancouver-Quilchena) resigned his seat to make way for Campbell. Two by-elections were called. Socred leader Grace McCarthy chose to run in Socred-friendly Matsqui rather than take on Campbell near her home base in Vancouver. Campbell would cruise to an easy victory, and the real fight was in Matsqui, where the BC Liberals could put a stake in the heart of the Socreds for good.

After the ballot's over, a cold grey dawn for Social Credit

VAUGHN PALMER
Sun Victoria Columist

MATSQUI
AS THE CLOCK ticked past 10 o'clock on last night, the votes had been counted and a tentative winner declared. Liberal Mike de Jong, Neither of the two leading contenders had shown up to address their supporters. At Socred headquarters, in the back of a restaurant adjoining the motel made famous by Grace McCarthy's residency there during the months-long campaign, the mood was somber, tinged with bitter irony.

The evening had been unnecessarily cruel for supporters of the proud party, the result of organizers relying on figures from their own scrutineers rather than the official numbers from the returning office. Whereas the official count had the race a dead heat from the outset, the Socreds kept posting results that showed themselves ahead by margins of 200-300 votes.

As late as 9:45, with 90 per cent of the polls reporting and McCarthy seemingly in the lead, the Socreds had begun to congratulate themselves on having squeaked out a win. Caught up in the nascent celebrations, one longtime supporter approached the media contingent to plead that many of us would simply be eating a lot of crow tomorrow.

Then the mood collapsed, as official reports overwhelmed the overly optimistic tally from the Socred campaign workers. McCarthy was ahead, she was behind by just enough to put victory out of reach, barring recounts. Outside, as party workers moved in to break up an ugly confrontation between one organizer and a member of the news media, one member of the party board reflected: "I guess we'll have to move to plan B."

"What's that?" I asked. "We don't know," came the reply.

Meantime at the nearby Liberal headquarters, a storefront office on the main street of the fast-growing community of Clearbrook, they had proclaimed the Socreds would envy. Their candidate had won — but where was he?

"He couldn't wait to get over so he's taken the last ferry to Victoria," joked someone in the crowd.

Finally, after a few anxious minutes, Mike de Jong's little sports car scudded down the main drag and turned into the parking lot. At 10:15, the winner mounted the platform amid general delirium and shouts of "Banzai" from an enthusiastic Japanese supporter.

"I have a speech," he began, then interrupted himself: "I have two speeches in my pocket." Came a voice from the crowd: "Give the other one to Grace."



MCCARTHY DE JONG

More cheers. Another voice: "Is that a speech in your pocket or are you just happy you won the election?" Louder, the candidate, red faced, explosive, started again: "Six weeks ago a group of us got together and wondered if we ran a local candidate against a heavily favored, well-oiled machine... A party organizer couldn't resist the opening: "You won Mike, give it a rest."

Eventually every one else shut up and he made it through the perfunctory thanks to his campaign team. "I've got a lot to learn," he confessed at one point — and he does. For one thing, he was so caught up in his own moment of victory, he neglected to mention party leader Gordon Campbell or congratulate him for winning his own seat in Vancouver-Quilchena.

Understandable, but it served as a

reminder that Campbell faces a big job crafting the many free spirits in his party into a working team.

While the amateurs revelled at Liberal headquarters, the old pro had arrived to bring a dignified end to the campaign for the Socreds. Dressed in black and sporting the famous omie Grace McCarthy moved through the room, shaking hands, thanking those who tried so hard, and then went to the front to address the crowd.

There was no bitterness or any attempt to apportion blame, and she permitted herself only one remark: that she didn't have "more time to put my own stamp" on a troubled party.

Afterward, Socreds stood in groups of two and three discussing their options, none of them palatable. What for a recount? Sure, but only rarely do they reverse what is decided on election day.

On that night, no one had any stomach for joining the fight. Hanging tough and waiting for Gordon Campbell to stumble. "Pretty desperate. Starting a new party." The field is already crowded. Still, maybe something will turn up.

As the crowd dispersed, McCarthy moved through it for one last time, dispensing reassurance and gratitude with all the charm she could muster. When reporters warred around to ask her what happens next, she told them the only time she answers those questions. For now, the story is over.

By Vaughn Palmer, columnar reporter on the editorial page Monday through Friday.

In Matsqui, local members of the BC Liberal Party gathered at a high school gymnasium to nominate their giant killer. Some BC Liberal insiders favoured a Vancouver lawyer and high school basketball star who had strong ties to the area, but a young country lawyer and school trustee upset those plans by winning 102 to 84 (back when nomination meeting results were disclosed). The task of defeating Socred legend Grace McCarthy was thus on the shoulders of Mike de Jong, then shy of his 30th birthday. It was a new vs. old generational matchup. De Jong had a spirited team, led by campaign manager Dave Holmberg and wily ex-scribe Mark Rushton. The Socreds dug in and had a deep supporters list to draw on though there was much attrition to the oncoming BC Liberals and bleeding to the fledgling Reform BC (unaffiliated with the federal Reform Party) and the Family Coalition Party.

A sidebar to the Battle of Free Enterprise was the NDP candidate situation. Sam Wagar was nominated, but it became known to the media that the government's candidate in the Bible Belt was actually a witch. Wagar, who practiced the Wiccan religion, was non-plussed, but it was apparently too much for the political managers at Party HQ. Wagar was sent packing as a new candidate was conjured. So much for religious freedom.

It was a heated campaign in the depths of the Matsqui winter. All candidates' meetings were tense and scrappy. BC Liberal plants took the microphone to ask McCarthy detailed local questions to make hay of her parachute candidacy. De Jong defeated McCarthy by a mere 42 votes (41.77 per cent to 41.45 per cent) in a dramatic win. As Vaughn Palmer reported, at about 10:15 p.m., de Jong showed up in his blue Miata sports car, "mounted the platform amid general delirium and shouts of 'Banzai' from an enthusiastic Japanese supporter."

A significant part of the story was the other parties: Reform took 1,250 votes and Family Coalition Party took 275 votes, making it harder for the Socreds to save their leader.

Canadians conflicted about the role of the monarchy

By Darrell Bricker and Sean Simpson
Ipsos

Canadians are conflicted on the future role of the monarchy, with roughly half believing we should sever ties, according to a new Ipsos poll conducted on behalf of Global News.

Canadians see both positives and negatives to having the monarchy as our head of state, but these mixed opinions would likely not be conclusive enough to achieve the relative consensus required for constitutional change.

Canadians are clear on one thing: 82 per cent believe Queen Elizabeth II did a good job as monarch, with this final approval rating coming three points higher than it did in 2021. However, underscoring the uncertainty of the monarchy's future in Canada, only a slim majority (56 per cent) agree (10 per cent strongly/46 per cent somewhat) that they are confident that King Charles III will do a good job in his role as monarch.

Canadians are very much split on their opinions when it comes to the monarchy in Canada. Roughly half (54 per cent) agree (20 per cent strongly/33 per cent somewhat) that now that Queen Elizabeth II's reign has ended, Canada should end its formal ties to the British monarchy. This sentiment is down five points from 2021 but up from 44 per cent in 2011. Conversely, 46 per cent disagree (19 per cent strongly/27 per cent somewhat) that Canada should sever ties, up five points.

Those under the age of 55 are more likely to agree (57 per cent) that ties should be severed compared to those 55 and older (49 per cent). Regionally, Quebecers are most inclined to agree that ties should be severed (79 per cent), feeling much more strongly about it than those in Saskatchewan and Manitoba (54 per cent), British Columbia (46 per cent), Atlantic Canada (45 per cent), Ontario (45 per cent) and Alberta (42 per cent). In total, 46 per cent of those in English Canada support ending formal ties, compared to 79 per cent of Quebecers.

Canadians see some valid arguments for keeping the monarchy in Canada:

- A majority (55 per cent) agree (17 per cent strongly/38 per cent somewhat) that the constitutional monarchy helps to define Canadian identity and should continue to be our form of government, unchanged from 2021. However, when this question was first asked in 2002, 62 per cent were in agreement.
- Sixty per cent agree (16 per cent/44 per cent somewhat) that the Prince and Princess of Wales, William and Catherine, will help keep the monarchy relevant to Canadians, but this is down seven points since 2016.

- Only 43 per cent agree (13 per cent strongly/30 per cent somewhat) that the monarchy has too much of a role in Canadian affairs.
- Sixty per cent agree (14 per cent strongly/46 per cent somewhat) that Canada's relationship with the monarchy is useful because it helps to keep us different from the United States.

Conversely, many agree with arguments in support of severing ties with the British Crown:

- Sixty-three per cent agree (27 per cent strongly/36 per cent somewhat) that the King and Royal family should not have any formal role in Canadian society as the royals are simply celebrities and nothing more, down three points since 2021.
- Only 47 per cent agree (nine per cent strongly/38 per cent somewhat) that King Charles III and Camilla, the Queen Consort, will help keep the monarchy relevant to Canadians, leaving 53 per cent who disagree.
- A majority (57 per cent) agree (21 per cent strongly/36 per cent somewhat) that the monarchy is too linked to the history of colonialism and slavery to have a place in today's Canadian society.

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Queen Elizabeth tributes reflect affection and fond memories

Jean Campbell: Everyone has favourite stories of the Queen's visits. I have two favourite ones I thought I should share.

Many years ago, while all the Members of the Legislative Assembly were lining up to be presented to Her Majesty, Waldo Skillings was showing his wife how to curtsy properly. When it came to Waldo's turn to meet the Queen, to his chagrin, Waldo didn't bow but curtsied instead.

The other story involves Tom Uphill. We were instructed that to save the strain on the Queen's right hand, we were only to grasp it lightly. Tom ignored all the advice, grabbed the Queen's hand with one hand, patted it with the other, and loudly proclaimed: "Hello, dearie, I used to know your mother."

I had the privilege to meet the Queen many times, and she was always so very gracious and so very human. She will be sorely missed. I am sure you will commemorate Her Majesty in this issue of OOTD; I hope these stories help.

(Jean was the wife of Social Credit Minister of Municipal Affairs Dan Campbell, who represented the constituency of Comox. He died in 1992.)

Former MLA and AFMLABC board member Ida

Chong: My one encounter with Her Majesty occurred on her visit to the Legislature in 2002. Premier Gordon Campbell (pictured with the Queen on that visit) allowed the government caucus members (MLAs) to wait on the front lawn area just outside the East Annex, where the Queen would walk by with the premier.

As you know, our BC Liberal caucus was the largest in history (77 members), and as the Queen walked by (within five feet of me), she looked at all of us and very softly asked: "Are you ALL members?" I guess she was surprised to see so many of us. We were all rather shocked that she spoke to us. It took a moment for any of us to say, "YES, we are all members," rather than just nodding.

A picture of her walk-by was kept in my office until I left. That brief encounter revealed her gracious and gentle nature and how I shall always remember her.



Retired Legislature Law Clerk and AFMLABC Honourary Solicitor Ian Izard QC: The 1951 picture on the front page of the *Victoria Daily Times* is of my sister, Patricia, and myself, taken on Rockland Avenue one block from Government House on Oct. 21st.

We were part of the crowd out to see the Princess and the Prince on their procession from the Empress Hotel to Government House. I was three, and my sister was two days short of five years old. I recall the famous wave and a big smile from a black convertible.

The photographer was Jim Ryan of the *Victoria Daily Times*. I remember that he was very tall, had two cameras hanging from his neck and a large stogie clenched in his mouth as he strode up the avenue looking for subjects. That was apparently his usual persona.



Former MLA and AFMLABC board member Bruce

Strachan: We met the Queen a few times, but the most memorable meeting was with Her Majesty and our two children. It was the Royal tour of 1983; Dean, 9, and Jody, 6, were with us in Victoria.

The children were taken on a tour of the buildings by security staff. When they got to the Golden Gate, they saw the Queen was in the Legislative Chamber. Seeing the children, she immediately came to the gate and, with a mischievous smile, asked: "Are these bars to keep me in or to keep you out?" They have never forgotten that comment.

British Columbia Lieutenant Governor Janet Austin:

It was with enormous sadness that I relayed the news of the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada. Her long and steadfast reign endured for seven decades. Her presence touched many generations of Canadian families, who watched her grow from the teenage Princess who trained as a mechanic during WWII to the young Queen who charmed crowds on her many tours throughout the country, and to her family roles as mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother many times over.

Her Majesty's unwavering dedication to the people of the Commonwealth earned her the respect and admiration of Canadians. She, in turn, loved Canada – a sentiment she expressed to me personally during my audience with her upon being appointed Lieutenant Governor.

Our Queen travelled to Canada on more occasions than any other country in the world. Over the course of her 22 visits, she came to British Columbia seven times, visiting communities throughout our province.

The passing of our Queen represents the end of an era defined by its longevity, by her example of service and self-sacrifice, and by the kindness and consideration she always showed to everyone. The impact of Her Majesty's reign cannot be overstated, and I know that I am joined by all of you in the deep sadness I feel on the occasion of her passing.

On behalf of all British Columbians, I extend my heartfelt condolences to The Royal Family and all members of the Commonwealth on the loss of our most beloved Queen.



Queen Elizabeth is greeted by Lieutenant Governor Janet Austin at Government House in 2018

Premier John Horgan: British Columbians are deeply saddened by the passing of Queen Elizabeth II. The Queen will be remembered for her full-hearted service to her people and her steadfast commitment to her duties as the sovereign and head of the Commonwealth.

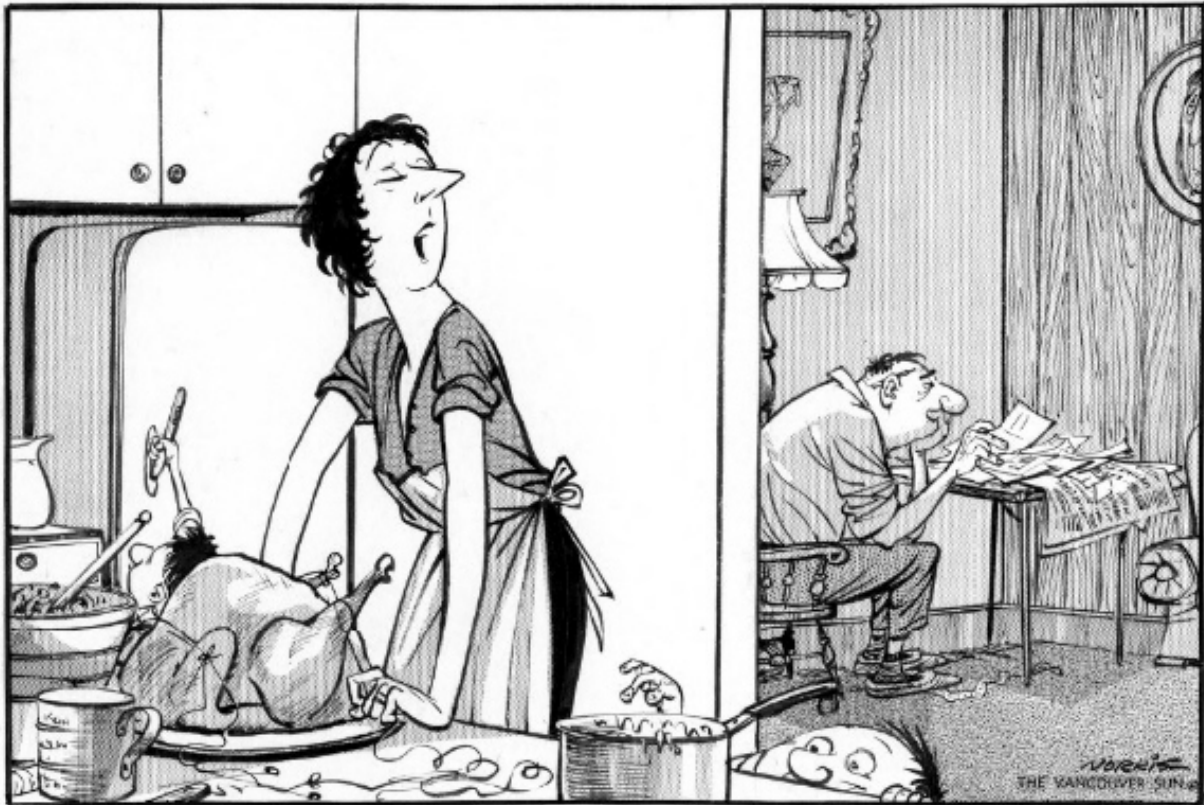
In the 1970s, the Queen joined us as we celebrated BC's 100th anniversary. In the 1980s, the Queen officially granted the Province its Coat of Arms, an important symbol of our independence and sovereignty.

In the 1990s, the Queen honoured us by opening the Commonwealth Games. And in the 2000s, during her Golden Jubilee Year, the Queen dropped the puck at a Vancouver Canucks game, to the delight of hockey fans.

At every opportunity, Queen Elizabeth II made time for people, especially children. For the tens of thousands of people who came out to see the Queen as she travelled to communities throughout BC, these moments will be cherished for a lifetime.

The Queen's legacy will live on in the many organizations and charities she supported. Among them was the Queen's Commonwealth Canopy, created to protect and conserve forests throughout the Commonwealth. In 2016, the Queen designated BC's Great Bear Rainforest as part of the canopy during the royal tour of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge.

Len Norris



October 10, 1959

"George, forget the monthly bills, the tax notices and the H Bomb for a moment and give me a hand with the Thanksgiving turkey."

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A century ago

Victoria Chinese students stage segregation strike

by *Capital Daily's* Jolene Rudisuela

In early September, the Greater Victoria School District issued an apology for racist actions taken by the school board a century ago against the local Chinese community. The apology came at the request of Victoria Chinatown Museum Society chair Alan Lowe, who spoke to the board in July about what he calls this "dark event in our local history."

Decisions by former board chair George Jay and the school board in the early 1900s led to the segregation of Chinese students and perpetuated racist discrimination.

In Victoria, at that time most Chinese students attended the Lequn Yishu (Sociability Free School), founded in 1899 as Canada's first Chinese public school, with a small number attending district public schools. The first stirrings of school segregation were already happening – white parents started a petition against Chinese children attending Rock Bay Elementary School.

In 1907, the local school board first passed a motion that required all Chinese students to pass an English exam to attend schools within the district – a rule that did not apply to children of European descent whose first language was not English. After the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association launched a legal challenge against the school board, the rule was changed only to require Chinese-born children to pass the English exam. Canadian-born Chinese students were allowed to enroll in local schools.

As Chinese children were turned away from public schools due to the new requirement, Lequn Yishu became overcrowded, and the Chinese Public School on Fisgard Street opened to accommodate more students.

Chinese students were only allowed to attend the district schools after Grade 4 – until the summer of 1922, when the district board voted to extend it to Grade 7. That was around the age when most of the children left school to work, meaning most would not end up attending after Grade 7 anyway.

"That was the straw that broke the camel's back," Lowe told *Capital Daily*. "That's when the Chinese community came out in force to tell the trustees that this was not right, this was not appropriate, they needed to reverse the decision."

On Sept. 5th, 1922, the day the order took effect, more than 200 Chinese students from Grades 5 to 7 were called out of their public school classrooms and marched down to a new school built for them on Kings Road.



Victoria Chinese Public School

But the children had a different plan. As the procession reached the school, one of the boys called out the signal and the kids dispersed into the streets and began boycotting the school in protest.

The Chinese Canadian Club, the Chinese Commerce Association, and the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association supported the strike.

"It was a one-year-long strike," Lowe told *Capital Daily*. "During the one year, the Chinese community actually brought in their own teachers, and they taught the Chinese students everything from English to culture and other types of courses that one would have if they were going to school."

After that year, students above Grade 4 were allowed to return to the public school system, though it wouldn't be until after the Second World War before segregation was completely abolished.

SD61 Board Chair Ryan Painter said that these events stand out "as a particularly dark incident for our school district." "The racist discrimination that led to this act is unacceptable and viewed with regret," he said. "We will work with the Chinese community to ensure this history is not forgotten and remain committed to celebrating their immense contributions to the City of Victoria."

On the 100th anniversary of the school strike, the Victoria Chinatown Museum Society organized a walk to re-enact and commemorate the strike.