



Winter 2017

Table of Contents

1. The Back Story: Annamarie Castrilli	Page 3
2. Meet the Premiers: Hon. Ernie Eves	Page 7
3. Distinguished Service Award Nominations	Page 13
4. Words of Wisdom in the Chamber	Page 14
5. Interview with Tim Murphy	Page 15
6. Interview with Deb Deller	Page 18
7. Order of Canada Recipient: Hon. David Onley	Page 23
8. Queen's Park to Campus	Page 24
9. Interview with Peter Large	Page 26
10. Order of Canada: Janet Ecker	Page 29
11. Interview with Mike Breaugh	Page 30
12. Christmas Social	Page 33
13. Membership Renewal Form	Page 34
14. Contact	Page 35

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Photographs of Queen's Park by Sebastian Smith.
All other photographs by Lauren Malyk and David Warner

Interview with Annamaria Castrilli



Liberal/Conservative
Downsview
1995-1999

Prior to 1995 you were a lawyer, university lecturer and Chair of the Governing Council of the University of Toronto. What motivated you to leave that behind and seek public office?

It's serendipity, really. I was born in Italy and moved over here at the age of eight. I had a large and fairly prominent

family in Italy, much involved in their community. But here it was just me, my parents and my sister. We came to Canada because my sister had polio. My dad had been to Canada as a young man and had heard of the great work that was being done by Sick Children's Hospital in Toronto and knew this was the place to get help. Canada took us in; many other countries might not have done that in the circumstances: even the word polio was very scary at the time. We were encouraged to study, to work and excel like many other immigrant families.

Coming from a family very much interested in politics, part of what I would watch on television were the debates in the Ontario legislature. I remember as a child watching Bill Davis, Stephen Lewis and Roy McMurtry in awe. McMurtry in particular was my idol, a fact I have related to him in recent years. I loved the way he would present issues in the legislature and how he could convince you with facts and reasoned arguments. I marvelled at the fact that Davis and Lewis could spar so elegantly and then go out to dinner together. It taught me that you could be adversaries and still treat one another with respect.

It was an amazing introduction to this country.

I was also fortunate to arrive at Osgoode Hall Law School just as Canada was beginning to discuss patriating the constitution. I soon became part of a generation of idealists who believed we could be our own people. We felt we were giving birth to a new nation, and it was exciting. Among my professors was Louise Arbour, an inspirational figure to me, who went on to the Supreme Court of Canada and then to head the United Nations International Court of Justice. My involvement in constitutional issues later led, among other roles, to being asked to serve as Co-Chair for Ontario of the YES Committee during the first referendum on the future of Quebec in Confederation. It was a very exciting time. I was later also privileged to be part of Premier's Bob Rae's Advisory Group on the Calgary Accord and a member of the tripartite committee on the Charlottetown Accord established under Premier Mike Harris.

In the interim, I had also become President of the National Congress of Italian Canadians. During my tenure, I became fascinated with the treatment of Italian Canadians during World War II. I had gone to school here in Canada and had never learned anything about this dark period of Canadian history, which culminated in prejudice, violence and internment. We persuaded Brian Mulroney's government to recognize and apologize for what had occurred. When he delivered the apology before a large audience that included six of the last remaining internees, there wasn't a dry eye in the House.



Photos from OAFP's Christmas Social. A good time had by all! On the right, Alan Eagleson and Anne Swarbick.

Since then, much has been documented about this period, and school curricula throughout Canada include the study of what happened.

During all this time I had also been involved with my first alma mater, the University of Toronto, and was privileged to be elected first Vice Chair and then Chair of its Governing Council, honours that I could never have dreamed of as a young immigrant child.

So it was a natural fit for you to go into politics?

I suppose, but I wasn't thinking about going into it at all. When I was at the University of Toronto, I was asked if I would run, and my initial response was that the idea was ridiculous; who would ever elect me, and why? But I was persuaded by cabinet ministers who approached me as well as by the President of the party who actually came to my home. I also admired Lynn McLeod tremendously as a woman of intelligence, integrity and kindness.

I loved the work, both the constituency work and helping solve people's problems, but I also loved the policy and legislative aspects of the work. One of my first actions in the Legislature was to introduce a Victim's Bill of Rights, which the then Attorney General subsumed into his own legislation.



OAFP members had a relaxing time at our Christmas Social. On the right, an elegant table setting.

Why did you want to run for Liberal leadership?

I ran because I was honoured to be asked by many, and because I thought I could make a difference. My passions were then, and continue to be: a love for democracy; the protection of rights, particularly of the most vulnerable, the importance of good public policy; and the role that Ontario and Canada can play in the world because of these, and because of our system of laws and respect for one another. These issues I reasoned could certainly be advanced by a leader of a party. The leadership contest was a positive experience for me despite the outcome. It taught me a great deal, and I made some great friends along the way.

Would you speak a bit about crossing the floor?

By nature, I am a person who thinks through issues and who believes that people's rights transcend any labels. During my time with the Liberals, I did not always vote with them but always made that clear in advance. In areas where I had some expertise like constitutional law, corporate and business law, I voted in accordance with what made sense. For instance, I voted for new franchise legislation with the Tories because of the consistency and effectiveness of the proposed law.

Increasingly, it became more and more obvious to me that the party was going in a different direction from the party I thought I had joined. I therefore made the difficult decision to leave.



Anna Swarbrick chats with members at OAFP's Christmas Social.

Meet the Premiers: Ernie Eves



23rd Premier of Ontario
2002-2003
Conservative

"I didn't go into public service with the intention of becoming Premier, I went into public service to help people," says Ernie Eves, the 23rd Premier of Ontario. "I would argue that in many respects, being Finance Minister is actually a much better learning experience than being Premier. As Premier, you're often looking at things from thirty thousand feet - broader general policies and principles - as Finance Minister you have to know virtually every program in each Ministry."

Ernie Eves learned to work hard from his father, who started as a labourer in the automotive plating business for Canadian Motor Lamps, which later became part of North American Rockwell in Windsor, Ontario. Eves said his father worked long hours day and night, often six or seven days a week which inspired his strong work ethic.

When Eves was 17, his family moved to Parry Sound so his father could oversee the operation of a new Rockwell factory on Otter Lake, just south of Parry Sound. The family only spent one year there. Eves' grade 13 year of high school. "Like all teenagers, I wasn't too happy about being uprooted, but as it turned out I loved Parry Sound. It may well have been the best thing that ever happened to me - it's funny how life turns out."

In his youth, Eves experienced many different summer and part-time jobs ranging from working on a sheet metal line, picking fruit in Leamington, scraping the bottom of acid tanks, bagging groceries, and eventually working at the accounting department at Ford in Oakville. He even ran a marina and gas station in Pointe au Baril.

“When I was younger, I managed to pay for my junior golf membership by caddying (where I?) and? had the privilege of meeting Joe Louis and Sammy Davis Jr. at Roseland Golf and Country Club.”

His mother pushed Eves and his siblings to pursue a post secondary education. His mother’s parents immigrated to Canada in the early 1900’s from Ukraine and settled in Mundare, Alberta where they raised 11 children. She realized the great opportunities available to those with an education.

After high school, he attended the University of Toronto for two years of an honours program in history, political science and economics. He excelled and on a lark applied to law school and was accepted at Osgoode Hall. Eves was the first one in either of his parent’s families to receive a post-secondary degree.

A number of law firms pursued Eves, who had received excellent marks, especially in tax and criminal law, but he chose the McTague Law firm in Windsor, Ontario where he was exposed to many fields in the practice of law. It was while attending law school though that he had the opportunity to work for W H (Bill) Green Q.C. and on completing his articles he returned to Parry Sound and bought into the partnership. Eves preferred not to keep a time docket, “keeping track and billing clients based on that is not what practicing law should be about,” he said.



Anne Swarbrick, Alan Eagleson, Bob Wong and Joe Spina chat at the OAFP Christmas Social.



"Bill was a tremendously brilliant lawyer with a huge social conscience and utmost integrity. Ironically he had also been the President of the local Liberal Association and was the Chair of the West Parry Sound Board of Education for 25 years. He represented both the town of Parry Sound and the Parry Sound District General Hospital. Bill has several reported cases in the Supreme Court of Canada, especially with respect to indigenous and minority rights. He was an extremely well respected individual of the utmost character who instilled in me the responsibility of public service."

Like his partner, Eves also immersed himself in community service. He was president of the Kinsmen Club, receiving a national award for helping children with cystic fibrosis, and he helped start a Big Brothers Association in Parry Sound. He became Mr. Green's Deputy Legal Aid Director and helped represent several First Nations.

Again, somewhat ironically, Green was the one who suggested that Eves think about working on his friend and colleague, Gordon Aiken's federal Conservative election campaign. "It was a great experience and that's when I became interested in making a difference through political public service."



Photos from OAFP's Christmas Social. Alan Eagleson and Floyd Laughren on the left. On the bottom, a spread of Christmas delights. On the right, Barbara Sullivan and Dennis Timbrell.



Eves was asked to join the Provincial PC Riding Association by M.P.P. Lorne Maeck. "Lorne was another individual of tremendous character and integrity who influenced my desire to help people." Shortly before the 1981 election the Honourable Lorne Maeck decided to leave public life after his wife Ivy suffered a stroke.

Ernie was able to win the nomination and managed to win the election despite the fact that the Liberal candidate and leadership hopeful Richard Thomas had been campaigning for two years. Although he captured 47.8 % of the vote, he won his first election by just 6 votes after the judicial recount.

This would be the first of eight consecutive elections Eves would win. He retained the Parry Sound-Muskoka seat for twenty years before representing Dufferin Peel Wellington Grey for another four.

During his lengthy career, Eves held numerous positions including Parliamentary Assistant to Dr. Bette Stephenson, the Minister of Education, Colleges and Universities, the cabinet positions of, Secretary of Resource Development, Minister of Skills Development, and Community and Social Services, as well as positions of Chief Opposition Whip and Opposition House Leader.

But one of the most memorable moments for him during his time in political life was in June 1995. In the PC majority government, Mike Harris chose Eves as his Finance Minister, Deputy Premier and Government House Leader. To say that he played a significant role in the Harris Government would be a huge understatement.



OAFP members at 2016 Christmas Social. On the left, Alan, Floyd and Spina. On the right, Margaret Birch meets with a former cabinet colleague.

Eves went from an ultimate career high to a personal low in October of that year when his son Justin was tragically killed in an automobile accident at 23 years of age. "That stuff never leaves you of course," says Eves. But together with his wife Vicki and their daughter Natalie, they started the Justin Eves Foundation in honour of his memory.

Justin was diagnosed with dyslexia at an early age and like most dyslexic people, Justin had excellent verbal skills and an extremely high IQ. Justin was blessed with terrific special education teachers at the elementary and secondary levels. However, when it came to his post-secondary education the family couldn't find a special education support system anywhere in Canada. They ultimately decided on Curry College in Milton, Mass. just outside of Boston where Justin flourished. "We decided to try to help the thousands of young people like Justin whose parents can't afford private universities. To date we've helped about 550 students through the Justin Eves' Foundation." As Finance Minister, Eves appointed Dr. Bette Stephenson to head the largest task force of its kind in the world to provide assistance to post-secondary students with learning disabilities. "I'm proud to have increased special education funding in the province from 600 million dollars to 1.2 billion dollars a year."

When asked what the most difficult decisions are that a Premier has to make, Eves says you have to have the courage to make the right decisions for the long-term future of the province even when they may be politically unpopular.



OAFP chair Steve Gilchrist, left, at the annual Christmas social. On the right, two colleagues catch up on the news.

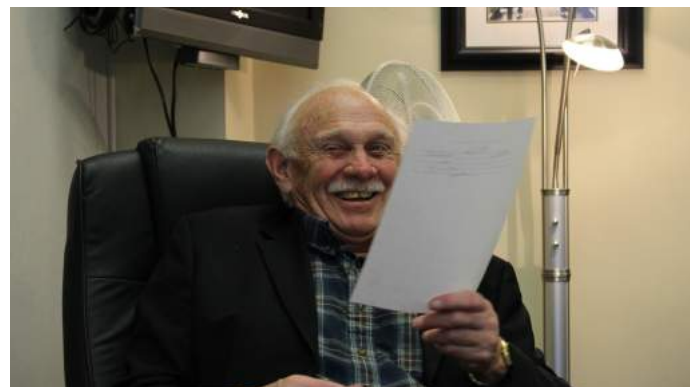
He stated that in the very first years under the Harris Government they did do some unpopular things to try and turn the economy around, and they worked. Some 750,000 people were able to find employment and the dignity that went with it. Tax reductions helped to stimulate a growing economy and led to balanced budgets.

Eves admits that some mistakes were inadvertently made and when that occurred the Government tried to respond and remedy the inequities in the programs.

"At the end of the day, all members are there to try and improve the lives of all Ontarians. We may differ on the methods of achieving those objectives but I firmly believe all members are there for the same reasons."

In February 2001, content that he had dedicated 20 years of his life to public service, Eves resigned and became the Canadian Vice-Chair of Credit Suisse, First Boston investment bank. However, when Mike Harris decided to resign, a group of Eves' former caucus colleagues, led by Bob Runciman, convinced him to reconsider public life. Eves sought the advice of former Premiers Bill Davis, Bob Rae and Mike Harris before deciding to take the plunge.

Some of his happier moments as Premier include accompanying Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth on several occasions, which included some interesting dinner and lunch conversations. He smiled when he recounted how he invited several disadvantaged children and their parents from across the province to meet the Pope, as opposed to some of his predecessors who



Colin Isaacs and John Parker, left, at the annual OAFP Christmas Social. On the right, Distinguished Service Award chair Doug Moffat at the social.

Distinguished Service Award Nominations

Criteria:

The Distinguished Service Award recognizes exceptional career contributions and/or achievements by former Members of the Ontario Legislature. The recipient is not currently elected to the House of Commons or appointed to the Senate, and is living.

Process:

Each September Members of the Ontario Association of Former Parliamentarians are notified that they may nominate a former Member for the Distinguished Service Award.

Nominations are to be sent to the O.A.F.P. Office at Queen's Park and can be sent up to midnight, February 28, 2017

The nominator should explain, in not more than 500 words, why this former Member should receive the Distinguished Service Award. The nominator should also provide a curriculum vitae of the nominee.

Each member of the Distinguished Service Award Committee will independently review all of the submissions, then the Committee will select one former Member to receive the Award.

This prestigious award shall be presented at the Annual General Meeting of the Ontario Association of Former Parliamentarians, in the year that the Distinguished Service Awards Committee selects the person, and is approved by the OAFP Executive."

Previous Recipients:

Hon. Bill Davis, Robert Nixon, Stephen Lewis, Margaret Birch

Words of Wisdom In the Chamber



A confession. I never had or took the time to take a close look at the various beautiful carvings in the Chamber. There are several, but two in particular, one to the Opposition side of the House, the other to the Government side, whose message is meaningful.

To the Speaker's right, Sapere Aude - Dare to be wise, Docendo Discimus - By teaching we learn. Fittingly, these words appear above an owl.

On the Speaker's left, the inscription Gubernatio Bona Fructum Parit is Good Government Bears Fruit, and was one of the two inscriptions carved into blank spaces in the Chamber on occasion of the Millennial in 2000. Curiously, the creature appears to be a pelican. It could have been added as a whimsical creature or perhaps a type of gargoyle or gryphon. I have not been able to confirm the meaning. If anyone knows the answer, please let me know.

Interview with Tim Murphy

Former chef of staff to Prime Minister Paul Martin
MPP for St. George—St. David, 1992-1995



When Tim Murphy looks back on one of the most important moments of his political career, he remembers it as the ‘worst period of time in politics’ he’s ever experienced.

Murphy, who served as an MPP for the former riding of St. George—St. David, was one of only three Liberal caucus members to vote in favour of Bob Rae’s same-sex marriage legislation in 1994.

“That whole period was politics at its worst as far as I’m concerned, for a couple of reasons. The Rae government and its ministers put forward a bill that was half-assed and Rae didn’t really whip his members to vote for it,” says Murphy.

“This is not to excuse Liberals for not voting for it, but the Rae Government put forward a bill and weren’t prepared to whip their members, so we didn’t get any progress of any significance.”

Though Murphy experienced fallout as a result of his decision to support the legislation, he attributes his stance and experience with the issue as part of the reason another same-sex marriage bill was passed in 2005.

“That was an issue I carried into the Prime Minister’s office so I absolutely came with a fair degree of knowledge about the good and the bad,” said Murphy, who served as Chief of Staff to former Prime Minister Paul Martin.

He continues, “If the journey [to the Civil Marriage Act] was 10 steps, the legislation that was defeated in Ontario was step 2. Step 1 was adding sexual orientation to the human rights code. Ten years later we passed step 10. It is amazing progress from the legal point of view ... the views of society still have to catch up to the laws. But there is real progress.”

Murphy’s first taste of politics came in high school when he was dragged to a Progressive Conservative event by two friends.

“It didn’t seem like me,” said Murphy, who would later become a member of the Liberal Party.

“I was always interested in public affairs and public policy but I was never partisan.”



George Smitherman, Patrick Reid and Barbara Sullivan, left, at the OAFP Christmas Social. On the right, Doug Holiday and Joe Spina catch up.

He went on to become an intern at the Ontario Legislature following an undergraduate degree at Queen's University, where Murphy worked as an editor at the campus paper. He pursued a law degree from the University of Toronto, then served as a senior advisor to Ontario Minister of Education Sean Conway and a special advisor to Attorney General Ian Scott before being recruited to work on Paul Martin's first leadership bid.

Murphy then decided to take a shot at becoming an MPP and ran in the riding of St. George—St. David after incumbent Ian Scott retired. "As an advisor you are always the advisor," Murphy said. "I wanted the opportunity to go out and be the decision maker, to be a direct representative of the people. It's an important, valuable function and you can hopefully do some good and great things."

Murphy's term was short, as he was defeated by Conservative Al Leach in the 1995 election less than three years later.

"[I was] retired by the voters," Murphy said, laughing.

On whether he would ever consider running again, Murphy says, "I never say never but there is no security in politics and as I have no pension, saving for retirement is pretty important."



OAFP Christmas Social attendees, left, enjoy some refreshments. On the right, Helen Breslauer, Peggy Sattler and Karen Haslam chat.

Interview with Deb Deller

The Clerk of the Legislative
Assembly of Ontario
2007 - 2016

Deb Deller, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario has held a variety of Assembly positions since 1979, including Committee Clerk, Clerk Assistant, Deputy Clerk and Director of Legislative Services. She is now retiring (has now retired?) as Clerk, and The InFormer sat down with her to reflect on her career and on how the Assembly has changed since she has been here.



Did you ever expect to become Clerk of the Assembly?

No, not ever. I think I always aspired to the next job, so when I was a Committee Clerk for example, they created the position of Deputy Clerk of Committees, and I thought I could do that job. Then as Deputy Clerk of Committees, I thought I could be Clerk of Committees. So it was always just thinking about that next job.

When I first walked through the doors of this building, I had been traveling around Europe. I needed a job and I first started as a temp. I didn't even have a clear idea of what went on here.

Now, I talk to every group of Pages and Interns, and I always think, aren't these kids just incredibly amazing? When I was their age, I had little knowledge of the political system. I certainly never aspired to be Clerk as a child.

What are the qualities a Clerk should have?

First of all, you need to be fully conversant in parliamentary procedure, that's not something that you can really go to school to learn. That's something you learn from experience, once you have experienced a full parliamentary cycle from election through to dissolution. So it does take a long time.

I think you need to be a diplomat; you have to be able to exercise considerable tact in the job and balance and manage competing demands from individual members and political parties.

You need to be pretty inscrutable. I joke that you should never play poker with a Clerk because we have good poker faces.

You have to be able to listen carefully, understand, and respond only to the question asked, not add anything that might reveal strategy or tip the hand of the other side.

My job is to advise the Speaker. That advice is based on considerable knowledge and experience of parliamentary authorities and precedent that can back up an eventual decision. It is the Speaker's job to decide whether or not to take that advice, and if not then the job of the Clerk is to support the Speaker's decision.

The administrative part of the job has changed since I was Deputy Clerk. There is now a greater emphasis on management. In addition to being the House chief procedural advisor, the Clerk is also responsible for a staff of 400. That comes with considerable executive level management responsibility including policy development, strategic planning, human resources, finance and security issues which take an increasing amount of the Clerk's day.



OAFP chair Steve Gilchrist welcomes members to the annual Christmas Social on the left. On the right, members chat and catch up with refreshments.

Would you tell us about some memorable moments?

The role of the Clerk includes a diplomatic part in which you receive visiting dignitaries on behalf of the Assembly. I have been fortunate enough to meet the Queen, Prince Philip on a couple of occasions, Prince Charles, Princess Anne and most recently - Prince Harry. Those moments are always memorable.

I recall a time when I think Ernie Eves was Minister of Finance and Gerry Philips was his Critic. Philips said "I'll eat my hat, if that's true." It turned out to be true and Eves ordered a cake made in the shape of a hat which, with the permission of the Speaker, was delivered to Philips at the end of Question Period the next day.

April 2nd, 1997 stands out as a memorable moment. I came to work thinking it might be a normal day and it soon became clear that it was going to be anything but. It turned into the first day of a nine-day filibuster during which the House sat around the clock.

I called home to say, "I don't think I'm going to be home for dinner" and then I called home to say "OK I think I'm going to be pretty late, maybe midnight." The third time I said, "I don't know what time I'm going to be home. Could you please bring me a change of clothes?"

Nine days later I finally got home. During the filibuster, I did not leave the building. I slept here and we woke each other up by intercom.



Members catch up at the annual OAFP Christmas Social with refreshments and Christmas-themed goodies. On the right, OAFP chair speaks to fellow members.

What changes have you witnessed over the years at the Assembly?

My first job interview at the Assembly was for a tour guide position. It took place in Room 151, which is now a committee room. The entire offices of both the finance and human resource branches were located in that room, with dividers throughout. If you think about the size of those branches now, it gives you some idea of how the place has changed.

We now live in a much more information insistent world. When I started, a request for information would be sent by regular mail. We had the luxury of reading and formulating a response with a time frame of three to four weeks.

Then we got fax machines, which made it a much faster process, and people expected a much faster response. And now we have Internet, and people are looking for an instantaneous response. This doesn't always give the opportunity to fully formulate an effective response.

There have been changes inside the Chamber too. When I started, there were no time limits on speeches. Members spoke to a bill either because they knew the subject or because they were interested in that piece of legislation. They said what they needed to say, and then they stopped talking. Now there's much more of an inclination to fill the time. You need to have x number of hours where you have speakers lined up to contribute to a bill. I wonder if these imposed time limits have diminished the relevance of the debate, and made it harder for the Opposition to extend debate as a means to oppose.

We first started broadcasting proceedings in 1986 and I don't get the sense that it has had significant impact on the decorum in the House. It did alter behaviour though. For example, there was a time when we had great orators in the House who developed those great skills by speaking to an audience that reacted to and listened to what they had to say.

Today, because its televised, the Members and the press can watch and



Photos from the OAFP Christmas Social. On the left, OAFP chair Steve Gilchrist speaks to speaker Levac. On the right, another group reminisces about their days in the legislature.

listen from where ever they are, and the Member speaking doesn't get audience feedback.

I was here when Bill Davis was Premier, and Stephen Lewis and Bob Nixon were in the House. When they stood up to speak, Members would stream in to listen. You don't see that anymore.

Thoughts about life after the Pink Palace?

Many people, mostly Members, have asked me recently when the book is coming out. I've always maintained that my job security has depended on my commitment to never write a book. I'm pretty sure I'll hold to that promise. I have always thought that when I retire,

I'm actually going to retire.

My husband and I enjoy sailing, and I'm relishing the notion that we'll be able to do a little more of that. We also like to travel so we might finally take some of those trips that have been on our "someday" list.

This has been a consuming career. It has taken considerable attention, energy and time away from family, and so I think that it's time to finally make them a priority.



Members catch up with refreshments, left, at the annual Christmas Social. On the right, Joe Sina and Tony Ruprecht pose for a photo.

Order of Canada Recipient: David Onley



28th Lieutenant Governor of Ontario
2007 - 2014

In December, 2016 the Honourable David Onley, former Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario was awarded the Order of Canada "for tirelessly advancing the rights of people with disabilities, notably during his tenure as lieutenant governor of Ontario."

David Onley was Lieutenant-Governor from 2007 to 2014, the second longest serving LG since Confederation.

During his term in office, O.A.F.P. was pleased to make him an Honorary Member of our Association.

He has, over the years, been a reporter, author of an award winning novel and an actor. Perhaps you saw him playing the role of Sir Oliver Mowat in a Murdoch Mysteries episode "The Ghosts of Queen's Park" (aired Feb. 25, 2013).

David was appointed Chair of the Accessibility Standards Advisory Council to the Minister of Community and Social Services in 2005.

Congratulations on an achievement which clearly shows that people should focus on abilities, not disabilities.

Queen's Park to Campus



It has been a long time since I had a 9:00 a.m. university class. But, there I was on a beautiful fall day, along with two former colleagues, John Parker and Barbara Sullivan, in front of a group of approximately 30 political science students. For the next 90 minutes we each presented our perspectives on the questions provided earlier by Professor Carlo Fanelli and answered a wide variety of questions from the students.

The three of us thoroughly enjoyed the experience and in fact continued the lively discussion after we left the classroom. Apparently, so did the students.

"Many thanks to the three of you for a very engaging discussion today – your thoughts and ideas certainly sparked discussion long after you had left. Students were commenting on everything from the role of the legislature and party discipline in holding the government accountable, to how the three parties differ from one another on individual issues, and how the composition of party bases has shifted and changed over time. Today's discussion certainly left them feeling less cynical about how individuals and groups could influence politics and social policy more broadly."

- Professor Carlo Fanelli, Ryerson University

By all accounts, the event was a real success. I have found your answers truly inspiring, and could not imagine a better way to give students a concrete idea of what being an elected politician is all about.

I am confident that your speeches resonated with many of the students, including those who didn't talk during the Q&A. Following a similar event we held last year in the course, I've had students telling me in person that they had been positively influenced by the guests, sometimes several months after the event. Your presence last Monday will likely have this sort of lasting influence on these students and their career decisions. I would also like to thank Mobina and the Ontario Association of Former Parliamentarians for their help in making this special event possible.

- Professor Ludovic Rheault, University of Toronto

Two bright sunshiny days in February and November saw seven past members of the Ontario Legislature engaged in classroom discussions with political science students at Trent and Ryerson University. Professors Devine Penner and Nathalie Changfoot at Trent, and Carlo Fanelli at Ryerson had prepped students well and they came to class armed with questions and observations.

Participants John Hastings, Mario Racco, Steve Gilchrist, David Warner, John Parker and I were pressed to measure up to keen interrogation from undergraduate students, many approaching graduation. We had an opportunity to speak on matters that we were individually engaged with at the Legislature, the workings of the committee system, party discipline, budget preparation and other matters. We were asked about issues that we cared about personally and where we might have influenced decisions. Together, we shared observations about the workings of the provincial House – and true to form, we were sometimes in agreement and at other times had views that were distinctly different.

All past members agreed that these were wonderful outings – connecting with thoughtful young people who are just starting their careers and are keen to learn, along with the opportunity for us to hear their thoughts and ambitions for the province and country. In sum, well worth doing.

Interview with Peter Large

Honorary Consul to Brukina Faso



"You are welcome here at home with us" is the translation for Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina Faso

This landlocked West African nation has a population of 17.4 million, was once part of the French empire, and gained its independence in 1960.

Burkina Faso, means "land of honest men," which is helpful in a land with significant deposits of gold.

The official language is French, since Burkina Faso was colonized by France. Other languages spoken include Mòoré, Gourma, Fulfulde, Dioula, Tamasheq.

Gold is Burkina Faso's main export, followed by cotton and animal products. Burkina Faso is Africa's largest producer of cotton. In 2010, almost 80% of the cotton planted in Burkina Faso was grown from genetically modified seeds. Burkina Faso is second only to South Africa as Africa's largest producer of bio tech crops (100% of it cotton), and had the world's second-fastest growing acreage of bio tech crops after Australia.

Interview with Peter Large, Honorary Consul

"In 1991 a new Honorary Consul needed to be appointed. Seven people were nominated. I was the only one who didn't ask for the job."

Twenty-five years later, Peter Large, bilingual lawyer with a background dedicated to international affairs and humanitarian aid, continues to represent this small African country. Peter credits being a member of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs for providing the depth of knowledge needed to be an effective diplomat.

What are your challenges as Honorary Consul in Toronto?

In the past we handled visa requests, but that is now being handled at the Embassy in Ottawa. The visa enquiries vary from missionary groups, to humanitarian aid organizations, to family members needing to return home quickly to see a seriously ill family member. Often Canadian business people are looking for information and advice about doing business in Burkina Faso. As well, I try to help spread the word about this small, but very interesting African country by speaking at schools and libraries.

What are the challenges for Burkina Faso?

This is a country of great contrasts. The capital city is modern, with impressive buildings, cafes etc. A short distance from the capital are villages with mud huts. A major challenge in the rural areas is water. Community water taps are needed. An improved educational system and a better health care system are really important. Burkina Faso is essentially an agricultural society, so trying to protect against the expanding Sahara Desert is critical. While this country is not fertile ground for radical Islam, there is a concern and a vigilance about Al-Qaeda. Burkina Faso is a multi faith country. It is not unusual to find both Christians and Muslims in the same family."

What is the connection between gold mines and Canada?

Most of the gold mines are Canadian companies and they hire locally, so they provide a major source of employment in the country. A while back the price of gold was very low, but the Canadian companies took the risk of investing. That has paid off today.



John Hastings and Speaker Levac, left, chat at the annual OAFP Christmas Social. On the right, Alan Eagleson and Anne Swarbrick catch up.

Why is it important for Burkina Faso to have a presence in Canada?

"I have visited Burkina Faso. One time, I was with an NGO, helping build a village for orphans. I was able to help construct a new school in that village. I found the people to be delightful; genuinely trying to develop their country. Both countries are members of the Francophonie. In straightforward terms, Canada is wealthy, Burkina Faso isn't. There is a genuine opportunity to assist a developing nation. And, Burkina Faso is a country that isn't looking for a handout; just looking for some help. C. I. D. A. (Canadian International Development Agency) was prominent a few years ago, but hasn't had a presence for the last few years. It would be nice if they got involved again."



A group of members, left, capture the attention of the room at the annual OAFP Christmas Social. On the right, Margaret Birch and Maureen Quigley chat.

Order of Canada Recipient: Janet Ecker



MPP of Pickering—Ajax—Uxbridge
1995 - 1999

In December 2016, Janet Ecker was awarded the Order of Canada “for her contributions to provincial politics in Ontario and to Canada’s financial services industry.”

Janet’s response to the news of her investiture was “I look at the list of nominees this year and in previous years, it’s pretty impressive. I’m excited, but humble.”

She was an M.P.P. from 1999 to 2003, first for the Riding of Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge, then Durham

West. During those two terms, Janet was Minister of Finance, Minister of Education, Minister of Community and Social Services, Government House Leader and Chair of the Board of Internal Economy.

She’s currently the president and CEO of the Toronto Financial Services Alliance, an organization that helps promote Toronto’s financial sector with the aim of making the city a top-10 global financial centre.

Congratulations on your achievement and for bringing honour to our Legislature!

Interview with Mike Breough



NDP

M.P.P. Oshawa

1975 - 1990

M.P. Oshawa

1990 - 1993

Political life for Michael James Breough started out of a restlessness. Mike had moved up the ladder from classroom teacher to Principal. The next move would be to administration, not a prospect which Mike found attractive.

So, why not a dramatic change and seek public office?

I wanted something else to do, and there was an Oshawa City Council election in 1972. I won, and I enjoyed the hands on opportunity to try and accomplish things for my constituents and our city. The Provincial Government brought in Regional Government the next year, so I ran for a Regional seat and won.

You have been elected municipally, provincially and federally. How would you compare the experiences?

Being effective means knowing who knows how to get things done. At City Council you get to know quickly who is involved in every department. My experience at Queen's Park was somewhat similar, but Ottawa was a different story. Part of the difficulty is that federal ministries are spread all over the country, so getting to know who could make things happen was more difficult.

What were a couple of the biggest challenges during your political life? The number one challenge in political life is organizing your time to accommodate the wide variety of responsibilities. The constant in politics is change, so handling those changes is challenging. Each level of government functions differently. In Ottawa, for example, everything is run out of the Leader's office.

Admittedly, I was in Ottawa at an unhappy time. Prime Minister Mulroney was not popular. The P.C. Caucus sensed that change was coming, so there weren't too many happy campers. Not a good atmosphere!

Would you describe a couple of memorable moments during that time?

When I was on Oshawa Council, the Province brought in Regional Government. We were not too happy with the boundaries they wanted. Bob Welch, Minister Responsible, paid us a visit, listened to our concerns, and changed the boundaries.

When I was at Queen's Park, a new member arrived, Peter Kormos. He didn't have the profile of his predecessor, Mel Swart. We thought we could give him a higher profile by having him lead a filibuster on a Government Auto Insurance Bill. Peter got the spotlight in an all-night debate, one which attracted a lot of people to the building in the middle of the night!



MPP Peggy Sattler and Anne Swarbrick speak over refreshments at the annual OAFP Christmas Social. On the left, John Parker and David Turnbull catch up.

A memorable Ottawa highlight was that I was on the Constitution Committee developing the Charlottetown Accord. It was a joint Senate/House Committee. I knew little about our Constitution, so I appreciated the opportunity to learn. In the end the Accord failed. I think the document was primarily of interest to governments, not the majority of Canadians.

Any advice for those young people who might consider a political life?

Start a career other than politics so that you will bring a certain experience to your political position. Enter the political arena not simply to be elected, but to accomplish something worthwhile; something for your community, province or country.



Members revisit old memories, left, at the annual OAFP Christmas Social. On the right, two colleagues reminisce about their time in the legislature.

The 2016 Christmas Social: A Joyous Occasion!



Our annual pre-Christmas gathering is a great time for former Members to mingle, reminisce, enjoy the company of former colleagues. This year was no exception. It was so good to see people who served as far back as the 1960's! As well, Speaker Levac stopped by to bring greetings. He had time to chat with the three professors from U of T, Ryerson and Trent who were in attendance. A couple of current M.P.P.s stopped by.

There was a tasty array of snacks, an ample supply of wine, beer and pop. Best of all, a wonderful, warm atmosphere of friendship. Definitely, an event not to be missed!

It's time to renew your 2017 membership!

Please complete the form below & forward it to OAFP office. Thanks.

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