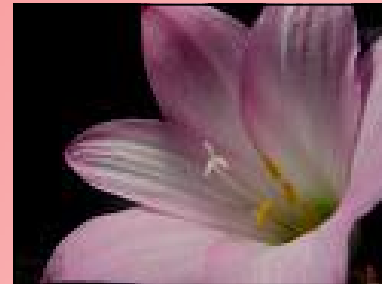


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SUMMER 2008

# Some Honourable Members

Former Manitoba MLAs Newsletter



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SOME HONOURABLE  
MEMBERS"  
is published by the  
Association of Former  
Manitoba MLAs



## Editor's Foreword by Len Evans, Editor Brandon East (1969—1999)



This is the eighteenth issue of our Newsletter and again we bring you some of the highlights of the Association's activities as well as news about some of our former colleagues over the past several months.

The Luncheon Group session held in May was well attended and heard Dr. Benarroach, Dean of the Faculty of Business and Economics at the University of Winnipeg speaking on the topic of the international value of the Canadian dollar.

The Association tendered a reception for the 2007 Youth Parliament which was held in the Legislative Assembly between Christmas and New Year. As in previous years we sponsored a "Bear Pit" Session with six former MLAs present to answer any and all questions of the young parliamentarians. This year the panel of "Bears" included Marianne Cerrilli (Radisson--1990-2003), Ed Mandrake (Assiniboia --1988-90), Rene Toupin (Springfield ---1969-77), Mike Radcliffe (River Heights--1995-99) , David Newman (Riel--1995-99) and Gary Kowalski (The Maples--1993-99).

In our "Where Are They Now?" Section we feature former Premier Howard Pawley (Selkirk --1969-1988) who visited Winnipeg in May and had an informal gathering with several of his former colleagues including Jerry Storie (Flin Flon--1981-94) who resides in Brandon and John Bucklaschuk (Gimli--1981-88) who came in from Gimli.

Featured in our Section covering former prominent provincial cabinet ministers is Errick Willis who became the leader of the Manitoba Conservative Party and went on to become Premier and then Lieutenant Governor. Our series on "Women in Manitoba Political History" includes Margaret Kovnantz who was the first woman M.P. elected from Manitoba and who was also the daughter of Edith Rogers, our first woman MLA in our Legislature.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- ◆ LUNCHEON GROUP---tentatively scheduled for September at the Norwood Hotel. Details will be mailed to members.
- ◆ LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR'S RECEPTION--Thursday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> between 5 and 7 p.m.
- ◆ ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION--Thursday, November 13<sup>th</sup> at 11 a.m. in the Norwood Hotel to be followed by a reception and lunch. Arrangements are being made for a guest speaker

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS

**MICHAEL BENARROCH PRESENTS ANALYSIS OF THE INTERNATIONAL VALUE OF THE LOONIE TO THE DISCUSSION GROUP**



At its luncheon meeting of May 13th in the Norwood Hotel the Association's "Discussion Group" heard a presentation by Dr. Benarroch on the factors affecting the international value of the Canadian dollar.

Linda Asper, vice-president and activities coordinator, opened the meeting welcoming the large group in attendance before turning the proceedings over to Len Evans, President, who introduced Dr. Benarroch, Dean of the Faculty of Business and Economics at the University of Winnipeg.

Professor Benarroch has had a long and distinguished academic career teaching at Carleton University, the University of British Columbia, the University of Manitoba and lastly at the University of Winnipeg. He has written on a wide range of topics in economics including trade barriers, foreign aid, international capital mobility, wage differentials and north-south trade.

Dr. Benarroch outlined several factors that have caused the value of the loonie to rise in recent times including the reduction of the federal debt, where Canada has become the least indebted as a percentage of the GNP of all the G8 nations. In addition inflation has been kept low while the economy is stable. At the same time in the U.S. the federal debt

has risen sharply resulting in less confidence in its dollar. In comparison Canada, both at the federal and provincial level looks good. Also, the U.S. housing market has collapsed causing new housing construction to fall off.

Since this industry accounts for one-fifth of the U.S. economy, there have been repercussions in other sectors. The actions of the U.S. Federal Reserve to lower interest rates is a reaction to the decline and potential for further slow-down the economy. Because our Canadian economy is more stable our interest rate levels are likely to stay higher which in turn tends to strengthen the loonie.

At the present time Manitoba's economy is performing well now achieving the second highest growth rate of all the provinces. While our exports to the U.S. have grown by about 7 per cent in the past year they have jumped 37 per cent to Asia. Our exports are in high demand including our agricultural products such as animal feed; our mining output such as nickel; plus the production of our aviation and bus manufacturing sectors.

Dr. Benarroch predicted that given the present state of our economy Canadians will continue to realize a continuation of a relatively high valued dollar.

A question and answer period followed the lecture.

The meeting concluded with Len Evans presenting Dr. Benarroch with a certificate of appreciation from the Association

**George Henderson  
(Pembina 1969—1977)**



GEORGE LINDSAY HENDERSON With his family by his side, George passed away on Wednesday, June 4, 2008 at the age of 92 at the Manitou Care Home. He was born in Homewood, Manitoba on March 18, 1916 to John and Annie Henderson. He will be remembered and sadly missed by his wife, Gertie (nee McCauley); his children, Jim, Donna Black (Don), Lindsay (Janice), David (Janis); his grandchildren, Charlyn Stang (Brian), Cindy Locke (Steve), Crystal Henderson (Glen Friesen), Michelle Jacobs (Wynand) and Sean Henderson; and great-grandchildren, Brenna Stang, Andrew and Jessica Locke and Cade Friesen. He is also survived by two sisters Sadie McKinley and Isabel Edgar. He was predeceased by his first wife Agnes (Cassels); his second wife Clara (Balfour); his brothers Bob and Archie; and sisters Mary (Bannister) and Kay (Ferris). George was a very successful, progressive farmer, real estate appraiser, broker and politician. He believed in community service and was President of the Chamber of Commerce, Mayor of Manitou and the Conservative MLA for the Pembina Riding from 1969 to 1977.

**“All schools, all colleges, have two great functions: to confer, and to conceal, valuable knowledge. The theological knowledge which they conceal cannot justly be regarded as less valuable than that which they reveal. That is, when a man is buying a basket of strawberries it can profit him to know that the bottom half of it is rotten”**

**Mark Twain**





**David Blake  
(Minnedosa 1971—1988)**



DAVID passed away on February 25, 2008. He was born on March 20, 1925. David was predeceased by his parents, William and Isabella, and brothers, Albert, Douglas, and sister-in-law Helen, Dave leaves to cherish his memory, his wife Gwen; sons, Darren and Christopher (Lisa), and daughters, Naomi Blake Marshall (Garry), Kelly Blake (Marguerite), Colleen Nelson (Leonard); grandchildren, Jordan and Kirsten Nelson, Dylan Blake-Marshall and Samuel Nyberg-Blake; cousin Cyril Blake; brother-in-law Paul Bergman and family, many nieces and nephews; and his many dear friends across the country. Dave was born and raised near Rapid City, MB on the family farm he loved. In 1941, he joined the Royal Bank of Canada until enlisting the following year in the R.C.A.F. and training as a navigator. Although he did not serve overseas, he was a champion of the war effort and continued his military service after the war as Captain and Paymaster with the Armed Forces 6th Field Engineer Regiment in Winnipeg. He returned to the bank and in a career that spanned 41 years, he served many communities throughout Manitoba most notably Glenboro, Selkirk, Swan River and Minnedosa. Posted to Flin Flon in 1948, he met Gwen Bergman (the boss's daughter). After a two year courtship, they married on August 16, 1951 and began their life together. It was his laughter, gregarious nature and Clarke Gable good looks that drew her to him. Naomi Karen was born in Flin Flon; Kelly Elizabeth in Winnipeg and Dave received his first appointment as Branch Manager in Glenboro the spring of 1958. He opened new branches for the Royal Bank in Selkirk and Swan River. In October of 1960, the family, including 10-day old William Darren, moved to Selkirk where Colleen Marie and Christopher David were born. Dave was a great dad. As a role model and with his support, encouragement and friendship, he nurtured their love and respect. He and Gwen enjoyed a lot of travel over the years including Europe, Iceland, many parts of the U.S. and coast to coast in Canada. Dave was always very active in the communities in which he lived. He was a Mason and Shriner for over 20 years. He curled, shot skeet, was a Rotarian and a dedicated member of Duck's Unlimited. He served as Chairman of the Industrial Commission of Selkirk. He was Past-President of the Royal Canadian Legion Branches in both Selkirk and Minnedosa and of the Kiwanis Clubs in Selkirk and Swan River, and after several years with the Manitoba Chamber of Commerce, was elected President in 1970 - 1971. In 1971 upon the request of former Progressive Conservative Premier Walter Weir, MLA for Minnedosa, Dave entered public life. In a by-election with record voter turnout, he became the first Royal Banker (perhaps the first banker in Canada) to be elected to a provincial legislature. He served the constituents he loved for 17 years both in and out of government. He also acted as Caucus Chairman; Chairman of Public Accounts and was on the Board of Directors of Autopac and Mackenzie Seeds. Dave had an immense love and respect for the people, wildlife and landscape of this province. He was in his glory flying into a wilderness fishing camp with his buddies, sitting point deer hunting or training one of his many Laddies to retrieve a targeted fowl. Retirement in 1988 did not slow him down. His sense of loyalty and humour were always evident to all. Dave had an ageless quality that attracted those old and young to seek out and enjoy his company. It was these qualities that defined his last 20 years. Golf, hunting, fishing, crib, a little gambling and the occasional rum coke press were just a few of the many pursuits enjoyed with his large circle of friends and family.

**“This is my simple religion. There is no need for temples; no need for complicated philosophy. Our own brain, our own heart is our temple; the philosophy is kindness “**

**HH THE DALI LAMA**



**Former Members and Friends enjoying the Luncheon**



**Al and Pat Mackling in conversation with Linda Asper**



**Dr. Benarroach receiving Certificate of Appreciation from Len Evans**



**Marty Dolin, Al Mackling with Marianne Mihychuk**

**“Conservatism stands on man’s confessed limitations; reform on his indisputable infinitude; conservatism on circumstance; liberalism on power; one goes to make an adroit member of the social frame; the other to postpone all things to the man himself; conservatism is debonair and social; reform is individual and imperious.”**

**Ralph Waldo Emerson**



SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS

**ASSOCIATION SPONSORS BEAR PIT SESSION AND RECEPTION AT THE 2007 YOUTH PARLIAMENT**



On December 28, 2007 once again the Association of Former Manitoba MLAs sponsored a “Bear Pit” Session at the Youth Parliament of Manitoba held in the Legislative Chamber.

Opening remarks were made by representatives of the YPM and by Len Evans, President of the Association. The Board of Directors of the Youth Parliament included Katie Szilagyi, Premier; Dana Gregoire, Speaker; Amy Dhillon, Deputy Premier; Akosua Matthews, Deputy Speaker; and Matt Bolley, House Leader.

Prior to the “Bear Pit” Session, Herold Driedger, Coordinator of the High School Essay Contest, and Len Evans, President of the Association, presented cash prizes and certificates to the three winners for 2007. The winners were Katrine Dilay (First Prize), Krupa Kotecha (Second Prize) and Julien Gauthier (Third Prize).

**BEAR PIT SESSION**

The former MLAs participating in the “Bear Pit” Session were: Rene Toupin, (Springfield, 1969-77) and former Minister of Health; Mike Radcliffe (River Heights, 1995-99) and former Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs; David Newman (Riel, 1995-99) and Minister of Energy and Mines and Minister of Northern Affairs; Marianne Cerilli (Radisson, 1990-2003); Ed Mandrake (Assiniboia, 1988-90); and Gary Kowalski (The Maples, 1993-99).

Speaker George Hickes and Youth Speaker, Dana Gregoire, co-chaired the questioning. The young parliamentarians were free to ask any questions which they were interested in for an hour and a half. Some of the questions asked were:

- \*What is the most important thing you accomplished while being an MLA?
- \*How can we keep our young people in Manitoba?
- \*What was the biggest issue for your constituents?
- \*What use could be made of the revenues that were lost from the cut in the GST ?
- \*What should the provincial policy be with regard to the financing of higher education?

**In Memoriam**



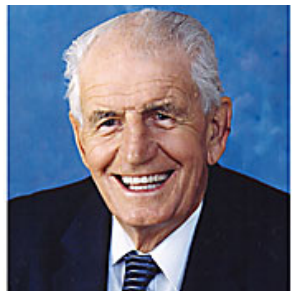
**Norma Price (Heeney)  
(Assiniboia 1977—1981)**



NORMA, beloved wife of John passed away peacefully on February 24, 2008 at Victoria General Hospital. Norma was born in Winnipeg on August 19, 1920. Norma finished her primary education at the Immaculate Conception parochial school and completed her education at St. Mary's Academy. Norma started in the hospitality business at the Viscount Gort Hotel in Winnipeg. She quickly rose to become the first woman in Canada to be a General Manager of a major hotel. She later moved to the International Inn where she was the Sales and Public Relations Manager for ten years. Norma was as a Provincial Progressive Conservative MLA in 1977, she was the only woman elected to the legislature in 1977 election, only the sixth woman ever elected to the legislature, and only the second female Cabinet Minister in the 111 year history. She was Premier Sterling Lyon's Minister of Labour and latterly the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Historic Resources. In the 1970s Norma switched careers, working for the Sun Life Assurance Company as an underwriter. She was instrumental in having Sun Life's human resource manuals revised to make them gender neutral. Norma found time to give back to her Winnipeg, of which she was a strong supporter. She was Chairman of the home visiting program for the Prison Chaplain's Volunteers for ten years helping federal prisoners manage their relationships while they were in prison. She donated generously of her time for the United Way, Meals on Wheels and various church fundraisers. Norma received numerous awards in her life including one of the Women of The Year awards in 1977 presented by the YWCA. She also was honored in 1996 as one of the first inductees in the Women Business Owners of Manitoba Hall of Fame. Along the way she became a very good golfer, regularly shooting in the nineties with the odd trip into the eighties. By the end of her golfing career she had scored three holes in ones. Although Norma touched many people during her busy career and charitable works her love and dedication towards her children was her first priority.

**Albert Vielfaure  
(La Verendrye (1962—1969))**

Albert passed away at the age of 84 years on December 12, 2007. He was born in La Broquerie on April 6, 1923, where he resided all of his life. He was predeceased by his parents, by his wife Solange, in



2006, after 55 years of marriage, his brother Antonio in 2006, his brother Aimé in 2004, his sister Louise in 1968, his brother Guy in 1963, his brother-in-law Gérard Tétrault in 2005, his brother-in-law J.A. Kirouac in 1985, and his beloved grandchild, Lynne, in 1992. Albert's first love was his family. There was nothing he loved more than a family gathering where everybody was present and lively discussions went on. Albert left behind a legacy of wisdom, values and a wonderful life lived to the fullest. His community was also of great concern and a priority to him. He participated in probably every community group that existed over his many years in La Broquerie. His interest in agriculture also lead him to many appointments in the field of agriculture, most noticeably the National Farm Products Marketing Council in Ottawa for 22 years and the Manitoba Hog Board for many years. In 1979, Albert was named Farmer of the Year in Manitoba. He received the Prix Riel in 2001, was inducted in the Manitoba Agriculture Hall of Fame in 2002, received the Queen's Jubilee Medal in 2002, and was awarded the Prix Entrepreneur in 2003. Albert was a great traveller. He and his wife travelled intensely visiting many continents. He always tried to learn more so he could help his fellow citizens with new techniques and methods in agriculture. His children will always remember the wonderful slide shows upon their return which was an education in itself. Albert was a devout Catholic and contributed generously to his faith and church. Albert leaves to mourn his loss his five children: Jocelyne (George Burrow), Monique (John Mackenzie), Paul (Gisele Leclerc) and their five children, Miguel, Kristine, Chantal and her daughter Izabela, Sofie and fiancé Yvan, and Ghyslyn; his son Denis (Nicole Bonneville) and their three sons, éric, Joel and Jérémie; and his son Claude (Barb Magnusson) and their sons Réjean and Alex. He also leaves behind a brother, Louis Vielfaure, White Father missionary for 40 years in Africa; his three sisters, Annette Kirouac; Lina (J.B. Grégoire), and Florence (D. Torcutti) and sisters-in-law Hermine Freynet Vielfaure, Florence Rocan Vielfaure, Madeleine Tétrault, Phyllis Ruttig Buzahora, and many nephews and nieces.

# ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

Have you ever wondered why.....

- ...why the sun lightens our hair, but darkens our skin?
- ...why you don't ever see the headline "Psychic Wins Lottery"?
- ...why "abbreviated" is such a long word?
- ...why doctors call what they do "practice"?
- ...why you have to click on "Start" to stop Windows?
- ...why lemon juice is made with artificial flavor, while dishwashing liquid is made with real lemons?
- ...why the man who invests all your money is called a broker?
- ...why there isn't mouse-flavored cat food?
- ...who tastes dog food when it has a "new & improved" flavor?
- ...why Noah didn't swat those two mosquitoes?
- ...why they sterilize the needle for lethal injections?
- ...why they don't make the whole plane out of the material used for the indestructible black box ?
- ...why sheep don't shrink when it rains?
- ...why they are called apartments when they are all stuck together?
- ...if con is the opposite of pro, is Congress the opposite of progress?
- ...why they call the airport "the terminal" if flying is so safe?



## FORMER MLAs PARTICIPATE IN BEAR PIT SESSION



Gary Kowalski  
(The Maples 1993-99)



Rene Toupin  
(Springfield 1969-77)



Marianne Cerrilli  
(Radisson 1990-2003)



David Newman  
(Riel 1995-99)



Mike Radcliffe  
(River Heights 1995-99)



Ed Mandrake  
(Assiniboia 1988-90)

“The perfection of wisdom, and the end of true philosophy is to proportion our wants to our possessions, our ambitions to our capacities, we will then be a happy and virtuous people”

Mark Twain



SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS

RECEPTION

The evening concluded with refreshments being served in the Rotunda at which time there was an opportunity for the "young" and the "old" parliamentarians to exchange views on a one to one basis



SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS

bell's philosophy of "minimal government" was rejected by the more progressive figures in the PC ranks, the most vocal of whom was Dufferin Roblin (grandson of former Premier Sir Rodmond P. Roblin). In 1949, Roblin was elected to the legislature for Winnipeg South as an anti-coalition Progressive Conservative.

Under pressure from his party and disturbed by the Campbell government's inaction on various issues, Willis resigned from cabinet on August 19, 1950. At a party convention in October, the Progressive Conservatives voted 215 to 17 to leave the coalition. Willis, who also fended off a leadership challenge from George Hastings at the

convention, once again became leader of the opposition.

Willis was re-elected for Turtle Mountain in the provincial election of 1953, but the provincial Progressive Conservative organization was weak, and Campbell's Liberal-Progressives won a decisive majority. MLA J. Arthur Ross forced a leadership convention in 1954; at this convention, Roblin defeated Willis to become party leader.

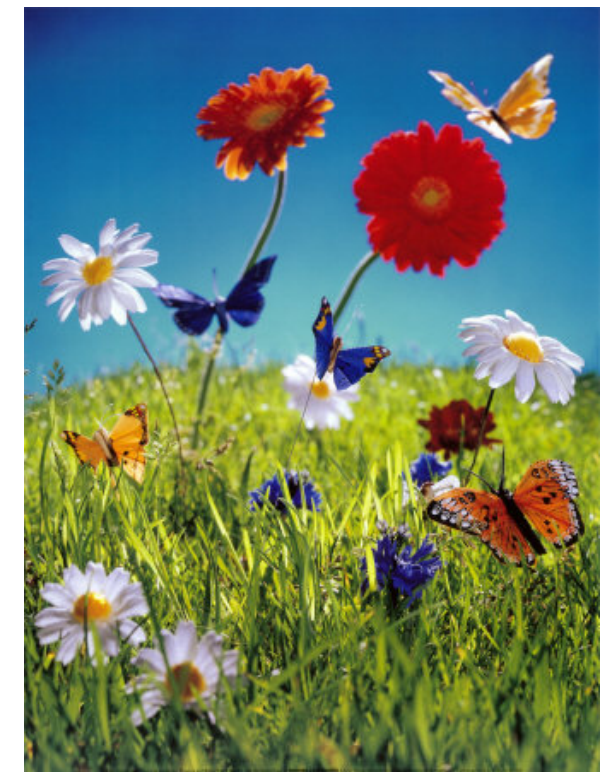
Willis continued as a member of the legislature after this loss. He was re-elected in 1958, and served in Roblin's minority government as Minister of Public Works, Minister of Agriculture and Deputy Premier. Re-elected

again in 1959, he continued to serve in cabinet until January 15, 1960, when he was appointed as the province's lieutenant governor. He remained in this position until August 31, 1965.

Willis died on January 9, 1967.

Source: Wikipedia

"Success consists of going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm"  
Winston Churchill





## PROMINENT PROVINCIAL CABINET MINISTERS IN MANITOBA'S POLITICAL HISTORY

**Errick Willis**



**Errick French Willis**

(March 21, 1911—January 9, 1967)

Served as a leader of the province's Conservative Party between 1936 and 1954, and was responsible for beginning and ending the party's alliance with the Liberal-Progressive Party. He also served as Manitoba's Lieutenant Governor between 1960 and 1965.

Willis was born in Boissevain, Manitoba. He was the son of R.G. Willis, himself the leader of the Conservative Party from 1919 to 1920.

The younger Willis received a BA from the University of Toronto, an MA from the University of Manitoba and an LL.B from the University of Manitoba. He subsequently worked as a barrister and farmer, and was involved in local Masonic organizations.

Willis began his political career at the federal level. He was a Conservative, but used the label "Progressive-Conservative" in Souris in the election of 1926, and was defeated by a straight

Progressive candidate. He won the riding in the 1930 election, again having contested it as a "Progressive-Conservative" and served for five years as a back-bench supporter of R.B. Bennett's Conservative government. In 1932, outside of politics, Willis was a member of the Canadian curling team that won a gold medal in the curling event at the 1932 Winter Olympics

He was defeated in the 1935 election, losing by three votes to the Liberal candidate.

Willis was acclaimed as leader of the provincial Conservative Party on June 9, 1936 replacing W. Sanford Evans. He was elected for the riding of Deloraine in a provincial election held later in the year.

The election of 1936 was very close, with John Bracken's Liberal-Progressives winning 23 seats in the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba and Willis's Conservatives winning 16. Another 16 seats were won by smaller parties. There were rumours of a Bracken-Willis coalition after the election, but this plan was rejected by the Conservative leader.

After the start of World War II, the idea of an all-party coalition was revived by Bracken's government. The Conservatives, Social Credit and Cooperative Commonwealth Federation joined Bracken's Liberal-

Progressives in a "non-partisan government", meant to demonstrate the united resolve of the province. Willis was sworn in as Minister of Public Works on November 4, 1940. When CCF leader Seymour J. Farmer resigned in 1942, Willis also became the Minister of Labour holding this position until 1944.

The coalition was generally advantageous to the Conservative Party, which was renamed the Progressive Conservative (PC) Party in the mid-1940s. Its ministers were allowed a fair degree of autonomy, and were fully integrated into the province's governing structure, unlike the CCF and Social Credit ministers, who were marginalized. The party maintained an identity separate from the Liberal-Progressives throughout this period. In a 1946 manifesto, its members pledged to support an increase in old-age pensions, a decrease in tariff rates, and further transportation openings to the province's north. Willis, supported by the Liberal-Progressives, was re-elected by acclamation in 1941, 1945 and 1949.

There were some Progressive Conservatives who opposed the coalition, particularly after Liberal-Progressive Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) Douglas Campbell became the province's premier in 1948. The Conservatives had nominated Willis to be premier, but Campbell defeated him in a vote among coalition MLAs. Camp-



## WHERE ARE THEY NOW

### HOWARD PAWLEY AND FRIENDS

On Friday, May 16th some colleagues from the Pawley Government era gathered to greet former Premier, Howard Pawley and his wife, Adele, who came for a visit from Windsor, Ontario, where they now reside. Included in the group from outside of Winnipeg were John Bucklaschuk and his wife, who now live in Gimli where they have a real estate business; and Jerry Storie, now Dean of Education at Brandon University. Other former MLAs in attendance were Muriel Smith, Jay Cowan, Myrna Phillips, Doreen Dodick, Roland Penner and Len Evans.



Howard and Adele Pawley with Doreen Dodick



Jerry Storie and Muriel Smith



From left to right are Mrs. Bucklaschuk, Len Evans, Roland Penner, John Bucklaschuk, Adele Pawley, Howard Pawley, Doreen Dodick, Myrna Phillips, Jay Cowan, Jerry Storie and Muriel Smith



SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS

**WHERE ARE THEY NOW  
CONTINUED**



**MYRNA PHILLIPS  
(Wolseley 1981-1988)**

After her six years as MLA, including two years as Speaker of the Legislature, Myrna Phillips continued her activity as a labour activist and committed feminist. She returned to employment in the Department of Employment & Income Assistance until her retirement in 2001.

During those next 12 years she worked in Student Social Allowance and the Office for Persons' with Disabilities assisting individuals to get the education they needed for employment. At this time she served on the M.G.E.U. Board as Director for the Social Science Component and was elected as employee

rep on the Civil Service Superannuation Board. Myrna was honoured when her Union elected her as an Honourary Life Member.

In 1996-1998 she was asked to work in Palestine as Director of the Legislative Council Program. Funded by the National Democratic Institute in Washington, D.C., this program was designed to assist the Members develop their parliamentary procedures, rules of order and committee structure of the newly established Legislative Council.

Her Palestine experience took her to Hungary, the Republic of Georgia, Jordan & Egypt and whetted her appetite for travel. Since retiring, Myrna has visited Australia, New Zealand, Laos, Vietnam, Cuba, Turkey, Spain, Italy, Greece and Holland.

Much of her time the last several years has been devoted to caring for her ailing parents. She also served as a member of the Motor Transport Board and presently is a Commissioner on the Board of the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission. She remains active in the N.D.P., the Coalition for Reproductive Choice, and since moving downtown to Fred Douglas Place, she has joined the Resident's Council

**"Philosophy consists very largely of one philosopher arguing that all others are jackasses. He usually proves it, and I should add that he also usually proves that he is one himself"**

**H.L. Mencken**

In 1962 she decided to become a candidate for federal office. Convinced that she could make a significant contribution, she later wrote, "Between the years 1956 and 1961 I had found that our image abroad had deteriorated to such an extent that I was anxious to do anything I could to serve my country." As a candidate for the Liberal Party, she lost her first election in 1962 by 392 votes, but won the following year in the riding of Winnipeg South. Her platform included the expansion of technical schools and of retraining programs for workers and the provision of additional financial aid for students. She wanted Winnipeg to participate more prominently on the national scene and to see Canada more active in international affairs. Konantz was the first woman M.P. from Manitoba and one of the four women elected that year.

In 1963 she was appointed to the 18th General Assembly of the United Nations Third Committee on Social, Economic and Humanitarian Problems. In this capacity she helped formulate a declaration regarding the elimination of racial discrimination. Two years later, she was again chosen as a UN delegate. In August of 1963, as part of her parliamentary duties, she toured some of the Indian reservations of Northern Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta and British Columbia.

She lost her bid to win a second term as M.P. for Winnipeg South in 1965, but looked on this defeat as an opportunity to devote more time to her United Nations activities. She had been National Vice-Chairman for the Canadian Committee of UNICEF from 1959 to 1965, and in 1965 was elected National Chairman. In that capacity she represented Canada at the Nobel Peace Prize ceremonies in Oslo, Norway, during which UNICEF was awarded a Nobel prize. She spent most of the next eighteen months traveling abroad. In 1965 she went to British Guiana to participate in the twinning of their capital city with Ottawa as part of the ceremonies of the International Year of Co-operation. The following year she traveled to Turkey and Tunisia to study developing countries which had initiated self-help programs with UNICEF. She also visited England and Ireland. After returning, she again toured the country speaking to various groups and organizations in support of the United Nations. During a speaking engagement in the Maritime Provinces, she suffered a heart attack and died in May 1967.

*Source "University of Manitoba Archives and Special Collections"*

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## WOMEN IN MANITOBA POLITICAL HISTORY— Margaret Konantz

Margaret McTavish Konantz was born Margaret McTavish Rogers in 1899, the daughter of Robert Arthur Rogers and Edith McTavish Rogers. Her father, who had been a successful private banker in Parkhill, Ontario, moved to Winnipeg in 1890 where he established a wholesale produce company. Fifteen years later, he opened the Crescent Creamery Company which he operated successfully until his death. Her mother was the daughter of Donald McTavish, and a great-granddaughter of Sir George Simpson, Governor-in-Chief of the Hudson's Bay Company Territories from 1839 to 1860. In 1920 Edith Rogers was elected to the Provincial Legislative Assembly, thereby becoming the first woman in Manitoba to hold such a position. She was an MLA from 1920 to 1932.

Margaret Konantz grew up at 64 Nassau Street in south Winnipeg. She attended the Model School, Bishop Strachan School and Havergal College in Toronto. After completing her studies at Bishop Strachan School, she attended Miss Spence's School in New York. In 1922 she married Gordon Konantz, an American who, after serving with the forces in France, moved to Winnipeg. They had three children, Barbara, William and Gordon.

In the late 1920's Margaret Konantz began collecting books for the Winnipeg Hospital Aid Society, thus initiating a career of service which was to continue throughout her life. She was a founding member of the Junior League of Winnipeg and eventually became a major fund-raiser for that organization. She was President of the Junior League from 1928 to 1930. During this time she was instrumental in organizing the Junior League Thrift Shop, and subsequently served on its board. Through the years she held many offices with the following volunteer organizations: Winnipeg General Hospital; White Cross Guild; Convalescent Hospital; Crippled Children's Society; Community Chest of Greater Winnipeg; Junior League of Winnipeg; International Junior League Association; Central Volunteer Bureau; Council of Social Agencies; Canadian Welfare Council; and the Canadian Centenary Committee.

With the outbreak of World War IIP Margaret Konantz became even more involved with volunteer work. She organized the Patriotic Salvage Corps, Bundles for Britain and the Women's Volunteer Services in Western Canada. Because of her intense involvement with the war effort in Canada, she was chosen as one of a team of four women sent to Britain in 1944 by the Canadian Government to participate in the work of the Women's Voluntary Service.

Shortly afterwards, in 1946, she was awarded the Order of the British Empire for her outstanding contributions in this area. Deeply impressed with the W.V.S and the work it was doing in war-torn England, she wrote a lengthy report on the W.V.S. for the Canadian government on returning to Canada. This later became a handbook for the Women's Voluntary Service. After the death of her husband in 1954, Margaret Konantz embarked on a series of extensive tours to foreign countries. During her travels in South America she wrote descriptive letters rich in detail and local colour. In the winter of 1955 she was invited by Lady Stella Reading, Chairman of the W.V.S. in Britain, to visit England to observe and work with the W.V.S.

On her return, she decided to devote her energies to the United Nations to work in the interest of international peace. In accordance with her desire to study the activities of the United Nations at first hand, she spent three months in 1957 touring the Asian region of UNICEF, visiting the following countries: Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, The Philippines, Thailand, Cambodia, India, Pakistan, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan and Israel. Following the tour, she traveled throughout Canada speaking to various organizations about the activities of the United Nations. In 1960 she became Chairman for the Manitoba Committee for Refugee Year, which raised \$127,000 to help clear a refugee camp in West Germany. In 1961 she spent four months traveling in Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, Rhodesia, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia and the United Arab Republic, again to observe UNICEF activities.

## 2007 HIGH SCHOOL ESSAY CONTEST

Below are the first two winning essays in the 2007 High School Essay Contest.

The Topic was:

**“Some people in Canada are talking about lowering the voting age from 18 to 16. They believe that this will encourage more meaningful participation of young people in the political process.” Students were asked to agree or disagree, giving their reasons”**



**Katrine Dilay  
- (it was  
originally  
written in  
French and  
is  
reproduced  
below)**

En 1970, l'âge du droit de vote fédéral au Canada a été abaissé de 21 ans à 18 ans. Aujourd'hui, on parle de diminuer cet âge encore une fois. Cette fois-ci, l'âge requis serait de 16 ans. Cette modification comporte peut-être des avantages comme une augmentation de l'intérêt des jeunes à la politique et une hausse du taux de participation au vote fédéral. Toutefois, les désavantages semblent l'emporter. Les adolescents de 16 ans ne paient pas du tout ou peu de taxes comparé à leurs aînés puisqu'ils n'ont pas d'emplois à temps plein. Aussi, les jeunes de 16 ans ne sont pas encore en mesure de prendre des décisions éclairées, n'ayant pas terminé leur éducation. En plus, l'on dit toujours que les jeunes de nos jours sont très occupés et n'ont donc pas le temps de s'informer sur l'actualité. Finalement, la majorité des privilégiés réservés aux adultes ne sont accordés qu'à l'âge de 18 ans, et le vote ne devrait pas faire exception.

Premièrement, les jeunes de 16 ans ne sont pas des contribuables à part entière. Bien que plusieurs jeunes ont des emplois, ceux-ci ne paient que le salaire minimum (présentement 8\$) ou un peu plus dans la plupart des cas. Pour cette raison, ils ne paient pas ou très peu d'impôts sur le revenu. Dans une

multitude de familles, les parents paient les dépenses de leurs enfants pour qu'ils se concentrent sur leurs études. Dans certaines autres situations, tout simplement puisqu'ils en ont les moyens. Ces adolescents n'ont donc aucune valable raison de se trouver un emploi. Leur droit de vote ne serait pas représentatif des besoins de la population active du Canada qui travaille pour survivre.

Deuxièmement, les adolescents de 16 ans sont encore à l'école secondaire dans le but de compléter éducation. Ils sont encore dans le processus de former leurs opinions et jugements. C'est vraiment durant l'adolescence que les individus décident qui ils sont et établissent leurs valeurs. Les adolescents de cet âge commencent tout juste à être initiés à la politique grâce aux cours d'histoire et aux bulletins de nouvelles. C'est préférable d'attendre quelque temps pour que les jeunes se familiarisent avec les sujets d'actualité et qu'ils absorbent assez d'information pour prendre des bonnes décisions dans le processus électoral. À l'âge de 16 ans, le risque du droit de vote serait que les adolescents peu ou mal informés voteraient pour le candidat appuyé par leurs parents choisissant ainsi la solution la plus simple. Il est vrai que l'implication des jeunes augmenterait sûrement puisque voter est un droit qui fait sembler plus adulte, quelque chose désiré chez les adolescents. Toutefois, cette implication de la jeunesse refléterait simplement le choix des parents.

Troisièmement, il est connu que les

adolescents mènent une vie occupée. Avec l'école, les amis, le travail, les sports, où trouvent-ils le temps de s'informer sur les sujets d'actualité? La réalité est que la plupart des jeunes ne s'informent pas assez. Le manque de temps et le manque évident d'intérêt expliquent cette lacune. Il est vrai que certains jeunes portent un intérêt particulier à la politique et seraient prêts à passer au vote, mais ils ne comportent qu'une minorité de la population adolescente. Les autres ne prennent pas le temps de s'informer et leur choix serait par conséquent peu éclairé. Cependant, on retrouve aussi un grand nombre d'adultes qui ne s'informent pas.

Quatrièmement, au Canada, c'est à 18 ans qu'une personne devient un adulte. Avant cela, la personne est considérée mineure et est donc protégée de certaines façons et aussi privée de certains droits. C'est seulement à 18 ans que l'adulte peut acheter des billets de loterie ou aller jouer des jeux de hasard au casino. À l'âge de 18 ans, une personne peut acheter de l'alcool et des produits de tabac. Avant d'avoir 18 ans, l'étudiant doit faire signer des notes de permission scolaire mais à 18 ans, cette autorisation n'est plus nécessaire. À 18 ans, la personne pourrait aussi se marier sans la permission de ses parents. Un individu peut posséder un permis de conduire avant l'âge de 18 ans. Cependant, avant d'avoir un plein permis, il faut passer par l'étape débutante (pendant 9 mois), l'étape intermédiaire (pendant 15 mois) et l'étape finale (pendant 36 mois). Pendant ces trois étapes, des restrictions sont posées sur les conducteurs pour qu'ils puissent acquérir



SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS

les connaissances et les compétences nécessaires pour conduire un véhicule en toute sécurité. Puisque tous ces privilèges sont acquis à l'âge adulte, il semble que celui du droit de vote ne devrait pas faire exception à la règle.

En fin de compte, abaisser l'âge du droit de vote à 16 ans ne serait pas souhaitable en raison de plusieurs arguments. Les adolescents n'occupent que des emplois à temps partiel qui ne paient que le salaire minimum ou un peu plus faisant d'eux des contribuables à part seulement partielle. Ensuite, les adolescents de 16 ans commencent à être initiés à la politique et leur emploi du temps ainsi que le manque d'intérêt ne leur permettent pas de s'informer adéquatement résultant en des choix mal informés s'ils étaient en mesure de voter. Enfin, ce n'est qu'à 18 ans qu'une personne devient un adulte acquérant une multitude de privilèges et de droits. En prenant en considération toutes ces raisons, il serait mieux de conserver l'âge du droit de vote à 18 ans pour garder les résultats électoraux représentatifs de la population canadienne en entier.



**Krupa Kotecha (2nd Place)**

One hundred and forty years ago, in 1867, the Fathers of the Confederation

convened to devise the foundation of the British North America Act, which after having been signed by Queen Victoria and come into effect on July 1<sup>st</sup>

of that year, marked the unification of Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Quebec, and Ontario, and the establishment of the Dominion of Canada. The basis upon which the Dominion was erected was that of a "responsible government" under which only a small number of affluent men were given the privilege of voting. Since Confederation, women, prisoners, Asians, and Aboriginals are all minority groups that have fought for their right to suffrage, helping change the perception of voting as not just a privilege but also as a fundamental right, as entrenched in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982. However, the battle for suffrage continues to rage on even today, perhaps the most evident battle taking place in the hearts of political-savvy, astute, articulate young people, of which there is no shortage of in Canada. These sixteen and seventeen year old intellectuals are hungry to have a say in the direction in which their country is moving, to contribute to how the land on which they reside is transforming. Moreover, they are more than capable of voting knowledgeably, responsibly, and for the political party they feel best represents the interests, needs, and concerns of their communities.

Canada is a country that takes much pride in being a democratic institution, not one governed through tyranny, autocracy, or dictatorship, but by the citizens which reside within it. Staggeringly, though voting is perhaps one of the most crucial civic duties, the voter turnout for the past three elections has been the lowest since 1867 (61.2, 60.9, and 64.7 percent respectively). Perhaps even more disconcerting are the voter

turnouts for the younger generation (22 percent in the 2000 election, and 38.7 percent in the 2004 election), which indicate the growing political apathy of today's younger population. In recent years, it has become common knowledge that something must be done to engage the youth of today in the political process but there is little agreement on what that measure should be and how and when it should be taken. However, as Carrie Donovan, the youth director with the nonpartisan Centre for Informed Research and Civil Learning and Engagement notes, young people in their late teens and twenties that vote in an election are significantly more likely to vote in future elections. Additionally, Donovan also notes that the best indicator of future voting is not age or education, both highly associated with voting, but whether a person did or did not vote as a youth. Lowering the legal age limit would aid young people in feeling more involved in the democratic process at a crucial stage of their development. Getting people engaged in the voting process provides a greater probability that they will remain voters as adults, but because national elections are usually held every four years many people must wait until the age of twenty or twenty-one, which is often too late for them to begin to become "hooked" on the process. Not only will lowering the voting age have positive effects on the younger generation's attitude towards politics, but it will also result in the increased involvement of entire families. A 1996 survey conducted by Bruce Merrill, an Arizona State University journalism professor, found that in five cities with Kids Voting (a program

in which youth participate in a mock vote and accompany their parents to the polls on Election Day) five to ten percent of the turnout of registered voters claimed their participation was due to Kids Voting. Even such a modest gesture was able to increase interest, and make a dent in the apathy of the nation.

If examined closely, it becomes evident that sixteen and seventeen year olds today are in fact the ideal voters. They have been relatively stationary, are familiar with their communities, have been going to school, and as a result are perfectly familiar with the issues that affect them. At eighteen, however, many people leave their communities and go away to college or move away from home in search of work. They are expected to vote concerning places, communities, and institutions with which they are not yet familiar, and must also learn the ins and outs of the voting process as a whole. Those that are two years younger will have a better understanding of local issues, and will be more inclined to become involved in the shaping of their communities. Furthermore it is easier to carry out voter education and registration through high schools—and high school is the last time eligible voters are all in one place. It becomes a lot harder to register first time voters and expose them to the process of what is involved when they aren't affiliated with some kind of an institution.

Sixteen and seventeen year olds today have many responsibilities that are associated with adulthood—they may drive, get married, and have children, yet they are unable to have a say in the type of society that child must grow up in. Furthermore, sixteen and seventeen year olds that make more than eight thousand dollars in their part time jobs must pay taxes to the government. Just as argued in 1774 during the American Revolution, these young people are being subjected to "taxation without representation".

An argument that has been used for several years to deny sixteen and seventeen years olds the vote is that they are simply unintelligent, uninformed, and easily influenced by the adults around them. In recent years research indicating the decision-making center of the brain doesn't develop until the mid-twenties has been used to increase the driving age in some areas. However, Constance A. Flanagan, an expert in adolescent civic and political development at Pennsylvania State University, explains that though "the frontal lobes of adolescents may not be as fully developed and their judgment may not be as developed as when they are older, this has next to nothing to do with their ability to assess different perspectives on political issues, see competing claims, understand others' points of view, see connections between what a particular candidate stands for and how the people in their local community or some other interest group would fare if that candidate is elected". She goes on to say that "Even for mature adults, there is not necessarily an intelligent or informed basis for their vote. Emotions and passions are at least as important as facts for mature adults". The voter registration process will simply separate those ready to vote from those not ready to vote, and those that are not mature or uninterested wont be inclined to register or vote and those who are informed and interested will register and represent their generation. Adolescents are much too often subject to the stereotype of being "hormonal" and "self-serving", and many adults harbor the preconceived notion of sixteen and seventeen year olds as uninformed, and thus more irresponsible voters than those in their twenties. In a recent study by the Centre for Informed Research and Civil Learning and Engagement fifteen to seventeen year olds performed better than twenty-four to twenty-five year olds on a series of political questions. When asked

which party had the most seats in the House of Commons, thirty-seven percent of fifteen to seventeen year olds were correct compared with twenty-eight percent of twenty-four to twenty-five year olds. Moreover, it seems that only young people are subject to this standard of voting that seems to be so prevalent in the minds of adults—we do not deprive alcoholics, neurotics, or psychotics of their right to vote—there is no intelligence test. If most normal adults do not meet society's unrealistic standards of what makes an eligible voter, how can the same standards be used to prevent young people from voting?

Lowering the voting age from eighteen to sixteen will benefit the voting process as a whole, and make it a more meaningful experience in the lives of young individuals. Development of Canadian society, and it has long become apparent that the minimum voting age must be changed from eighteen to sixteen in order to reflect the capability of the youth of today, and the benefits that the utilization of that capability will have on the voting process, and moreover, on Canada.



From left to right the winners were Katrine Dilay (1st), Krupa Kotechka (2nd) and Julien Gauthier (3rd)