

## A nation young at heart turns 150



On July 1st, 1867 Canada became a country with four provinces – New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario and Quebec. The story of Canada was truly that of a work in progress. It would take more than a century to add the other six provinces and three territories that make up Canada today.

As AFMLABC President Penny Priddy notes in her Page 4 greeting: “It is an excellent time to reflect on the principles on which our democracy is based and how they have shaped our province and our country.” As 2017 unfolds and July 1st approaches readers of OOTD will be encouraged to share their Canada stories on these pages.

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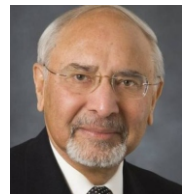
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Her Honour

The Honourable Judith Guichon, OBC

Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia

# Thank You and Miscellany

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

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

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Payment can be sent to the above address.

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**Can you help?** We have lost track of a number of Members and subscribers. Their newsletters have been returned to us, indicating that they have recently moved. Can you help us locate these people?

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## From the Editor's Desk

As Rob and I geared up in early January to begin assembling Orders of the Day content for this "Winter" issue much of the content-to-come was a mystery to us.

After two years in the editor's chair, I find it is the same most months. As the days tick off towards the printing deadline I am always pleased, and relieved, to see the work in progress begin to define itself and take shape.

This issue has evolved as a scene setter, and potentially a trend setter, for 2017. As a scene setter it looks ahead to a year that will be full of celebration, primarily Canada's 150th anniversary as an infant nation and the 30th anniversary of the Association of Former MLAs of BC. Both these milestones will be well covered and featured in succeeding 2017 issues, but it was important to set the stage for the celebrations to come.

The association's esteemed Honorary Life Member Jim Hume – who turned 93 on December 27th – has filed a "Canada at 150" piece reminding us that BC loves a party even though it wasn't at the first one. And, the History Page contains a Confederation primer for folks like me who have forgotten most of the history they were force-fed in school.

Also, with the help of a 10-year-old Garde Gardom 20th anniversary letter that was buried deep in Rob's files, we take a look back to 1987 and the founding of the AFMLABC.

As a potential trend setter, this issue offers two contributions that I hope are evidence of more submissions to come under the heading "Reader Engagement." Joan Sawicki and Tom Perry have submitted articles that speak to the need for political and post-political participation in a bipartisan context. I hope other readers will respond with their thoughts and ideas.

*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.*

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# 2017 Association Dues

It's that time again. Dues for 2017 are due.

Annual membership in the Association is \$60 (unchanged from previous years) and that includes the subscription fee for *Orders of the Day* (OOTD).

Fans of OOTD who are not Association members should send in a cheque for \$40 to remain on the newsletter subscription list.

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# Welcome to a New Year of milestones and celebration

By Penny Priddy  
President, AFMLABC

The New Year, 2017, promises to be a busy and exciting time.

There are several important milestones this year that offer opportunities to reflect on and to celebrate the history of our country and our province.

This is the 150th birthday of Canada as we know it today. In small towns and cities across the country there are events planned to honour our past and look to our future.

It is important to note that for thousands of years before the establishment of Canada these lands were lived upon, nurtured and travelled by First Nations people.

There are other important dates to be noted. This year will mark the 100th year of women in BC winning the right to vote. What a difference this has made.

It also marks the 75th anniversary of the internment of Japanese citizens during the Second World War. There are events to honour the history and celebrate the culture of the Japanese community.

We will also see the installation of the 41st Legislature of BC after the upcoming election.

I would note that this will be the 30th year since the founding of the Association of Former MLAs of BC. Through the OOTD we hope to bring you articles of meaning and interest during the year.



It is an excellent time to reflect on the principles on which our democracy is based and how they have shaped our province and our country.

Best wishes for 2017 from the Board of the AFMLABC.



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# The AFMLABC celebrates 30 years; it started with Garde

If ever there was an iconic BC public servant it was the irrepressible Garde Basil Gardom. We lost him in June 2013, but thankfully, six years earlier he put pen to paper to chronicle the founding of the Association of Former MLAs of BC.

He wrote: "Following my decision not to seek re-election in 1986 (20 years, two months and 22 days as an MLA was enough for me), I was offered the position of Policy Advisor to Premier Bill Vander Zalm. I then thought of incorporating a society for ex-MLAs."

Garde discussed his idea with the NDP's Dennis Cocke, Conservative Don Marshall, Liberal Gordon Gibson and Socred Jim Nielsen. He wanted the group to be non-partisan. His co-conspirators were in accord; Garde approached the Premier and received his support.

"The Association was officially formed on September 30, 1987, and was incorporated on Christmas Eve 1987," he recalled.

"I was appointed Agent General London in 1987 and prepared and forwarded to Jim Nielsen the Minutes and Annual Reports for filing with the Registrar of Companies for 1988 and 1989. In June of that year Lieutenant Governor David Lam hosted a dinner at Government House for all of us.

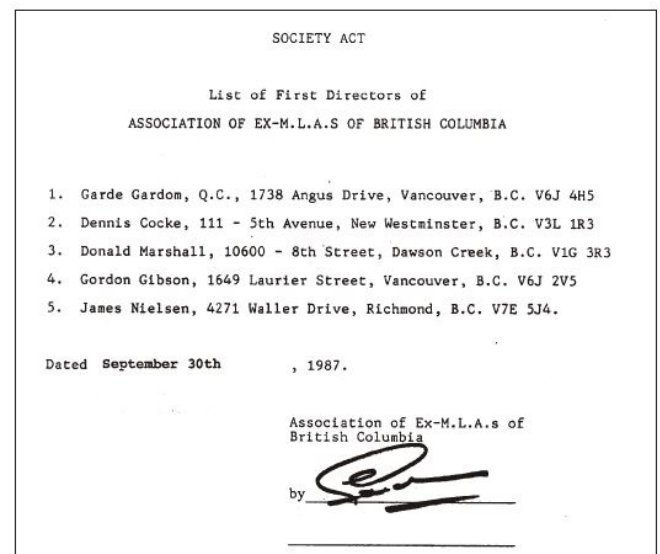
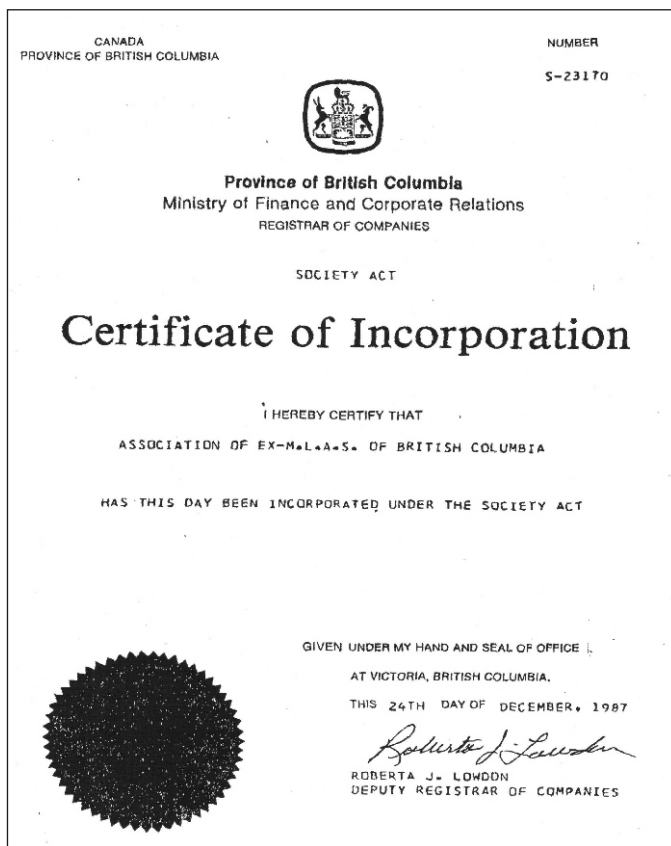
"Whilst I was in the UK, Jim Nielsen and Bob McClelland injected some enthusiasm, and we've never looked back ... In 1998, I was privileged as Lieutenant Governor to give Royal Assent to the "Association of Former MLAs of British Columbia Act."



"Since we started, the best thing that has occasioned was when Hugh Curtis became our Secretary Treasurer. His "Orders of the Day" collates a first class history of major times and major events in British Columbia. I have every copy on file. Each one of us owes him much gratitude."

The first issue of Orders of the Day was sent to more than 100 members of the AFMLABC in the autumn of 1994. Association President Jim Rhodes reported on the group's philanthropic focus, funding for deserving students interested in public affairs studies at UVic, UBC, Simon Fraser and UNBC.

Rhodes reminded readers of OOTD: "It is often said that nothing is forgotten faster than a former Member of the Legislature. I believe that our association has now located almost all former MLAs who are still with us. A few go back to the 1940s. We try to keep in touch with all and make a special point of making contact during times of illness or with their families in times of their passing."



Left: The Association's Certificate dated December 24, 1987.

Above: The first Directors of the Association: Garde Gardom, Dennis Cocke, Don Marshall, Gordon Gibson and Jim Nielsen.

# Must reading for the 'Former MLAs' Class of '17

By Joan Sawicki



As we all know firsthand, within the unique culture of elected politics, pre-election periods and campaigns have a drama all their own.

Sitting MLAs who have chosen not to run again are probably already counting the days. For those MLAs seeking re-election, amidst the endless 'fact' sheets, message boxes, phone trees and door knocking, there will be those nagging questions: What if I win and my party loses? What if I lose and my party wins? Which would be worse?

Meanwhile, we who have been there are relegated to the side lines, whether we wish to be or not.

It's ironic. Most of us went into politics with credentials of one sort or another, ready to dedicate them to the benefit of British Columbia. Once there, however, any expertise we had was likely overshadowed by our role as

a partisan, whipped to within an inch of our personal and professional integrity and bound by unquestioned loyalty to our party leader and colleagues. So be it. That is how our parliamentary system works and that is what we signed up for.

Then, by whatever means, we 'retired' from elected politics, perhaps to return to our former – or a new – profession, perhaps to spend more time with travel, hobbies and grandchildren. I doubt any of us left that world unchanged, however. The irony is, just when we are able to use our before-politics career and life experiences, augmented by the pragmatism gained through survival as a Member of the Legislature, there is nowhere to market that new-found wisdom. Certainly not as we approach and engage in a provincial election campaign.

Regardless of expertise or good intentions to contribute to public debate beyond the rhetoric and arguments deemed persuasive by party strategists, any comment on our part is destined to be dismissed as the predictable 'spin' of a former MLA and/or cabinet minister. It is as if we remain mere puppets of our respective political parties.



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On the flip side, I suspect those of us who have tried to help our respective parties develop more credible positions and platforms have met with equal disdain. Rather than being valued as ‘elder statespersons’ with the wisdom that comes from having lived that life, but now having had time to actually THINK and gain broader perspectives, we are more likely to be regarded as ‘has beens’ who can’t possibly understand the challenges that current caucuses face. (Ha!)

In other words, we are neither fish nor fowl, as they say. Our status as former MLAs is both a source of pride and a curse. Pride – because we were there and, hopefully, in our probably yet-unsorted file boxes, there are a few memories of where we made a difference. Curse - because, in the public’s eye, that mark on our forehead never seems to go away and, in our party’s eye, that mark is at best, a sign of irrelevancy and at worst, a potential embarrassment, should we dare make a public statement off-message from the official party line.

As an association of ‘Formers’, however, one thing is certain. Come May 9, 2017, we will inherit another wave of new members, some joining us voluntarily, others gifted to us by the voters. It will take most of them a while to reintegrate into the real world. Hopefully, eventually, they will shed their system-imposed partisan baggage



“Hitting the books” as Speaker Designate before Parliamentary Opening in 1992.

(which is not the same as shedding one’s values, principles or personal opinions) and we can welcome them into our own unique political bubble – the non-partisan world of the ‘Formers.’

**(Joan Sawicki served as MLA for Burnaby-Willingdon from 1991 to 2001. She served as Speaker from 1992 to 1994 and Environment Minister from 1999 to 2000.)**

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# Why celebrate the 150th? BC just loves a party

By Jim Hume

Confederation Day for British Columbia was July 20, 1871. That was some four years after Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, on July 1, 1867, were informed by their English masters “their desire to be federally united into one dominion under the Crown of the United Kingdom” had at last been granted. London added it believed “such a union would conduce (sic) to the welfare of the provinces and promote the interests of the British Empire.”

So what were we doing massing in our thousands on the Inner Harbour Causeway on New Year's Eve to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Confederation seven months before its due date and four years before BC was entitled to join the club?

Simple. BC has never missed an opportunity to have a party. Back in the late 1960s and early 70s we had “Centennial” celebrations so often that the late Laurie Wallace - deputy provincial secretary in the W.A.C. Bennett years - earned the nickname “Mr. Centennial.”

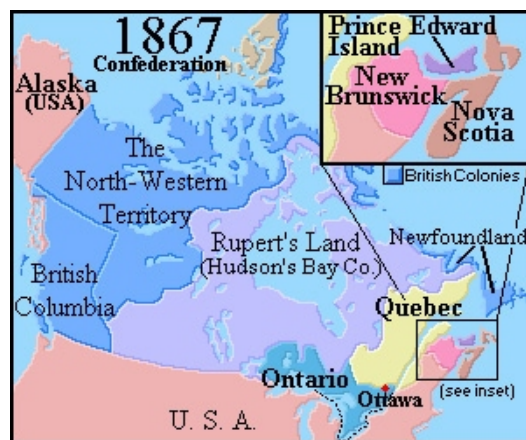
There was not much to celebrate in the summer of 1871 when British Columbians officially became Canadians. Times were hard and government finances were a mess. A first provincial government had been elected on October 16 with John Foster McCreight appointed Premier by Lieutenant Governor Joseph Trutch. McCreight, a lawyer, had been elected in Victoria with 373 votes of the 1,515 cast. Throughout the new province only of 3,804 citizens were entitled to vote in that first election.

Party politics did not exist, but bitter individual rivalries did and McCreight's tenure at the top was short. His first and only Throne Speech read by (and probably written by) Lieutenant Governor Trutch complimented the government for introducing an efficient and responsible administration. MLAs not happy with McCreight's appointment introduced an amendment deleting that statement – and won the vote 11-10. McCreight was out of office on a non-confidence vote after five weeks as Premier.

How tough were the times? For years BC had been on a roller coaster boom and bust gold discovery cycle. In 1861 Billy Barker struck it rich in the Cariboo launching the great gold rush that forced the building of the Cariboo Trail and other roads to the Interior and saw Victoria stagger from the confines of its stockade to eventually become the city of gardens. But that was many decades away and not before many more years of hard times for a young nation and even younger province.

In 1871, a few days before the proclamation that British Columbians were now Canadians, the British Colonist newspaper ran a two line classified advert reading: “Mule Team for Sale. Ten or twelve mules with wagons ...” The gold rush was over, recession was setting in.

The same day the local editor quoted extensively from an Ottawa newspaper welcoming BC to Canada and offering some sound advice for the west – and politicians in general – if the new Dominion was to prosper:



“.....Let us not forget that with the growth of our territorial importance there comes also additional responsibilities which call for the exercise on our part of constant watchfulness and unselfish patriotism. Now more than ever does it become our duty, not of statesmen only, but of every man in the community to frown down anything which may tend to cause division, and to do all that lies within its power to encourage sentiments of cordial union and good fellowship between the different portions of the Dominion. Now more than ever does it become our duty to rise superior to the ‘petty politics of the past’ and to accustom ourselves to those questions of imperial magnitude upon the true solution of which our future destiny depends.

“Bearing these things in mind, let men of all classes and creeds and political parties in Canada unite together in extending a cordial welcome to our fellow subjects in British Columbia, a welcome which will not be an idle profession merely but springing from the heart.....”

Eastern journalists were not unaware of British Columbia's reputation for frontier style politics with lines quickly and often dangerously drawn in the sand. They hoped the ‘birthday’ of the Pacific Province would be the ‘deathday’ of that spirit of faction which had been the perniciousness of the departing system.

“It is hoped that....British Columbians will realize the importance of sinking party lines which are no party lines (just) mere factionary differences.....It is in this spirit that the new dispensation should be entered upon – not in the cantankerous spirit of schism and discord...Those who would sow seeds of faction are the enemies of the people; and of all such let the people be aware.”

High standards, but attainable. Our ancestors took the first steps between 1867 and 1871. Maybe we can finish the job by our 200th anniversary with party lines obliterated and the common good well established as a worthier cause than political ambition.

**(More great yarns from Jim Hume, esteemed Honorary Life Member of the AFMLABC, can be found at [www.jimhume.ca/](http://www.jimhume.ca/).)**



# Public service defines Youth Parliament session

By Chris Coulson  
Premier and Minister of Archives  
88th British Columbia Youth Parliament

Public service is a concept familiar to all members of the Association of Former MLAs of BC. That concept was embodied in the proceedings of our members attending the 88th British Columbia Youth Parliament (BCYP) during the Christmas holiday period.

Ninety-seven of the best and brightest youth from around BC met in the BC Legislature from December 27th to the 31st to become Parliamentarians. Six pieces of legislation proposed by the government were scrutinized and passed with amendments, and in the tradition of public service, these acts will govern the service projects that BCYP's Cabinet and Membership will undertake throughout 2017.

Projects include seven Regional Youth Parliaments around the province for high school aged youth, and Camp Phoenix, a sleepover camp for youth who would otherwise not have the opportunity.

Debates at Session also included universal free tuition for post-secondary school and the value of the Kinder Morgan pipeline. These issues - along with many others - received spirited, respectful, and quality debate both inside and outside of the House. This year's membership shows



*Premier Chris Coulson, flanked by his cabinet, addresses the 88th British Columbia Youth Parliament presided over by Her Honour the Speaker Linda Reid.*

great promise both within and outside Parliament and the future is bright.

Many thanks are owed by all of Youth Parliament to MLA alumni who assist in organizing our annual session, and to the invaluable support of Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor Judith Guichon, her Honour the Speaker Linda Reid (who presided over our House as our 88th Speaker) and, of course, our own Alumni Association.

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# Let's hear it for functional parliamentary committees

By Tom Perry MD

"Time for a Change" was the successful campaign slogan of the New Democrats in 1991 when Mike Harcourt was elected premier and appointed a cabinet with more females than any other until the 2015 federal cabinet of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

I recall the eerie feeling of campaigning door to door and asking voters what issues were on their minds. All too often I got the jingoistic response: "It's time for a change!" Less chauvinistic or vitriolic than "Make America Great Again" or "Jail Hillary", yet disappointing to a democrat.

While I remain proud of many Harcourt government accomplishments, I still regret how poorly we fulfilled our promise to empower legislative committees. In five years as a backbench MLA, I recall one committee meeting that "elected" a chair and vice-chair, then adjourned. No substantive business was conducted – ever. Who needs MLAs to consider public policy, after all, when we have an executive council and a surfeit of "girls and boys in short pants?"

I had a different experience last November. The Parliamentary Committee on Health invited the UBC Therapeutics Committee to present during its ongoing examination of a National Pharmacare program. Studious readers of OOTD can see my testimony (representing the Therapeutics Initiative) and that of others at this site: <http://www.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?Language=e&Mode=1&Parl=42&Ses=1&DocId=8651955>

I wondered whether other ex-MLAs might agree that the House of Commons has found a way for individual representatives to contribute meaningfully to public policy by applying some of their skills in the forum of a legislative committee. For example, new Liberal MPs include an ER physician from Winnipeg, a hospital administrator from Oakville, and a young oncology nurse who is now Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, not to mention veteran Vancouver-Kingsway MP Don Davies who is NDP Health Critic.

I couldn't help thinking back to 1989 when I was first elected to the BC Legislature as a then-young physician. If the Minister of Health had at that time been able to accept my offer to help with improving public policy on Pharmacare, is it possible we might have accomplished something constructive?

Two of our esteemed colleagues responded immediately to an email that I sent late last year describing this experience. Here they are:



*Tom Perry, Chair of the Education Working Group of UBC's Therapeutics Initiative, enjoys a brief photo-op in The Chair on The Hill.*

*Photo courtesy of MP Don Davies.*

**Gordon Gibson** (MLA, North Vancouver-Capilano 1974-1979): "... I have testified numerous times to parliamentary committees, most recently on electoral reform a few months ago. I have found the Senate committees to be uniformly excellent and in search of some version of the truth, while the Commons committees seemed to be mostly in search of justifying their party lines and getting in digs at the other side. I am very happy to learn that you have found something better than that. Yours in hope, Gordon."

**Doug Symons** (MLA, Richmond Centre 1991 – 2001) knew my parents and my sister, so when he was also elected in 1991 we were naturally friendly, even if separated by two sword lengths:

Doug writes: "Tom was re-elected and I was elected in 1991, Tom with the NDP and I with the Liberals. Tom came to see me and told me of his work in their caucus to bring in a motion to declare BC a nuclear free zone. Could I get support from the Liberals for the motion? I would try but I pointed out that his motion did not mention anything about nuclear weapons on ships visiting our harbours. Tom wasn't sure whether his group would go that far.

"We agreed that I would bring this in as an amendment. The motion passed with only one vote against. This was the first, and I think only, time in my 10 years as an MLA that there was any real cooperation on both sides of the House. I served on a few of the House committees, as I am sure Tom did, but they were stacked according to which party had won the election, not on the expertise that the committee member might have.

"Tom's description of the House of Commons committees appears to be much better and should be adopted by our Legislature. Take the politics out of the committees as much as possible. I chaired the Transportation Committee of the Liberal Caucus. As such, when I traveled around the province, I would stop in to visit local mayors and district highways offices. At one office, the person I was speaking to told me he had a letter from the Minister of Highways that if I should come into this office he was to notify the minister before speaking to me. Having said that, he then asked: 'What do you want to know?'

"Governments nowadays have become more secretive and less accountable to those they serve. It is time to reverse this trend."

How do other ex-MLAs, or even sitting MLAs, feel about this issue? Could there be more to being a backbench or Opposition MLA than pure constituency work and electioneering? Does any BC party seriously advocate a more meaningful role for future MLAs in policy development and public engagement? The Editor and readers look forward to hearing from more of you.

**(Tom was the MLA for Vancouver-Point Grey and Vancouver-Little Mountain from 1989 to 1996, former NDP Health Critic, former Minister for Advanced Education, Training and Technology.)**

# Nuraney “epitomized class, grace, and principle”

John Nuraney, BC's first Muslim MLA and a tireless entrepreneur, philanthropist and diplomat, has died at 79.

Nuraney served two terms for the riding of Burnaby-Willington. The Kenyan-born business leader was first elected in 2001 as a member of the Liberal government of former premier Gordon Campbell.

He was re-elected in 2005, but lost his seat in 2009 to New Democrat Kathy Corrigan in the Burnaby-Deer Lake riding. After he relinquished his seat, he moved from Burnaby to Surrey and served as vice-president for the federal Liberal party's electoral district association for Cloverdale-Langley City.

Nuraney worked in the insurance industry in Kenya, London and Zurich before moving to Zaire in the late 1960s where he recorded, produced and distributed Zairian music. He immigrated to Canada in 1974 after the government in Zaire – now the Republic of Congo – nationalized businesses and expelled foreigners. In Canada, he worked in insurance, real estate and restaurant businesses, owning several A&W franchises in Metro Vancouver.

He spoke six languages: English, French, Swahili, Lingala, Hindi and Gujarati.

Nuraney's son Nick said his father passed away last November after suffering ongoing heart issues.

“He was charismatic, diplomatic, a real people person,” said Nick. “He really enjoyed meeting new people, speaking in front of people. He was just a very social guy.”

In 1974, he immigrated to Canada “with not much,” said Nick. After that, Nuraney got into the A&W restaurant business, before going into politics.

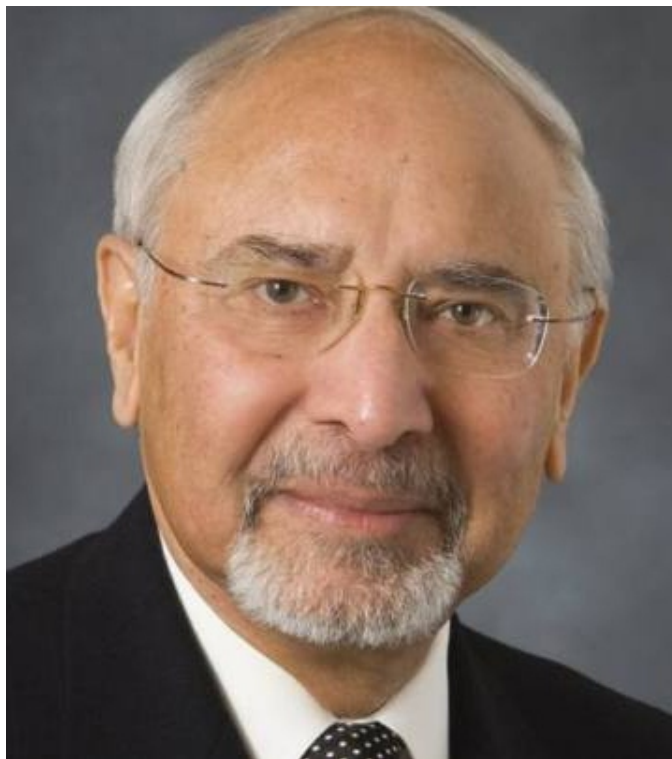
“His life was full of achievements,” said Nick. “I think his greatest achievement was his flexibility to take on new challenges and take it to maximum.”

However, said Nick, if we had been able to ask Nuraney himself, he would undoubtedly have said his family was his greatest achievement.

“It really would be his grandkids,” said Nick. “He loved his grandkids and spent a lot of time with them and really enjoyed being a grandfather.”

Premier Christy Clark said in a statement that Nuraney was a mentor and a friend, and the Ismaili community has lost one of its most respected leaders.

“When I think of John Nuraney, one word comes to mind: gentleman.



“No matter the interaction, John dealt with people in a way that made them feel important and honoured. He was a man who epitomized traits we don't often hear used anymore: class, grace, and principle.

“That spirit was a testament to who he was and was determined to always be. After having his business and assets seized by Mobutu Sese Seko's corrupt government in Zaire, John saw a better life for his family halfway around the world and seized the opportunity.

“British Columbia was lucky he chose us. John arrived here with nothing, but you can't keep a man of his talent down. He was a tireless entrepreneur, philanthropist, and champion of causes from the theatre to a school lunch program for hungry kids.

“John was more than just a colleague – he was a mentor, and a friend. My thoughts are with the Ismaili community, who lost one of their most respected leaders, but especially with John's family. Above all, John was a proud husband, dad, and grandfather. Through them his legacy of compassion will continue.”

Nuraney is survived by his wife Gulshan and their children, Nick, Asim and Naseem.

## It's the Year of the (Giant Inflatable Trump) Rooster at one Chinese factory

A factory in eastern China is racing to keep up with demand for its new clutch - giant inflatable rooster balloons that bear what some say is an uncanny resemblance to U.S. President Donald Trump.

The Zhejiang-based factory has already produced 30 of the inflatables, some of which are up to 20 meters (65.6 feet) in height, and all sporting puffed-up combs of gold.

Li Haiyan, manager at Caille Inflatable Products Co, said he still has plenty of orders to go before the Lunar New Year arrives on Jan. 28.

The likeness to Trump is pure coincidence and unintended, Li said, and many Chinese will only associate its appearance with that of this year's zodiac animal - the rooster.

Li would not say where the inspiration for the design came from, but local media have commented on the inflatables' remarkable likeness to a statue that appeared in front of a shopping mall in northern Shanxi province in late December.

Seattle-based U.S. graphic artist Casey Latiolais, the statue's designer, said he was commissioned to produce something rooster-like but agreed there were some similarities.



"I can definitely say Mr. Trump has a lot of similarities in that he likes to tweet," Latiolais said.

"And he also likes to tweet at or around sunrise, and if you take away the fact that roosters are kind of loud and self-absorbed, then I think you can start drawing similarities that way."

China is paying close attention to Trump. During his election campaign, the billionaire and former reality show star took an aggressive tone with China, blaming Beijing for U.S. job losses and vowing to call China a currency manipulator once in office.

*Reuters.com*

## 'Surreal' declared 2016 word of the year

In a word, 2016 was "surreal."

Surreal, meaning "marked by the intense irrational reality of a dream" was looked up so much by online users that Merriam-Webster has dubbed it the 2016 word of the year.

Surreal joined the Oxford English Dictionary's "post-truth" and Dictionary.com's "xenophobia" as top words of the year.

"Our word of the year is one that people came back to over and over again in response to several events, and it gives us a look at 2016, according to what sent us to the dictionary," Merriam-Webster editor-at-large Peter Sokolowski said in a video posted by the company on its website.

Merriam-Webster began tracking dictionary lookup trends in 1996, the same year the dictionary first landed online. The publisher said it ranks the word based on two criteria: a significant year-over-year increase in lookups online, and a high volume of lookups.

"Surreal" had its most significant spike in 2016 following the U.S. presidential election in November, Sokolowski said. Searches for the word first surged after the Brussels attack in March and then again in July after the Bastille Day massacre in Nice, France and a coup attempt in Turkey.

The word was first defined in a Merriam-Webster dictionary in 1967 and derives from the Surrealism artistic movement of the early 1900s.

In recent history, "surreal" rose to the top of searches after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks on New York and Washington, the Newtown shootings that left 26 children and educators at a Connecticut elementary school dead in 2012, the Boston Marathon bombings in 2013 and comedian Robin Williams' suicide in 2014, according to Merriam-Webster.

*Reuters.com*

# Len Norris



February 14, 1963

"Shall we decide who we'll vote for now ... or wait to be caught up in the emotional excitement of the hustings?"

## An invitation to donate to the Hugh Curtis Memorial Fund

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

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

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

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

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

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

Click to indicate whether you want to donate now or monthly and you will be taken through the steps to make your donation.

In the section for designation of your gift, click on the drop down menu to select the Hugh Curtis Memorial Fund.

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

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

There are several privacy permissions available. If you choose to include your name and address in the information which is sent to the Victoria Foundation, the Association will be pleased to acknowledge your gift.

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

# Member News

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

## Where Are They Now?

### Jeff Bray

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

This month we welcome Jeff Bray, who served as a Liberal MLA from 2001 to 2005, representing the riding of Victoria-Beacon Hill. He is currently the Principal of Capital Public Affairs, a boutique government relations and public affairs firm with a focus on assisting organizations understand and interact with government.



#### 1. What prompted you to seek public office?

My parents, especially my father, had always imparted in me how important democracy was, and how important voting was. As such, I developed an interest in politics from a relatively young age. As a young working person, I became frustrated with the then current federal government; enough that I joined a political party for the first time. I volunteered, helped in a campaign, and ultimately ended up a federal riding president. I loved the passion that people displayed when debating issues, and although people did not always agree, there was an excitement that we could debate issues intensely but all go for a beer afterwards as friends. This contrasted sharply with what the TV news of the day was showing from other parts of the world. When I moved to Victoria as a civil servant for the Ministry of Human Resources, the idea of becoming involved in provincial politics became more prevalent. Again I joined the local Victoria-Beacon Hill BC Liberal riding association. As a policy analyst, and at that time still part of the 'younger generation' I felt I could make a contribution to improving things in the province. So I put my name forward for the nomination in 2000.

#### 2. Which political figure most influenced you?

Well, although not a 'political' figure, I would say my father influenced me the most. In terms of politicians, the first person I heard saying something that was at least

different from the crowd was Preston Manning. As a Blue Tory, I certainly did not agree with everything he said. However, hearing someone speak about trying to change Parliament to give private members more say, of freer votes, of citizen engagement, of making Parliament more accountable to the voter, these were issues that excited me about the potential for politics in a better way. I guess that is why I was such a supporter of the Citizen's Assembly on Electoral Reform, and ultimately became the Chair of the Special Committee on the Citizen's Assembly on Electoral Reform.

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

Being the MLA with the smallest riding geographically speaking, and with the Legislature in my riding, little changed in my daily life as my commute etc. was the same as before. Although not necessarily a hard transition, the most immediate change was how comfortable people were providing me their feedback, regardless of where I was. At the checkout at the grocery store or walking down the street, people felt at ease offering their viewpoints, sometimes loudly, and occasionally not in an overly complimentary way. Learning that as soon as you stepped out the door you "were on." Having one's three-year-old daughter see "recall" demonstrations was probably the toughest transitional issue.

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

I did not really find many challenges in returning to private life. Again, I was lucky to be a local MLA and that made things easier. As a provincial employee, I was on leave from my job, so had that available to me. I was offered the opportunity to be the Executive Director of the Government Caucus after the 2005 election, so really only had to change hats. My work address (The Leg) stayed the same.

#### 5. What was the biggest lesson that has stuck with you since being an MLA?

As a former politician, I will answer this single question with multiple answers:

- 1) That public service matters.
- 2) That I never found an elected person, either

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provincially or municipally, who was not committed to making things better for their constituents, regardless of partisan affiliation.

3) That we spent so much time sweating small things within the Leg that the outside world did not give a hoot about. The world outside politics is much bigger than the world inside politics.

4) That there is room inside the tent for everyone.

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

After I left the Government Caucus I entered the private sector for the first time. I had my own public affairs firm, and then for several enjoyable years was the Manager of Government and Regulatory Affairs for Shaw Communications in BC. Currently, I am again Principal in my own firm, Capital Public Affairs.

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

I still work fulltime, and we still have a 16-year-old at home, so life is pretty full. I do love to ski and play golf (or

a close facsimile at least). I am also active in several non-profit boards. I am Vice Chair of the Royal BC Museum Foundation, Vice Chair of the Garth Homer Society (providing day programs for adults with developmental disabilities), Vice President of the North Quadra Community Association, on the Garth Homer Foundation Board, and Vice President of this organization.

I was encouraged (cajoled) to join by the late Hugh Curtis. I enjoyed my Saturday breakfasts with him and Rob Lee. I saw through him the value of the Association as we were all persons who had the privilege of serving, had gained experience in public policy, and could work with others from all political persuasions to further the values of democratic participation.

As former MLAs, we have unique insights and are able to rise above partisan positions to work collaboratively. Our support of the Young Parliamentarians is a perfect example. It is also rewarding to meet others who have been in the Legislature, hear their stories, and share that unique bond that only a small fraction of citizen's have, being an MLA.

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## Holiday pix



This photo is of Bev and yours truly on the beach in Puerto Escondido, Mexico. We've been spending January and February here for about 18 years. Puerto has sensational weather, it's safe, quiet and a lot of fun. Cheers, Bruce Strachan

## A Confederation primer for those who slept through History 101

On July 1, 1867 Canada became a country with four provinces – New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario and Quebec. The story of Canada was truly that of a work in progress. It would take more than a century to add the other six provinces and three territories that make up Canada today.

In the 1500s explorers from Europe came to North America to claim lands rich in resources. Soon settlements began and the two European countries that figured the most in the settlement were Britain and France.

When the Seven Years War ended in 1763, France had to surrender its North American footholds to Britain. From this time on Britain had control of most of North America.

At the time of the war with France most of Britain's colonies in North America were in what is now the United States. However, these 13 colonies spurned their British masters and, in 1775, began a struggle for independence. The Americans won; the British recognized the United States as its own country and regrouped in the territory left over called British North America ... Canada almost 100 years later.

In the 1860s there were several British colonies: British Columbia, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and the Province of Canada. These colonies faced many problems.

The Province of Canada contained the most people and would become Ontario and Quebec. The Province of Canada did not run smoothly because the English-speaking and French-speaking halves had different ideas about how things should be run. Leaders from both decided that joining the other colonies might mitigate their political differences.

In order for their economies to do well, the colonies needed to be able to sell their goods to other markets that were scarce. One solution was to bring all the colonies together to more easily facilitate trade.

The relationship between British North America and the United States, never stable, became even worse when Britain supported the South in the American Civil War. The North won, of course, and many Americans wanted to get even and take over all of what is now Canada.

The fear of the United States strengthened the call for confederation. As well, Britain didn't want to have to pay the cost of defending its colonies. It encouraged Confederation, thinking the United States would be less likely to attack a unified, self-governing country.

For all of these reasons the Province of Canada began to plan for Confederation.

Leaders from New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island had already thought about joining together in a Maritime union and were planning a conference. The Province of Canada asked if it could come to the meeting to propose a larger union. The Maritime colonies agreed and they met at Charlottetown on Prince Edward Island in 1864. This was the first of the three conferences that led to Confederation in 1867.

The Province of Canada convinced the Maritimers to consider a larger union and a second conference was held in Quebec City a month later. During this conference the leaders had to work out how the new country would be run. The decisions they came to were called the Quebec Resolutions. Although Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland both took part, after the conference they both decided not to join Confederation at that time.

The last conference took place in London in 1866. Leaders from New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and the Province of Canada arrived with a rough draft of the Quebec Resolutions and came up with a final agreement, the British North America Act.

