



# the CHURCHILLIAN

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[www.churchillsocietyofedmonton.com](http://www.churchillsocietyofedmonton.com)

SEPTEMBER 2022

Published by The Rt. Hon. Sir Winston Spencer Churchill Society, established 1964.

*The Sir Winston Churchill Society isn't all about the things Winston Churchill did in the past (however profound they may be.) It's about his convictions, his wit, his power to inspire and how those qualities are necessary in the world today. We want to incorporate his values and spread his ways. We want to share what we have learnt and discovered from him, with you.*

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## ELIZABETH II 1926 – 2022

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The Rt. Hon. Sir Winston Spencer Churchill Society extends heartfelt condolences to the Royal Family and the people of Great Britain. We mourn with them the death of our beloved Queen, the only sovereign most of us have known. She served her nation with tireless devotion to duty and tradition, through heavy seas both national and

familial. Her civility, charm, and lovely sense of humour will be missed. Farewell, your Majesty, and thank you; you were good for us, and for the world.

Charles III also faces formidable challenges. May his reign be remembered for wisdom, strength, and good fortune. Long live the King.

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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First, I want to thank the Sir Winston Churchill Society of Edmonton for allowing me to serve as President. I have agreed to serve as the President until November 2024.

My predecessor, Elisebeth Checkel, has left me an organization that is prepared to grow to meet the challenges of the 2020s without losing sight of our historical foundations.

During my presidency, I will work with my Board of Directors to ensure we continue honouring Sir Winston's legacy in our city and province. Part of this role will be to respond to the frequent mischaracterization of Churchill that certain sectors of modern society level against so many historical figures. We will continue to ensure that our bust of Churchill in Edmonton's downtown pedestrian tunnels stays in good order and free of vandalism.

I will also ensure that our society continues to share our good fortune in supporting the education of Albertans about citizenship and civil discourse. We are proud of our essay competition for high school students, and dozens of high schoolers participate in our speech and debate competitions. A former mayor of Edmonton and, at least one Member of Parliament have won our competitions!

Finally, I will not forget the fellowship hallmark of our society. It was a pleasure to host our honorary patron, Her Honour, the Honourable Salma Lakhani, AOE BSc,



LLD (hon), at our Churchill Banquet after a two-year pandemic-related hiatus. General (Retired) Paul Wynnyk was a compelling speaker on Russia's war against Ukraine and its people.

I was fortunate to sit between these two outstanding Canadians. The Board will endeavour to have an in-person annual general meeting in November as another opportunity to gather.

Please do not hesitate to contact me by email ([wrandall@gamil.com](mailto:wrandall@gamil.com)) or phone (780-996-6169).

Will Randall

## OUR VISION

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The leaders we inspire today will rise to meet tomorrow's challenges.

## OUR MISSION

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The Sir Winston Churchill Society promotes leadership, citizenship, and strengthened communities through civil discourse, connecting to history, and encouraging critical thinking.

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# CHURCHILL SOCIETY'S 56<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEMORIAL BANQUET – A SOLD OUT SUCCESS

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By Rick Dumas

Photographs and recordings by: Grant Cree

The Churchill Society of Edmonton held its 56th Annual Memorial Banquet, 21 June 2022 at the University of Alberta's University Club. The dinner is inextricably linked to our society's origin and history. A group of seven Edmontonians, feeling that Churchill's legacy and impressive contributions should be perpetuated, acted decisively. The Right Honourable Sir Winston Spencer Churchill Society (Edmonton Society) was formed – the first of its kind in 1964. It was the first to be created during his lifetime and the only one personally approved by him.

The society's first project was to launch a dinner whereby members and guests would celebrate his lifetime of many and varied contributions within a military mess-style dinner setting.



*Board President, Will Randall II, carried out numerous duties such as hosting the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta and our esteemed keynote speaker. He would later introduce stages – recognizing student award recipients (through Lucas Robertson), acknowledging our scholars (through Dr. David Checkel, our first Cambridge Scholarship recipient) – and presided over presentations.*

Society Memorial Banquets would become renowned for their distinguished keynote guests who would speak with authority to some aspect of Churchill's great life from a personally connected perspective. There were many of fame and distinction. Field Marshall, Lord Harding of Petherington (former storied Commander of the Desert Rats) delivered the first memorial address at the Hotel Macdonald May 10, 1965, with 625 attendees. Lord Louis, Earl Mountbatten II of Burma, would preside the following year April 11, 1966, in full Admiral's dress. The

former Governor General of Canada, Field Marshall, Earl Alexander of Tunis, would address over 700 participants at the Alberta Room of the Chateau Lacombe April 24, 1967.

This year, Lieutenant General (Ret'd) Paul Wynnyk, CMM, MSM, CD was our keynote speaker. While serving up Churchillian application, he shared his personal and unique experience and perspective on the war in Ukraine. Early in his speech he stated:

*"ZELENSKY, LIKE CHURCHILL, HAS NOT – IN THE FACE OF ODDS THAT HAVE BEEN COMPARED TO DAVID AND GOLIATH – ACCEPTED ANY FORM OF DEFEATISM, NOR ANY REASONABLE TERMS THAT WOULD COMPROMISE THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF UKRAINE. SIR MARTIN GILBERT, CHURCHILL'S OFFICIAL BIOGRAPHER, WROTE THAT "IT WAS CHURCHILL'S OWN OPPOSITION TO ALL FORMS OF DEFEATISM THAT MARKED OUT THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF HIS WAR PREMIERSHIP AND ESTABLISHED THE NATURE AND PATTERN OF HIS WAR LEADERSHIP."*



*Current Deputy Minister of Health for Alberta and former Commander of the 3rd Canadian Division, the Canadian Forces Intelligence Command and the Canadian Army, Paul Wynnyk delivers his presentation. The framework was inspired by a 1966 spaghetti western – *The Good* (Zelensky), *the Bad* (Putin) and *the Ugly* (the brutal reality). His speech will be added to our impressive archives.*

As High School essay, debate, and speech contests were introduced and evolved, they would become permanent annual events. Some time ago a contest between the winners from Calgary and Edmonton vied for Alberta championship and the Billington cup. Does this predate CFL and NHL rivalries – de facto Battles of Alberta?

*continued on page 4*

## CHURCHILL SOCIETY'S 56<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEMORIAL BANQUET – A SOLD OUT SUCCESS

Service-minded citizens and serious philanthropists spearheaded plans for doctoral scholarships at Cambridge. They were supported by the Master of Churchill College Cambridge, then-Premier Peter Lougheed, and eventually the University of Alberta. Later the impressive Churchill Statue and Oxford Scholarship Foundations were formed.



*At the podium (Left) is Lucas Robertson and (Right) is Elisebeth Checkel welcoming winners and guests for formal recognition. Observing is The Honourable Salma Lakbani, His Honour, Dr. Zabeer Lakbani, Will Randall II, Lieutenant General (Ret'd) Paul Wynnyk and Dr. Marianne Howell.*

Committed to promoting leadership and higher education among Edmonton's youth, recipients of scholarships, awards, and prizes are recognized at the dinner. As a point to note, Churchill Debate alumni have gone on to elected positions in provincial and federal governments.



*Our Honourary Patron, The Lieutenant Governor of Alberta, Her Honour, The Honourable Salma Lakbani, AOE B.Sc., LLD (hon) informally chats with student winners after formal presentations before heading into the dining room. Her husband, His Honour, Dr. Zabeer Lakbani is a former Churchill Society director of competitions. Both are wonderful role models.*

After a two-year COVID induced hiatus, a six-person banquet planning committee was assembled, overcoming adversity and making up for the two disruptive years that had gummed up a consecutive fifty-five year run. The five-month effort led to a sold-out banquet while preserving the

forementioned traditions. Furthermore, passive fundraising in support for the Ukrainian effort was discreetly exercised with the use of donation envelopes. For the occasion, we were delighted to have with us the 2nd Vice President of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, Olesia Luciwi-Andryjowycz.



*Left to right: Melissa Chaffee, banquet sub-committee members Bob Chaffee with Vice President and sub-committee chair Jill Wright (standing), Master of Ceremony Rick Dumas, Diane Sweet, Military Chaplain Captain Helen Bennett, and fire fighter Matthew Chaffee. Missing Banquet Sub-committee members include David Reed, Hugo Young, and Lucas Robertson.*

During this year's summer solstice, in keeping with our decades old banquet traditions and aims, our one hundred and fifty participants enjoyed a magnificent dinner in Churchillian fashion in the company of our Honourary Patron and accomplished keynote speaker. A noticeable military flavour included a military chaplain leading us through Grace, members of several regiments in attendance, and honorary colonels and military headquarters personnel. The Loyal Edmonton Regiment's Dinner Ensemble, Piper and Drumline were deeply appreciated.



*The Loyal Edmonton Regiment's Dinner Ensemble provided both military and popular music for the dinner's duration. To close the evening, several band members quickly changed into another uniform reminiscent to the late 1880s/early 1900s to perform their popular black-light Drumline show. It harkens back to an era where drums and bugles would issue signals on battlefields. The Regimental Piper escorting the Head Table wore a First World War uniform and accoutrements.*

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## BOOK REVIEW

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# THE VICTIM CULT: HOW THE CULTURE OF BLAME HURTS EVERYONE AND WRECKS CIVILIZATIONS BY *MARK MILKE*

*Submitted by Elisebeth Checkel*

President of the Calgary Churchill Society, Mark Milke, has written an insightful book to help make sense of some of the apologies and progressive reparations for historical wrongs that have become so common in Canada. He examines and compares the differing experiences of cultures around the world and in North America and his rigorous statistical analysis provides additional understanding of some of the current problems we face as a society. He outlines how victim and blaming culture has led to some of the most horrific acts of the last hundred years with examples from Rwanda, Germany, Russia, and Palestine. He studies how some societies thrive and how some fail.

He examines the idea that historical wrongs and the accepted understanding of systemic racism explain the poor outcomes for First Nations and Black people in Canada today. The Foreword, written by former Chief Councillor of the Haisla Nation, Ellis Ross, says “The false narratives or ideologies – The Indian Act, residential schools, etc. – that convince people that they are doomed to fail and that someone else or something else is to

blame. There is plenty of blame to go around, but I prefer finding solutions. I try to fight the idea that individuals are destined to fail, especially when I see political leaders using this to their own advantage instead of finding a way out for people who are stuck.” He goes on to say, “False narratives will only produce false solutions that will fall apart as soon as they are tested.” These are controversial ideas. You may agree or disagree, but they provide opportunities for real communication and civil dialogue. I applaud Mark for daring to broach them.

*“This excellent book was eight years in the writing and it shows. But not because it is pedantic; on the contrary, Milke wears his scholarship lightly. His crisp, polished prose belies the exhaustive research that permits him to speak out so boldly and broadly on what is a sensitive, often culturally weaponized subject.”*

— Barbara Kay, *National Post*.

THE VICTIM CULT is available at Audrey’s Books and other fine bookstores. You can also order it directly from Mark’s website at a slightly reduced price and with free shipping. <https://markmilke.com/thevictimcultbuy>

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## QUEEN ELIZABETH II PLATINUM JUBILEE AWARDS

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The Churchill Society was honoured by the request to partner with the Alberta Government to select ten nominees for the late Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Medal. Seven thousand medals will be awarded across the province for public service. Members of the Legislature, Mayors, Reeves, Indigenous Leaders, Members of the Alberta Award of Excellence and others will automatically receive the medal in recognition of their demonstrated service to our communities.

A call for nominations went out in early September to our Society Members and Friends and the Nominations

Committee has been overwhelmed with the number and quality of responses. At this time, ten nominees are being selected. The nominees will be announced when the decisions are finalized.

A special Awards

Ceremony will be held following our AGM on November 7th. Save the date now! Details will be announced soon.



*Our director David Reed has submitted a reaction to recent events concerning the interpretation and treatment of historical legacies and monuments. We offer his opinion essay in three parts. David holds a Masters Degree in History from the University of Calgary.*

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## WINSTON CHURCHILL'S SCORECARD — PART 1

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*By David Reed*

It is becoming fashionable to take aim at historical figures and to completely summarize their life and their legacies by snap judgements or memes. People seem to think it fitting to demonstrate progress by toppling historical statues or changing names of public buildings to make a political point. I stomached the dismantling of Robert E Lee's statue last year. I considered Lee a decent man of integrity despite his choice to fight for the Confederacy in the Civil War. He was certainly deemed worthy enough to be Abraham Lincoln's first choice to lead the Union Armies and no one in September 2021 thought to speak out about Lee's efforts to reconcile the Southern states with their northern brethren after the war had ended. Despite my feelings, I could understand that the statue of Lee, which was put up in the early nineteenth century to intimidate African Americans from clamoring for further freedoms, might be offensive and traumatizing to black Americans today. In the case of the Confederate statues, their original purpose made it desirable to remove them from a public place.

But in the last year cancel culture has continued to demand the 'heads' of historical figures: at Princeton University the name of Woodrow Wilson, one of the greatest idealists in American history, was removed because Wilson had also segregated Washington DC. I do not deny that Wilson's action in that regard was less than admirable. But should we throw his entire legacy and life into the trash because of one action? In England, there were demands to remove multiple statues including the legendary prime minister William Gladstone, on the grounds that Gladstone's father had some involvement in the slave trade. This attack was even worse; Gladstone was condemned because of the actions of his father, which were not in his control.

Those leading the great social movements of today seem to be saying that a historical figure can have his entire life summed up by one action. And on those grounds it is possible to besmirch their legacy and to remove any offensive reminders of their existence on this earth. This rush to judge is not surprising in light of today's fashion of

raking public figures over the coals for actions taken many years ago. The evidence is produced, usually out of context, and then blasted around the world until the accused, their reputation now shattered, issues a craven apology.

Human beings, however prominent or obscure, should not have their entire existence and the legacy that follows declared devoid of value and honour because of a single action. Each human generally lives a long life, full of many statements and actions. They cannot be summed up in flippant one-liners based on a single event or aspect of their life.

What is needed is a balanced, objective approach that takes into account a generous representation of actions the person performed through the course of their life. We have all done things that we regret. Some have more to regret than others. But we have all, at some point in our lives, also committed acts of kindness and generosity. Human beings are complex and that is why, when studying human history, any attempt to judge a person's legacy must look from many different angles and perspectives. Even as different camera angles are required to fully understand what a person looks like, a little known fact may transform a devil into an angel, or maybe a friend.

*To be continued...*



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## SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

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On July 26, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy received the International Churchill Society Leadership Award. In making the presentation, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson compared Zelenskyy's crisis leadership in 2022 to that of Winston Churchill in 1940. It seems a fair comparison, also drawn by General (Retired) Wynnyk at our memorial banquet in June. Zelenskyy holds a law



*Volodymyr Zelenskyy*

degree and is an experienced actor and comedian. If his wartime leadership is successful, he may then get to preside over the extensive rebuilding of his country's assets. That will take a different sort of leadership, but the need for effective communication will remain.

The Sir Winston Churchill Society's mission is to encourage those who will be tomorrow's leaders to develop communication skills and a rational understanding of the past. We believe that Winston Churchill's career is an outstanding example of leadership and public service.

You are invited to join our society and participate as you wish in our efforts. Membership confers voting rights at our annual general meetings and a reduced ticket price for events such as our Memorial Banquets. If you are a member, consider gift memberships for family and friends. We look forward to seeing you at our Annual General Meeting in November.

Memberships can be purchased at our website:  
<https://www.churchillsocietyofedmonton.com/>

or by postal mail with the form below. Memberships are valid for one year from date of purchase.

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## SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

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We offer three tiers of membership. You can purchase your membership by visiting our website and following the instructions there:

<https://www.churchillsocietyofedmonton.com/shop>

Or send the form below, with payment, to our Executive Secretary. Memberships are valid for one year from date of purchase.

**Regular membership:** Annual fee \$30  
*Confers voting privileges at members' meetings and reduced ticket prices for Churchill Society events*

**Student membership:** Annual fee \$10  
*Regular members' privileges for registered students*

**Global membership:** Annual fee \$90  
*Regular members' privileges plus 1 year's membership in the International Churchill Society with 4 issues of their excellent magazine "Finest Hour"*

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## 2022 SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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Salutation: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

First

Middle

Last

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Street

City

Prov

Postal Code

Type of Membership:     Regular \$30     Student \$10     Global \$90

**Privacy and Consent:** By including your E-mail address, you agree to receive future notifications regarding Society activities. Please note, all E-mail messages sent to the membership are sent under the use of the Blind carbon copy (Bcc) tool which means that individual recipients do not see the entire list of addressees. There is no fear of being added to additional mailing lists, etc.

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## OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

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If you would like to help our society carry out our mission in pursuit of our vision, please contact us. **Directors are appointed to terms of three years. We are seeking a volunteer director with bookkeeping experience, to serve as treasurer. Our treasurer is responsible for keeping our books and accounts in accordance and compliance with our charitable status and its regulations.**

See the contact information for our Executive Secretary elsewhere in this newsletter.

### Churchill Society Board and Executives

Will Randall II	<i>President</i>
Jill Wright	<i>Vice President</i>
Elisebeth Checkel	<i>Secretary/Treasurer</i> <i>Membership</i>
Lucas Robertson	<i>Competitions</i>
David Reed	<i>Director</i>
Norman Leach	<i>Director</i>
Richard Dumas	<i>Director</i> <i>Protocol Officer</i>
Hugo Young	<i>Director</i>
Robert Chaffee	<i>Archives,</i> <i>the Churchillian</i>

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## HISTORICAL EVENTS

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- 1914** Britain finds itself at war on August 4, as Germany invades Belgium in defiance of a British ultimatum.
- 1942** While meeting with President Roosevelt June 21 in Washington DC, Churchill is informed that the port of Tobruk had fallen, and its garrison had surrendered to *Panzerarmee Afrika*.
- 1945** The first atomic weapon is used against Hiroshima on August 6. The second is used against Nagasaki on August 9. The Japanese Emperor announces surrender on August 15, ending the Second World War.



- 1951** Winston Churchill becomes Prime Minister for the second time, and this time elected as leader of the governing party, October 26.
- 1959** Churchill is elected to the Commons for the last time in the general election of October 3.

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## CONTACT US


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If you would like to comment on anything in our newsletter, or if you have submissions or suggestions for future articles, we would like to hear from you! Contact our editor, Robert Chaffee at 780.929.6766 or email to [edmontonchurchillsociety@gmail.com](mailto:edmontonchurchillsociety@gmail.com). If you are interested in serving as a Director or Treasurer, or helping out with events, please contact our Executive Secretary.

*Alternatively, we invite you to make your purchases on-line at*  
**[www.churchillsocietyofedmonton.com/shop](http://www.churchillsocietyofedmonton.com/shop)**

For membership application, enclose a cheque payable to "The Sir Winston Churchill Society" and send to:

Elisebeth Checkel, Executive Secretary  
Sir Winston Churchill Society  
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Edmonton, Alberta T6J 6T1

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