



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.

SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL SOCIETY AGM AND MEDAL PRESENTATION

Written by: Rick Dumas

Photos kindly provided by: Grant Cree

This year's AGM was conducted at the Edmonton Garrison Officers' Mess. The meeting segued into our presentation of ten Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medals.



Society President – Will Randall hosts our 2022 AGM within the Officers' Mess conference room.

As the AGM progressed, medal recipients began arriving in time for the pre-event reception. The meeting's conclusion and reception commencement melded – all welcoming our Honourary Patron and Lieutenant Governor of Alberta, Her Honour, The Honourable Salma Lakhani, AOE, BSc and His Honour, Dr. Zaheer Lakhani.



The Society's Chair of our Awards Committee and MC, Rick Dumas, commences with some levity as the ceremony begins.

The Society's medals project from flash to bang was only an approximate three months, including acceptance

of partnership with the Government of Alberta, the development and implementation of the plan, and the conduct of the ceremony. The Churchill Society of Edmonton was 1 of 400 partners chosen for the task of selecting 7,000 deserving Albertans. Sponsored by our Society, aged 16 to 84 years old, 10 Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medal recipients were recognized and feted at the Edmonton Garrison Officers' Mess, November 7, 2022.



In Churchillian tradition, the pomp and ceremony was on par with ceremonies held at Government House.

We were supported by vedettes in traditional period uniforms of the Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians), harpist Keri Zwicker, and with all the trimmings – flags and banners – all within a magnificent venue. The Lieutenant Governor presented medals to deserving individuals after a poignant speech regarding service and leadership commensurate with the example set by Her late Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.



Recipients, seated in the front, are symbolically backed by family and friends who are to their immediate rear.

Those that gave of themselves in the service of their varying communities would lead rather than wait to be led.

SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL SOCIETY AGM AND MEDAL PRESENTATION

Examples include innovating strategies to prevent academic failure among our youth during the pandemic, victims and families recovering from sexual assault, assisting Ukrainian refugees, building and sustaining a school in Nepal, Habitat for Humanity, military service as an Honourary Colonel, improving the quality of life and standard of health of citizens, advancing community enrichment endeavours, and promoting higher education and leadership among Edmonton Youth.



Group photo: Seated is Her Honour, The Honourable Salma Lakhani, AOE, BSc and His Honour, Dr. Zaheer Lakhani. Standing from left to right are Mr. Josh Bilyk, Dr John H. Hutson, Mr. Brian Jones, Ms Jill Wright, HCol Doug Cox, Ms Mira Yuetong Zheng, HLCol Mary Cameron, Ms Laura Sherrer-Townsend, Ms Elisebeth Checkel and Mr Watson. The presentation venue was ideal given the theme of service and leadership.

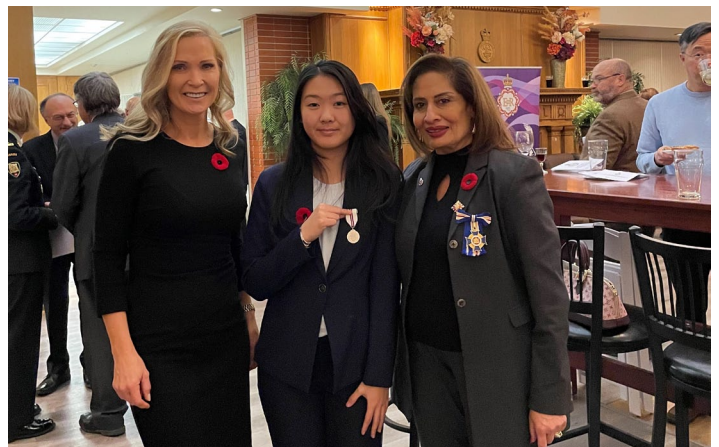


As Their Honours look on, a cheque presentation is made to the Military Family Resources Centre in appreciation for their support to military families. Left to right is Executive Director Roza Parlin, Board Chair Kaet Corbould, and MC Rick Dumas.

It was fitting that the event was conducted during Veterans' Week – a time where we honour those whose sacrifice exemplifies the concept of service. The very namesake of this medal was an exceptionally inspirational woman who epitomized service and leadership for 70 remarkable years. The Churchill Society of Edmonton remains relevant



Our Society President Will Randall presents to the President of the Mess Committee Major J.P. Wright, a token of our appreciation for the use of the mess and for wonderful staff support. The inscription read, "Presented to EGOM at the Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee Medals Ceremony in gratitude and friendship by the Sir Winston Churchill Society of Edmonton, 7 November 2022."



Our medal recipient, Mira Yuetong Zheng (middle) was a President in the JA Company Program last year. To the left is President/CEO Junior Achievement Northern Alberta & NWT Jennifer Martin. On the right is our Honourary Patron, The Honourable Salma Lakhani, AOE, BSc. Our society has funded four JA programs for \$5,000, impacting 100 students in Edmonton's inner city that have demonstrated a high need for services. They include St. Alphonsus Elementary/Junior High, Spruce Avenue Junior High, John A. McDougall Elementary, and Delton Elementary. (Photo provided by JA.)

during these complex and trying times – an era that has become increasingly in need of more debate, leadership, and example. Promoting higher education and leadership among Edmonton youth remains essential while recognizing the many contributions of previous generations. The recipients were able to proudly and deservedly wear their medals on Remembrance Day, illustrating the several individuals and communities that we have reached and who share our values – very inspirational and encouraging. To quote Churchill, "We make a living by what we get but we make a life by what we give."

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Edmonton Churchillians:

I am pleased to mark my second Christmas as President of the Churchill Society of Edmonton. I have had the honour to meet most of our members despite the lingering COVID-19 pandemic, and I hope to meet everyone in 2023.

First, I want to acknowledge the recent passing of Queen Elizabeth II and the accession of King Charles III. I wish him the best as our sovereign, and I look forward to his first visit to Canada as our monarch.

Following the success of our banquet in June, we had the good fortune to be asked to select ten Albertans to receive the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal (Alberta). Her Honour, the Honourable Salma Lakhani, AOE B.Sc., LL.D (Hon), our honorary patron, awarded the medals to ten fine Albertans on November 7. I sincerely appreciate Her Honour's continued patronage of our society.

That same evening, we had our AGM, and we finished the meeting with our traditional port toast of the Heroic Memory and His Majesty.

The University of Alberta could not host our speech and debate competitions as previously scheduled. The new date is Saturday, January 7. I invite society members to serve as judges of the speech competition.



Finally, I wish everyone a happy Christmas. I hope that, after two Christmases under a pandemic, we will be able to celebrate with our loved ones. Moreover, I pray for a happy and safe new year.

God save the King!

Will S. Randall II

Phone: (780) 996-6169

wrandall@gmail.com

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/willrandall/>

OUR VISION

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

OUR MISSION

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

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

We warmly welcome two new members to our board, Stan Guszczewski, and Craig Lukaniuk, effective November 7.

Craig Lukaniuk

Craig is a Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA) who originally achieved the accounting designation Certified Management Accountant (CMA) back in 2002. He has broad experience as a financial controller in a wide range of industries including not-for-profit and transportation. Craig volunteers his time in many organizations and events and has many interests such as adventure running, camping, fishing, and rugby to name a few. He ran a full marathon back in 2007 and refereed the Canada U-21 women's rugby team. He has an inspiring philosophy of life-long education and service to the community.



Craig



Stan

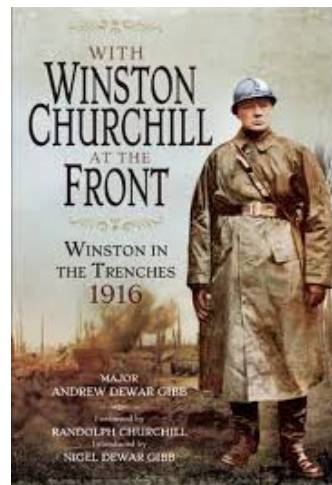
Stan Guszczewski

Stan was born and raised in Saint John N.B. In 1986 he made the life - changing decision to join the Army and on completion of basic training in Cornwallis N.S. was posted to the Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians) in Calgary. While there he spent a summer in the Ceremonial Mounted Troop, deployed to Cyprus, and was a team member for a multitude of competitions. In 1990 he was posted to the 8th Canadian Hussars in Lahr Germany for four glorious years. 1995-1997 saw him posted to the Armour School in Gagetown, New Brunswick before rejoining the Strathconas in 1997 where he

deployed to Bosnia, Kosovo and twice to Afghanistan. He retired from the regular force in 2006 and took a position in the South Alberta Light Horse in Edmonton. Here he eventually became a Sergeant-Major. After commissioning in 2016, he rose to become the Officer Commanding B Squadron. He had one final deployment to Darfur, Sudan in 2009. His civilian employment finds him diligently at work in Operations for CN Rail.

Churchill Society Board and Executives

Will Randall II	<i>President</i>
Jill Wright	<i>Vice President</i>
Craig Lukaniuk	<i>Treasurer</i>
Elisebeth Checkel	<i>Secretary</i>
	<i>Membership</i>
Lucas Robertson	<i>Competitions</i>
David Reed	<i>Director</i>
Stan Guszczewski	<i>Director</i>
Richard Dumas	<i>Director</i>
	<i>Protocol Officer</i>
	<i>Military Liaison</i>
Robert Chaffee	<i>Archives</i>
	<i>The Churchillian</i>



If you would like to help our society carry out our mission in pursuit of our vision, please contact us.

SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

2022 has been a good year for our society. Our membership roll has increased, we have been renewing our traditional close relationship with the military, and we were able to stage an excellent and sold-out Memorial Banquet. We have expanded our community support to include the Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts, the Alberta Aviation Museum, and Junior Achievement Edmonton. Our AGM was creatively combined with the honour of hosting the ceremonial award of ten Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medals.

We were again present at the city hall Remembrance Day service, in the form of our President Will Randall II, who placed a wreath on behalf of our society.

In the past year we have lost one director – Norman Leach

– and gained two: Stan Guszczewski and Craig Lukaniuk. Many thanks to Norman for his work and service to our society. Welcome to Stan and Craig: there is plenty to do.

Membership in our society is affordable and carries little obligation. We hope to find among our members some who are willing to work on various projects; our annual memorial banquet planning, for example. Members can vote at our AGM and can attend our events at a reduced ticket cost.

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.

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"

2022 SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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.

Our director David Reed has written 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 Master of History Degree from the University of Calgary.

In Part 1 (in our September issue) David discussed, with examples, the recent trend of disregarding the positive legacies of historical figures in favour of focusing on their lack of connection with 21st Century sensibilities.

WINSTON CHURCHILL'S SCORECARD — PART 2

By David Reed

In the spring of 2020, Winston Churchill's statue was vandalized in London. The vandals spray-painted an epithet referring to Churchill as a 'racist'. In Edmonton the following year, a statue of Churchill was also attacked. These attacks, I believe, hint at a growing discomfort with the praise normally lavished on Churchill by historians and by Western civilization in general. Following this train of thought, some might think it is time to cut Winston Churchill down to size. After all, the man's political career was marred by failure and controversy up until 1940. His views regarding India and Ireland were hardly progressive. Above all, he was a champion of the anachronistic British Empire, an institution which enforced racial hierarchies with the use of sometimes brutal force.

Maybe it is time for the Winston Churchill statues to come down and for us to whip out the mob tribunal and come to a summary judgement about Churchill. Perhaps our society would be better if the Churchill legacy was exiled to the shadows.

I cannot write the above sentences without feeling positively sick to my stomach. I cannot digest the logic that would cast aspersions on someone who stood up for democracy and led the fight for humanity's political freedom against one of history's most sinister and murderous regimes. If Winston Churchill had not decided to keep fighting Hitler's Germany in May of 1940, if he had decided to negotiate with the Nazis, as some of his colleagues were urging, the world would be a very different place today. It would be unrecognizable and not in a positive way. The very freedoms and rights that allow us to take down the statues, that allow us to make fundamental changes to the laws and ideologies that have structured some of the most humane societies on the planet could very well have been snuffed out 80 years ago had Winston Churchill not been the bull headed, opinionated person that he was.

Churchill, with the help of Canada, Australia, and the rest of the British Commonwealth, chose to take a stand and fight for freedom; even freedoms they did not necessarily agree with. The Americans are fond of saying they may not agree with what you are saying but they will defend to the death your right to say it. The British Commonwealth did not say that - they did it. They fought for world freedom at a time when Russia allied with the Nazis, and the Americans chose to stand aside; concerned with their own well-being without the foresight to understand the threat to humanity that was the Nazi regime. Britain and the Commonwealth stood alone. The courage of the British, from the pilots of the RAF to the soldiers who barely escaped with their lives at Dunkirk, to the determined citizens who endured the ghastly horrors of Luftwaffe bombing, was remarkable and it was inspired by the words and example of Winston Churchill.

Yes, Winston Churchill was devoted to an Empire founded on racist principles. But the valiant stand Britain took against Germany resulted in her own virtual bankruptcy and the eventual end of her Empire. Churchill did not foresee this, indeed, he fought against imperial decline to the utmost of his ability. Nevertheless, the British struggle at the vanguard of the effort against Hitler spelled out the end of her Empire and her status as a world power. Russia rewarded herself for her efforts by seizing control of Eastern Europe. The United States displaced Britain as the leader of Western civilization and a world superpower. Britain was rewarded for her bravery with decline and a loss of world prestige. Perhaps the end of the Empire was inevitable and surely it was a sign of progress, still it was a heavy price to pay. One reason Neville Chamberlain, Churchill's predecessor, sought to appease Hitler was based on the understanding that the British economy could not bear the cost of full rearmament. Churchill was not blind to this truth; the difference was, he did not let the financial dangers facing his country stop him from doing what would preserve the rights and freedoms of the individual.

To be continued...

2022 CHURCHILL ESSAY COMPETITION

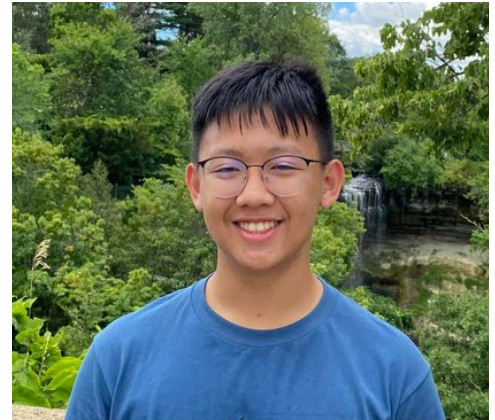
This year's essay topic was: "How can the study of the European appeasement of Adolf Hitler in the 1930s help world leaders deal with Russia's recent invasion into Ukraine? Justify your response (750 words)." The gold medallion was awarded to George Xie of Lillian Osborne School, whose essay follows.

Charles Tilly once said, "War made the state, and the state made war."⁽¹⁾ Throughout history, the success of dictatorial regimes have been maintained through bloodshed and conquest. Over the course of this essay, I will advocate for heavy military aid for Ukraine by analyzing Putin's incentives and different approaches to diplomacy, evaluating the military situation, and addressing counter-arguments.

Immediately, one can recognize the similarities between Hitler's and Putin's reign. Both rose in the wake of catastrophe and gained popular support as strong leaders that would bring their nations back to international relevancy. They are dictators who consolidate power by violently suppressing opponents, promoting hatred through the media, and most importantly, waging war against their enemies. These actions make their incentives clear: their illusion of strength through fear is the only thing keeping them in power. Concessions are ineffective because they do not change Putin's motivations for conquest. Putin cares only about his power, and to get it, he relies on displays of strength to build national unity – we need only to look to the 2014 annexation of Crimea to see a successful example of this. Territorial or monetary gains only serve to build up his army and encourage his aggression. With NATO on his borders and democracy in Russia gaining support under leaders like Navalny, Putin will have even more power to lash out at his growing number of enemies.

Because concessions have been established as harmful, we have two options: humanitarian aid, or military aid. For the first option, the expected result is a prolonged war. Aid would go to a weak Ukrainian army that lacks the manpower to beat Russia, likely resulting in Ukraine's loss. Even in the slim possibility humanitarian aid could help Ukraine beat Russia, the continuation of the war would be a long and bloody conflict. For Putin, a loss would destroy the prideful image he's built over the course of his reign, which firmly eliminates the possibility of his surrender. Therefore, the only path to a short war is if Russian victory is made impossible through the sheer size of western opposition. Only then will the people and soldiers of Russia

recognize Putin for who he is: a dictator who is steering his country into ruin, overthrowing him for his cowardice. Thousands of lives hang in the balance; military aid needs to be given immediately to prevent further bloodshed.



George Xie

Chamberlain had far more disadvantages negotiating with Hitler than present leaders have with Russia – he can be partially forgiven for his shortcomings, present inaction from western countries cannot. The United Kingdom at the time had a damaged military that was recovering from a world war, lacked good allies, and had little domestic support for the war.⁽²⁾ NATO and western democracies suffer from none of these issues and have to fight a comparatively weaker Russian military. Hitler had to spend a massive amount of resources on the German war machine that still eventually lost to the Allies. Russia, with a small export economy reliant on natural gas and oil, is shackled by tariffs and is in no position to win a drawn-out war against technologically superior opponents.⁽³⁾ Western intervention guarantees victory.

One might object that the possibility of nuclear war and Putin's allies are significant threats that should deter involvement. While nuclear war is terrifying, mutually assured destruction has proven to be an effective deterrent, with disobedience being the likely response from resentful soldiers if he asked them to doom millions of their own citizens to death. Even if we ignore this, Russia starting a nuclear war would risk alienating important allied nations like China and Putin's own citizens. Additionally, a world without western military intervention is comparatively

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2022 CHURCHILL ESSAY COMPETITION

worse for the lasting impact of nuclear weapons; if Russia sets the precedent that any nation can use nukes to violate borders without western retaliation, other rogue nations would follow suit. On the threat of Russia's allies, the face of the matter is that they are unwilling to get involved in the conflict. There is no clear upside for their investment; China or India would rather have a functioning global economy than spend money on a selfish Russian conquest.⁽⁴⁾

Winston Churchill said it best: "I never worry about action, but only about inaction."⁽⁵⁾ If history is to teach us anything, the best time to fight oppression is now. Concessions and weak approaches to aid would only strengthen and embolden Putin's brutal oligarchy, making inevitable future conflicts even deadlier. The situation demands immediate action, Ukraine must have military support now.

Bibliography:

All accessed March 23

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HISTORICAL EVENTS

1903 December 17: The Wright brothers of Dayton Ohio make the first four powered heavier-than-air flights near Kitty Hawk, NC. Winston Churchill would become an aviation enthusiast but would later abandon pilot training after an accident which injured his instructor. He would, however, travel over 100,000 miles by air during the Second World War, sometimes in less-than-secure airspace.

1914 December 25: Unofficial and local ceasefires and various amounts of fraternization unfold on Christmas Day along parts of the stalemated Western Front. Afterwards, industrial-scale murder resumes. As the war and its horrors intensify, there are few repeats on subsequent Christmas days.

1940 December 25: Hong Kong falls to the Imperial Japanese Army on Christmas Day. Among the garrison are a battalion each of the Royal Rifles of Canada and the Winnipeg Grenadiers. 290 Canadians fell in battle or were killed after surrender; over 250 perish while prisoners of war.

1943 December 25: The 1st Canadian Infantry Division is engaged in a grinding, brutal urban battle for the town of Ortona, Italy. Front line soldiers are moved to the rear in relays to enjoy a Christmas meal.

CONTACT US

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. 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

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

Elisebeth Checkel, Executive Secretary
Sir Winston Churchill Society
127 Twin Brooks Cove NW
Edmonton, Alberta T6J 6T1

780.619.7506
edmontonchurchillsociety@gmail.com
 [/churchillsocietyofedmonton](https://www.facebook.com/churchillsocietyofedmonton)

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