

MINUTES OF SPECIAL CONVOCATION

Toronto – Friday, 4th October, 2002
9:00 a.m.

The Treasurer, Benchers and their guests proceeded to the auditorium at Roy Thomson Hall in Toronto for the Call to the Bar ceremonies of the 264 graduates of the Bar Admission Course, 3 transfer candidates and 1 law dean.

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CONVOCATION WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 9:00 A.M.

The Treasurer asked all present to stand for the National Anthem sung by Tamara Hummel.

PRESENT: (Platform)

The Treasurer (Prof. Vern Krishna, Q.C., FCGA), Larry Banack, Thomas Carey, Abdul Chahbar, Andrew Coffey, Gillian Diamond, Todd Ducharme, Gary Gottlieb, Gavin MacKenzie, Frank Marrocco, Derry Millar, Judith Potter, Heather Ross, Joanne St. Lewis, William Simpson and Gerald Swaye.

and

Justice Sidney N. Lederman, Justice Edward Ducharme, Justice Alan C. R. Whitten, Justice Paul M. Taylor, Justice of the Peace Raymond John Switzer, Justice Ronald S. Veale, Harvey Strosberg, Huguette Thomson, Dean Bruce Elman, Dean Ian Holloway, M. Virginia MacLean, Nancy Iadeluca, Malcolm Heins, Diana Miles, Roman Woloszczuk and Nancy Martin.

The body of the auditorium was occupied by the candidates and their guests.

CONFERRING OF AN HONORARY DEGREE

Mr. Frank Marrocco, Chair of the Government Relations Committee introduced the Doctoral candidate, Harvey T. Strosberg, Q.C, and read the following citation:

“Treasurer, may I present to you and Convocation Mr. Harvey Strosberg, Q.C. and request that you confer upon him the degree of Doctor of Laws *honoris causa*.

Harvey Strosberg earned his Bachelor of Science degree at the University of Windsor in 1966. After completing the LL.B. degree at Osgoode Hall, he articulated with the firm Fasken & Calvin, with two of Canada’s most celebrated lawyers, John Sopinka and Ronald Rolls.

In 1977, six years after his call, he accepted the position of Commission Counsel to the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Confidentiality of Health Records in Ontario, under the direction of Mr. Justice Horace Krever. By the time that the Commission had completed its work in 1980, Harvey Strosberg’s reputation as one of Ontario’s most luminous advocates had been fully established. In 1982, he was appointed Queen’s Counsel.

He was elected a Bencher of the Law Society of Upper Canada in 1987 and became Treasurer of the Society in 1997. In that capacity, he had one simple but profound goal: to make the practice of law more inclusive and more accessible to all, regardless of colour, creed, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or economic disadvantage.

Mr. Strosberg is the author or co-author of numerous articles and publications touching upon a broad spectrum of topics from solicitor negligence and matrimonial law to advocacy skills, especially in the context of class action litigation.

He is deserving of the highest honour this Society can give and I request you, Sir, to confer upon Harvey Strosberg, Q.C. the degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*”.

The Treasurer admitted Mr. Harvey Strosberg to the degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*.

Mr. Strosberg then addressed the candidates and their guests:

“Treasurer, judges, benchers, family, friends and anyone else who helped pay the bills. No event is more joyous than a call to the bar. If you look around, you will recognize that this is one of the few occasions where you are surrounded by hundreds of people who are all happy and smiling.

I thank you, Treasurer and Benchers, for this honour. Treasurer, it is all the more meaningful to me because of our friendship.

Now that I have seized the microphone, I confess I'd like to stay here and practice that ancient Convocation-day custom of haranguing the candidates until they beg for mercy.

But you need not fear. I accept the reality that Convocation addresses are tolerated modestly, sometimes heard and virtually always forgotten. Thus, I intend to heed the advice given to me years ago by a justice of the Court of Appeal who lectured me about advocacy. He said: “Be seen, be brief, and be gone.”

I want you to know, at the outset, that I'm...almost gone. However, before I take my seat to witness your great celebration, I will share with you briefly some random thoughts about what this profession has meant to me and what I hope it will mean to you.

My call to the bar preceded yours by 31 years. I remember well this event because of the joy and relief I felt in having accomplished what I had set out to do years earlier. The journey to the Bachelor of Laws and to the Call is not easy for most of us. It requires discipline and industry. And, most importantly, it requires sacrifice, especially by those closest to us, those who love and care most about us: our spouse, our companion, our significant other, our children, our parents, our friends. Without their support, without their patience and understanding, most of us would not have had the will or the means to endure this 5 to 7 year odyssey. And even if we had the capacity to have gotten here alone, the day would be inconsequential if we couldn't share it with family and friends.

Today is especially meaningful for me, because I am here surrounded by my family. Cathy, my wife, my dear friend and my life's companion is here. She has always supported me. And, I say publicly to her that I could not have achieved any measure of professional success without her unfailing encouragement, her optimism, her enthusiasm, her sacrifice and her wise counsel.

My five children are also here. Elaine, Sharon and my son-in-law David Robins are lawyers. And happily, our son, Jay, will be called to the bar at this Convocation (where are you Jay?).

For me, then, the primary import of this ceremony, and of the award the benchers have generously conferred upon me, is that it puts me in mind of family, the spring from which everything in my life flows.

The call to the bar ceremony also reminds me of the profoundly serious responsibilities that go along with one's entry into this beautiful and noble profession. When, later this morning, the Treasurer utters those magical words, when he says "I bestow upon each of you the degree of barrister of law and call each of you to the bar of the Province of Ontario," you will there and then, and from that moment on, be vested with a sacred trust: to perform your duties as lawyers professionally, competently, and ethically. Not to do so is to betray that trust, dishonour our profession, and undermine its independence, without which our society's most cherished freedoms would be imperilled!

Law, as I said, is a noble profession. Membership in the Law Society is a privilege. It must never be taken for granted. It must never be compromised.

You may ask: How am I to live up to these lofty professional and ethical standards, and at the same time compete for business and make a good and profitable life for myself and my family? On this stage today, sitting before you, are some of the profession's most celebrated and successful lawyers. They once asked themselves the same question, and found an answer each in her or his own way.

There is no singular answer to the question. No formula will suffice. Each of you, too, must and will find your own way. It matters not whether you practice in Windsor or Walkerton. It matters not whether you practice on Bay Street or Main Street. It matters not whether you practice in a large firm or in a small firm or alone.

It matters not where you practice, it matters only how you practice. Hard work and technology will allow you to compete with the very best in the profession.

I myself am dramatic proof that one does not have to practice on Bay Street, or in Toronto, or in a big firm, to make one's way in the profession.

You can and you will succeed in the practice of law by dint of hard work and the exercise of good judgment founded on knowledge and professionalism.

Ethical action and professional responsibility also enter into the success equation. You must do your best for every client you serve, whatever the level of court, whatever the monetary value involved in the transaction and whatever the ultimate amount of the fee. Never compromise on this simple, elementary commitment.

Remember, too, that your legal education begins anew today. It does not, cannot, end with law school and the bar admission course. You will have no more formal exams but, you will be tested daily in your practice or your business.

You must stay current, commit to life-long education, knowing all the while that the law and technology as we understand and practice today, will change, perhaps later today, or tomorrow.

Be open to the newness. Do not fall in love with what you think you know. Do not forsake change. Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes said it well when he observed: "The best part of our knowledge is that which teaches us where knowledge leaves off and ignorance begins."

The law is protean and malleable. It moves and grows and is ever in the making. In this way, it constantly challenges us, and it forever relegates us to the status of student. The profession of law is in a continuing process of self-creation. Still, the values that underlie our profession, the values at its heart and center, are constant and timeless.

If as lawyers we wish to proclaim and maintain our profession's singularity and independence, we must be able to demonstrate to the public who place their trust in us that we possess not only a special body of current knowledge and skills but also the core values of honesty, integrity and diligence which set us apart and justify our exclusive right to carry on the practice of law.

You are our newest colleagues. By virtue of the timing of this call, you are the most junior members of the bar. The future is all before you. Promise today to hold fast to the faith of those who have gone before you. Commit to honour and uphold the values symbolized by this Treasurer and the impressive array of women and men surrounding him on this stage.

Today, with you, our newest colleagues, I celebrate your achievement. I welcome you to the greatest, noblest profession in the world.

And, to you Jay, my son, paraphrasing an ancient Hebrew prayer, I say, on behalf of your grandparents, Cathy, you siblings and myself, that we thank God for allowing us to live to see and enjoy this day.

God bless you all”.

PRESENTATION OF PRIZES

Ms. Diana Miles, Director, Professional Development and Competence presented the prizewinners to the Treasurer.

The Treasurer presented the following prizes to the respective recipients:

Awarded The Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History Prize; a share of The McCarthy T9trault Business Law Prize – Toronto; and a share of The Margaret P. Hyndman, O.C., Q.C., D.C.L. Prize

Eric Peter Reither

Awarded The Herbert Egerton Harris Advocacy Scholarship (highest grade), and The International Academy of Trial Lawyers Plaque

Diana Antonella Foggia

Awarded a share of The McCarthy T9trault Business Law Prize – London

Lenni da Conceicao Carreiro

Awarded a share of The Isadore Levinter Prize

Georgia Argitis

Awarded a share of The Practitioners’ Prize

Vanessa Victoria Christie

Awarded a share of The S. J. Birnbaum Q.C. Scholarship Third Prize

*Robert Douglas Richard Gates
Brooke Marie Jamison
Antonella Erminia Antonia Penta
Kathleen Mary Tutton*

CALL TO THE BAR

Mr. Larry Banack, Mr. Thomas Carey, Mr. Derry Millar, Ms. Judith Potter and Heather Ross, representatives of the Professional Development, Competence and Admissions Committee presented to the Treasurer 268 candidates for the Call to the Bar as follows:

BAR ADMISSION COURSE – 2002

268 CANDIDATES FOR CALL TO THE BAR

(Enclosed in Convocation file is a list of the candidates for Call to the Bar)

The Treasurer conferred upon the candidates the degree of Barrister-at-law and called them to the Bar of Ontario.

CONVOCATION ADJOURNED

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Following Convocation a Special Sitting of the Court of Appeal for Ontario and the Superior Court of Justice convened, with The Honourable Justice Sidney N. Lederman, Superior Court of Justice, Toronto Region presiding.

The candidates were presented to Justice Lederman before whom they took the Oath of Allegiance, Barristers Oath and Solicitors Oath and acknowledged their signatures on the Rolls in the presence of the Court.

Justice Lederman then addressed the new Barristers and Solicitors.

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At the conclusion of the formal proceedings, the Treasurer and Benchers held a reception and luncheon at Osgoode Hall and had as their guests, Justice Sidney N. Lederman, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario His Honour the Honourable James Bartleman and Her Honour Mrs. Bartleman, Laurent Bartleman, Justice Edward Ducharme, Harvey Strosberg, Q.C., Cathy Strosberg, Jay Strosberg, David Robins, Huguette Thomson, Dean Bruce Elman, Nancy Elman, M. Virginia MacLean, William Chisholm, and Nancy Iadeluca.

Confirmed in Convocation this 27th day of February, 2002

Treasurer