



# The Blazon

The newsletter of the British Columbia/Yukon Branch of the Royal Heraldry Society of Canada

SPRING 2022

Vol. 17, No. 1

## Happy Anniversary, Again!

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Last summer, in July of 2021, we celebrated the sesquicentennial of B.C. joining the Canadian Confederation. This was the harbinger of several significant anniversaries we will enjoy and observe in MMXXII.

The principal celebration is the 70th anniversary of our Sovereign. It was on February 6, 1952 that Queen Elizabeth II acceded to the throne and became the Queen of Canada.

While that day was saddened by the death of His Majesty, King George VI, we could not imagine that this would be the start of an amazing career for an amazing Lady.

And the date, February 6, is also a significant and national day of celebration of our sister-Dominion, New Zealand; the arms of New Zealand are an interesting story but for another time.

It was during Her Majesty's Golden Jubilee year of 2002 that our Sovereign granted the designation of "Royal" to our Society. See page 9 For details.

On a local level, we also celebrate the 40th anniversary of the founding of the B.C./Yukon Branch of the Royal Heraldry Society of Canada.

In recognition of four decades of promoting heraldry to Canadians, the branch founders are featured in this special Blazon issue.

I must thank fellow board members helping me chase details of our former and late branch members as well as archival assistance in gathering details of our founding members. I am also indebted to our first branch president, Robb Watt, for allowing me to interview him on the branch formation and early activities. See page 11 for the article.



The Canadian Platinum Jubilee emblem was created to mark the 70th anniversary of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's accession to the Throne .  
See page 6 For details.

Details of later members will appear in subsequent Blazon editions. Since heraldry is a very visual medium of personal identification, the arms of later members will also be featured as another way to achieve our aim.

The Branch Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday March 12, 2022. See page 15 For details.

Steve Cowan  
Branch President





Shown above is the special bilingual certificate signed by the executives of the Royal Heraldry Society of Canada and sent to Her Majesty in celebration of the Platinum Jubilee. The official signing was an on-line event on Sunday, February 6, 2022.

The certificate was designed by Jason Burgoin, C.D., chair of the Society's Platinum Jubilee committee and the artwork by branch member Allan Ailo, F.R.H.S.C.



Canada  
Province of British Columbia  
A Proclamation

ELIZABETH THE SECOND, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom,  
Canada and Her other Realms and Territories, Queen, Head of the  
Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith

**To all to whom these presents shall come – Greeting**

WHEREAS British Columbia is a culturally diverse province comprising many peoples and communities, and

WHEREAS heraldic emblems are representations of the heritage and historical value in the identity and culture of communities, and

WHEREAS the motto of the Royal Heraldry Society of Canada is “For Ancestors and Posterity,” to celebrate the role of heraldic emblems in bringing heritage and history alive for current and future generations, and

WHEREAS the Royal Heraldry Society of Canada celebrates the 20th anniversary of being granted designation as a Royal Society on March 20, 2022, and the society’s British Columbia and Yukon Branch celebrates the 40th anniversary of its formation on February 20, 2022, and

WHEREAS Heraldry Week is an opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate the importance and significance of heraldic emblems of institutions, corporations and people as a lasting and recognizable tribute to the diversity of British Columbia;

NOW KNOW YE THAT We do by these presents proclaim and declare that March 14 to 20, 2022, shall be known as

**“Heraldry Week”**

in the Province of British Columbia.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, We have caused these Our Letters to be made Patent and the Great Seal of Our Province of British Columbia to be hereunto affixed.

WITNESS, The Honourable Janet Austin, Lieutenant Governor of Our Province of British Columbia, in Our City of Victoria, in Our Province, this first day of March, two thousand twenty-two and in the seventy-first year of Our Reign.

BY COMMAND.

Attorney General and  
Minister Responsible for Housing  
(counter signature for the Great Seal)

Lieutenant Governor





**The Royal Heraldry Society of Canada  
La Société royale héraldique du Canada**

February 6, 2022

To all members of the  
British Columbia/Yukon Branch of the  
Royal Heraldry Society of Canada

On behalf of the Executive, the Board and all members of the Royal Heraldry Society of Canada, I offer you our warmest greetings and congratulations on the occasion of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the B.C./Yukon Branch.

Of the fifteen participants at your first meeting on February 20, 1982, several members had careers in promoting Canadian heraldry. Your first branch president, Robert Watt, LVO, AIH, FRHSC, became the first Chief Herald of Canada; Irene Alexander, FRHSC, became a heraldic artist working with the Canadian Heraldic Authority; Graham Anderson, FRHSC, became Cowichan Herald Extraordinary; Laurie Patten, FRHSC, SHA, was a long-time branch president and heraldic artist and craftsman.

Your branch also has the distinction of being the first branch established within our Society. From the beginning, your branch members continue to work to fulfill the aims of the Society in promoting heraldry to Canadians and, by the advent of COVID, to many living beyond our shores.

I wish you continued success as we move beyond the current pandemic. Together we can enjoy heraldry and its symbols of splendour as we celebrate the Platinum Anniversary of Our Sovereign, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the Queen of Canada.

Vicken Koundakjian, OStJ, FRHSC  
President



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The Royal Heraldry Society of Canada • La Société royale hérauldique du Canada

**Vancouver Branch**

vancouver@heraldry.ca  
www.heraldry.ca



Steve Cowan  
President  
RHSC, BC-Yukon Branch

Dear Steve

On behalf of the Executive and members of the RHSC Vancouver Branch, it is our pleasure to congratulate the members of the BC-Yukon Branch as you celebrate Branch's 40th Anniversary.

I understand the branch was founded in North Vancouver on February 20th, 1982 at the North Vancouver home of Robb and Alison Watt. Robb's inspired leadership launched the branch and its development over the years is a testament to the support and enthusiasm shown by its members. I am sure that these strengths will serve the branch well going forward.

Long may the BC-Yukon Branch continue to thrive.

Sincerely,

Tony Nicholson  
President  
RHSC, Vancouver Branch

January 31, 2022



# CELEBRATING THE PLATINUM JUBILEE

Gary Mitchell, Victoria BC



In 1959, Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh visited every province and territory as our Sovereign; see the map in column 1. During this Royal train tour, she visited Vancouver, Victoria, Nanaimo, Spences Bridge, Kamloops, Revelstoke and Golden on her westward journey.

On July 15, 1959, the Queen stopped in Vancouver for a one-day visit. Earlier that month, Vancouver's newest performing arts civic theatre had just opened following a \$9-million construction; the Queen attended to officially christen the building The Queen Elizabeth Theatre. The Deas Island Tunnel was officially opened by Queen Elizabeth.

Following stops in B.C., the 1959 Royal Tour carried on to the Yukon.

On February 6 we joined fellow Canadians, citizens of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth of Nations in celebrating our Sovereign's Platinum Jubilee: Seventy years as the Queen of Canada. And while this unique event is recognized throughout the rest of our nation and around the world, it is an ideal time to recall the details of Her Majesty's visits to our branch area of British Columbia and The Yukon.



Royal cypher of Queen Elizabeth II, C.H.A. Registration of a Badge February 15, 2021 Volume VII, page 332 of the Public Registry.

There have been six Royal Tours that included B.C. and a single visit to the Yukon by Queen Elizabeth II. While Her Majesty's first visit to B.C. as our Sovereign was in 1959, it was not until 1970 that Royal Tours to Canada were given a unique badge. And since our part of Canada was not included in every Royal Tour, only the badges of visits here are shown. Readers are encouraged to explore the Public Registry of the Canadian Heraldic Authority to see the complete range of badges for Royal visits to Canada by Queen Elizabeth II at: [www.gg.ca/en/heraldry/public-register](http://www.gg.ca/en/heraldry/public-register).



Her Majesty leaving the MacBride Museum in Whitehorse, Yukon, 1959. Photo courtesy of Yukon Archives.

In January 1963 and March 1970, the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh had overnight stops in Vancouver.



Badge of the 1971 Royal Tour

In celebration of the centennial of British Columbia's entry into Confederation, the Queen and Princess Anne visited Victoria, Vancouver, Tofino, Comox, Kelowna, Vernon, Penticton, Williams Lake and Haida Gwaii. The Royal visit in B.C. was from May 3 to May 12, 1971.



Drawing of the 1959 Royal Tour of Canada map. Created by S. Kohler, the Associated Press Newsfeatures Source: [www.buffalonews.com](http://www.buffalonews.com)

Continued on page 7





Queen Elizabeth talks with Haida First Nations members at Sandspit, B.C., on May 11, 1971.  
Photo credit: Bill Croke/The Canadian Press



Flags of the Commonwealth nations  
Source: www.worldatlas.com



Badge of the 1983 Royal Tour

Her Majesty's next visit to B.C. was in April 1983 when she and the Duke of Edinburgh made visits to Victoria, Vancouver, Nanaimo, Vernon and New Westminster. H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh visited Kamloops where he presented new Colours to the Rocky Mountain Rangers.

For British Columbians, the salient feature of the 1987 Royal Visit was the occasion of the new Arms of British Columbia being Granted and Proclaimed. The full details of this event at the Vancouver Law Courts is in the article "A Brief History of the Coat of Arms of British Columbia" by Robb Watt. This was recently published in the Blazon, Volume 16, number 2 of the summer of 2021 issue.



Badge of the 1987 Royal Tour



Her Majesty, escorted by Major Paul Smiley, going to inspect the Guard of Honour of the Royal Westminster Regiment, New Westminster B.C. on April 8, 1983. In the sinister foreground, carrying the Regimental Colour, is future branch member, Second Lieutenant Steve Cowan.  
Photo credit: unknown



Part of the choir that performed at the October 15, 1987 ceremony attended by Her Majesty at the Granting and Proclaiming of the new arms of B.C. at the Vancouver Law Courts. Seen seated in the foreground above is BC/Yukon branch president Robb Watt, on the right, next to his mother, Mary Watt and his young five year old son, Michael Watt.  
Photo courtesy of Robb Watt

In October 1987 the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh attended the opening session of the 34th Parliament of British Columbia and later, the 10th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Vancouver. Esquimalt, North Saanich and Qualicum Beach were also visited.





In August 1994, the Royal couple opened the XV Commonwealth Games in Victoria and also visited Twin Islands, Prince George (Queen only) and Prince Rupert. Prince Philip visited Khutzeyma-teen Inlet alone.



Her Majesty arriving at the XV Commonwealth Games at Commonwealth Stadium, Victoria B.C. in August, 1994. The vintage vehicle is a 1939 Lincoln Model K (originally built for the 1939 Royal Tour). Note the Royal Arms of Canada mounted in the top centre of the windscreen and above it is the Queen's Personal Canadian Flag.

Photo and vehicle details from: [www.bcpl8s.ca](http://www.bcpl8s.ca)



The 1994 Royal Tour badge is seen, above, on one of a series of unique licence plates made by the B.C. Motor Vehicle Branch (MVB) for use on special vehicles. Once the Royal Tour was concluded the plates were returned to the MVB with one being kept for the R.C.M.P. "E" Division display. In 1995, 18 sets of these plates were made available for public purchase by sealed bids; this helped recover the original costs.

Photo and vehicle details from: [www.bcpl8s.ca](http://www.bcpl8s.ca)

In celebration of the Golden Jubilee, the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh visited Victoria and Vancouver in October 2002. Sadly, our sovereign has not visited British Columbia or the Yukon since her Golden Jubilee.



Badge of the 2002 Royal Tour



Her Majesty, with Premier Gordon Campbell, examines the Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee window located at the B.C. Parliament Building, Victoria B.C. The window is a gift to Her Majesty from the people of B.C.

The window was made by our branch vice-president Tom Mercer and his stained glass business partner, Ed Schaefer. The window was installed the evening before Her Majesty's visit and viewing.

Source: The Government of BC

### Editor's Footnote:

The badge shown on the front cover is the Canadian Platinum Jubilee emblem. The original concept and painting of this emblem was done by Cathy Bursey-Sabourin, Fraser Herald, of the Canadian Heraldic Authority. While it was officially registered on August 20, 2021, it was only announced and revealed at the time of the Platinum Jubilee on February 6, 2022.



The Canadian Platinum Jubilee emblem



The Queen's Personal Canadian Flag

Similar to the Diamond Jubilee in 2012, Royal permission was granted to Government Houses across Canada to fly this flag on February 6, 2022.

Shown, to dexter, is the Queen's Personal Canadian Flag. Officially registered as the Flag of Her Majesty the Queen for personal use in Canada. This was recorded in the C.H.A. Public Registry on March 15, 2005 Volume IV, page 458.





## 20 YEARS AS A ROYAL SOCIETY

It seems like only yesterday... And I wasn't even a member.

March also has a significant anniversary for our Society besides the one for the formation of our branch. It was on March 20, 2002 when Her Majesty, Queen Elisabeth II, granted the Royal designation to us - we became the Royal Heraldry Society of Canada.

This put in motion a concatenation of items that commenced with our official name change. At a special general meeting of the Society in Ottawa on May 20, 2003, the membership approved our new name to include the Royal designation.

This then lead to having our arms revised to include aspects of being a Royal society. Our first grant of arms was done by the College of Arms in London, England, and dated March 6, 1972.

With the creation of the Canadian Heraldic Authority in 1988, we could now have our arms as a Canadian society granted in Canada to reflect our national heritage and Royal designation.

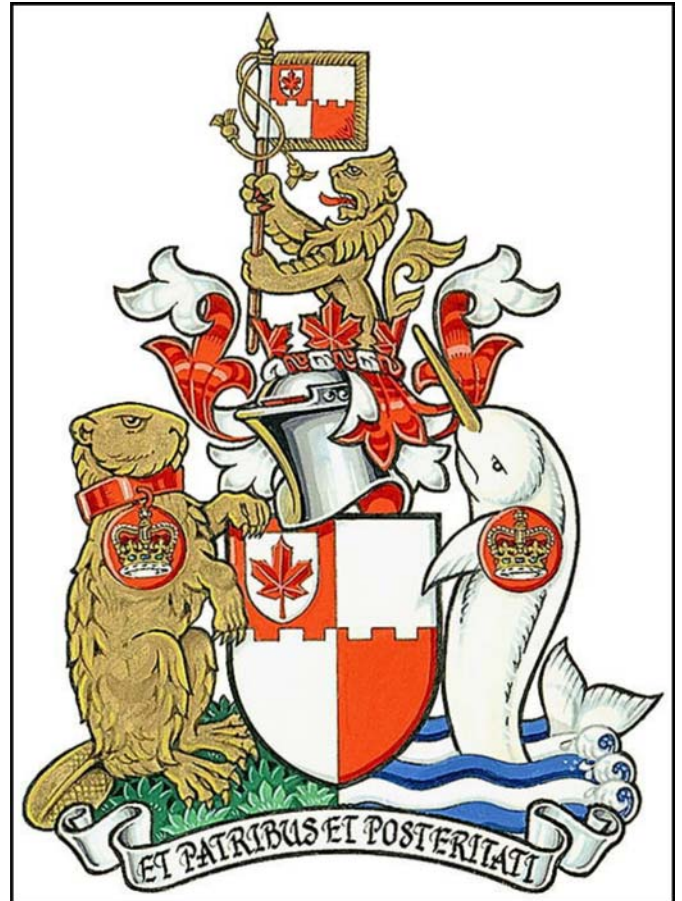
The new arms granted on September 15, 2004, show the revised augmentation of the Royal Crown on the shoulders of the supporters replacing the original Society's badge. This grant of arms by the C.H.A. also included the badges of the six Society branches at the time. And this included the BC/Yukon Branch badge as seen on the front cover of this publication.

Details of our grant of arms and the branch badges from the 2004 grant of arms can be seen in the Volume IV, page 400 of the Public Registry at [gg.ca](http://gg.ca).

Our national president at the time was Dr. Kevin Greaves, C.D., F.R.H.S.C. Kevin was president for five years and oversaw the entire process of getting our Royal designation and the new arms.



The arms of the Heraldry Society of Canada from the original grants of arms dated March 6, 1972



The arms of the Royal Heraldry Society of Canada from the grant of arms dated September 15, 2004



**IN MEMORY**

**Judith Anne Larocque,  
C.V.O., B.A.Hon., M.A.,  
(September 27, 1956 - December 29, 2021)  
Secretary to the Governor General of  
Canada and Herald Chancellor of Canada  
(1990 -2000)**

**TORONTO BRANCH  
ROYAL HERALDRY SOCIETY  
OF CANADA**

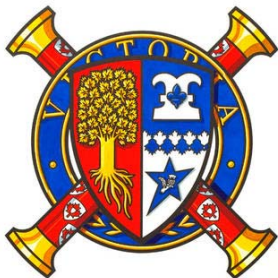


Mrs. Judith Anne LaRocque of Hawkesbury ON passed away unexpectedly December 29, 2021 at the age of 65. Her distinguished career in the public service started with the Public Service Commission of Canada and included a wide range of senior positions including the Prime Minister's Office; the Office of the Leader of the Opposition; the House of Commons; the Government House Leader; the



Judith Anne LaRocque

President of the Queen's Privy Council; the Minister of Justice and Attorney General; the Leader of the Government in the Senate and the Minister of State for Federal-Provincial Relations.



Impaled Arms of office as Herald Chancellor, registered December 15, 2010 in Volume VI, page 13 of the Public Registry.

These experiences culminated with her appointment as Secretary to the Governor General, a role she held from 1990 until 2000. In that position with the Governor Gen-

eral, Judith was also the Chancellor Herald; significant duties included issuing the warrants permitting the Chief Herald to make grants or registrations of arms as well as signing each completed grant or registration with the Deputy Chancellor along with the Chief Herald.



Arms of Judith Anne LaRocque registered December 12, 1990 in Volume II, page 54 of the Public Registry.

While the COVID-19 pandemic kept us apart from meeting and gathering in person, our fellow members at Toronto Branch developed a series of online Zoom presentations. And all Society members as well as our heraldic friends both locally and internationally were invited to participate. The presentations have been a great success. And they continue this year with the list, below, of the current **2022** events.

March 12 - Call to Arms Lecture 1 with Dr. Bernard Juby (virtual)

April 23 - Heraldic Artist Chat: Panel talk with international artists (virtual)

June 18 - Call to Arms Lecture 2 with Nathaniel Taylor (virtual)

13 August - Call to Arms Lecture 3 (virtual)

September 24 - Black Tie Dinner at the Toronto RCMI (in person)

October 15 - Trivia Night (virtual)

November 19 - 8th Annual Heraldic Studies Day

For more details and to register go to:

<https://torontoheraldry.ca/upcoming-events>

**BC/Yukon Branch  
Annual General Meeting  
and special heraldry  
presentation  
Saturday March 12, 2022**



See  
Page 15  
For  
details







## CELEBRATING OUR BRANCH 40TH ANNIVERSARY

Steve Cowan, Comox BC



*Readers may recall the interview article with Joan Merrington in the previous Blazon (Volume 17, number 3 Autumn 2021). This format of an article based on a personal interview proved popular and very interesting. The same approach was taken here with an interview with Robb Watt to learn about our branch history. I gave Robb a list of topics for discussion. Robb's comments are the basis for this article; I have also accessed the archived copies of the Blazon for historical items and help in researching the heraldry of branch members and heraldic treasures in B.C. and the Yukon.*

### IN THE BEGINNING

The British Columbia and Yukon branch of the, then, Heraldry Society of Canada was formed at a meeting of Society members on Sunday, February 20, 1982. This happened at the North Vancouver home of Robb and Alison Watt. Robb had joined the Heraldry Society of Canada in 1969 and was the



Badge of the BC/Yukon Branch. See page 13 for details.

director of the Vancouver Centennial Museum. He had gotten to know several other heraldry enthusiasts around the lower mainland and on Vancouver Island and this led to the first regional gathering in B.C. of H.S.C. members.



To dexter, founding branch member and secretary Alison Watt. To sinister, the arms of Alison Watt originally recorded at the College of Arms, London, England, 29 March 1983. Photo courtesy of Robb Watt

### THE FOUNDING MEMBERS

The following members and guests attended the founding meeting on February 20, 1982:

Irene Alexander, North Vancouver  
 Bill Amos, Richmond  
 Graham Anderson, Shawnigan Lake  
 George A. Brown, Langley  
 Ron Crawley, Vancouver  
 Tony de Cossan, West Vancouver  
 Michael Halleran, Victoria  
 Murray Mitchell, Langley  
 Dr. Earle MacPhee, Vancouver  
 Lawrence Patten, Nanaimo  
 Robert N. Thompson, Fort Langley  
 Robert D. Watt, North Vancouver

Special guest:

Jennie M. MacPhee, Vancouver

Action as secretary for the meeting:

Alison J. Watt, North Vancouver

(Source: Volume 1, Number 1 of the BC/Yukon Chapter newsletter dated March 1982.)

So, on that date fifteen members and guests enjoyed a buffet lunch before conducting a formal meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to strengthen the presence of the H.S.C. in this part of Canada, and it worked.

Alison Watt acted as the secretary for the meeting, and several meetings afterwards; Alison's participation continued beyond the meetings as she became the production editor of the branch newsletter, *The Blazon*, for several years. Without the archived copied of *The Blazon* few details would be known of the early years of the branch as well as details of the national board that affected B.C.

### THE BLAZON PUBLICATION

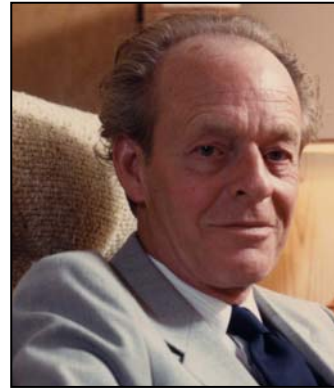
The idea of having a newsletter or publication was to make the bond between members strong by having something to show of the meetings and interests. One of the early ideas was to highlight some of the heraldic decorations in the province. Alison Watt became the publication editor and with Robb, did the production and mail distribution of the branch newsletter. Alison was also the secretary at the branch meetings and played a critical part in the creation of our branch. (Refer to page 5 of *Blazon* Autumn volume 16, number three for the article when Alison was presented with her table shield in appreciation of her work with our branch.)

Continued on page 12



To dexter, founding branch member and calligrapher with the C.H.A., Irene Alexander (1922-2015). To sinister, the arms of Irene Alexander originally recorded in the records of the Court of the Lord Lyon, Edinburgh, Scotland, date unknown.

Photo source: members roll of the R.H.S.C.



To dexter, founding branch member and Cowichan Herald Extraordinary Graham Anderson (1929-2012). To sinister, the arms of Graham L. Anderson originally recorded in the records of the Court of the Lord Lyon, Edinburgh, Scotland, 2 August 1983.

Photo source: members roll of the R.H.S.C.

The newsletter was named *The Blazon* in 1983. The title *Blazon* was chosen as it was a heraldic word that explained heraldry, a lovely and memorable word with meaning for people who understand heraldry and a word that laypersons can grasp quite quickly. The new name - *The Blazon* - first appeared on the bulletin of the B.C./Yukon branch in January 1983 in Volume 2, number 1 of our publication when the first nameplate was developed. In 1984, branch member and calligrapher Irene Alexander created special lettering for the nameplate.

Various nameplates have appeared with the current nameplate being in use from at least 2007. In the Winter 2001 issue, volume 4, number 1, a new branch badge appeared; refer separate item on page 13 for badge details.

### BRANCH NAME

From the first meeting, with Robb Watt being elected president, the branch - or chapter as it was classified at the time - was called British Columbia and Yukon. The Yukon has always been part of the branch right from the very beginning.

One interesting development was the renaming of the B.C./Yukon chapter in 1998. This was our name from the very beginning, albeit as a chapter then as a branch, but we have featured both the western most provincial and territorial names of Canada.



Arms of the Yukon

For some reason we became the Western Canada Branch in 1998 as shown in the *Blazon* of Winter 1998/99 Volume 2, number 1. In the next *Blazon* issue, Spring 1999, Volume 2, number 2, the matter was corrected and we resumed our proper original name of B.C./Yukon Branch.

### A CANADIAN HERALDIC AUTHORITY

From the very beginning of the branch, discussion also centred around the creation of a Canadian heraldic authority. And this was in tune with the Society's actions along this line; the creation of which was one of our stated aims. The Society had been involved with the Applebaum-Hebert Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee making submissions regarding Canadian heraldry. At this first branch meeting Robb gave an update to the attending members on a desire such an Authority. Details of this initial discussion can be found in *The Blazon*, Volume 1, number 1, of March 1982.

**Spoiler alert** – The Canadian Heraldic Authority was created by Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, The Queen of Canada by Letters Patent dated June 4, 1988.

The first Chief Herald of Canada just happened to be our first branch president.



Arms of the Canadian Heraldic Authority





## 1983 NATIONAL CONVENTION

One of the first motions passed by the new branch was to host the 1983 national convention of the Society in Vancouver B.C. From this motion a formal invitation was extended to the national executive.

By the time of the third branch meeting, in New Westminster in February 1983, the announcement was made that the BC/Yukon branch would host the 1983 national convention in Vancouver. From this the Society gained national status and was seen as a golden opportunity to demonstrate our celebrated west coast hospitality.



To dexter, founding branch member and heraldic craftsman Laurie Patten. To sinister, the arms of Lawrence J. Patten recorded November 22, 1994 Volume II, page 330 of the Public Registry.

Photo source: [www.bc-yukon.heraldry.ca](http://www.bc-yukon.heraldry.ca)

## SYMBOLS OF SPLENDOUR EXHIBITION

In preparation for hosting the 1983 convention, the branch planned a major public exhibition on B.C. heraldry. A grant of \$5,000 was received from the B.C. Heritage Trust. The exhibition, set up at Robson Square in downtown Vancouver, was titled Symbols of Splendour; Heraldry in British Columbia and was open September 23 to September 26, 1983.

A unique feature of this exhibition was that the original grants of arms from several B.C. municipalities were displayed. The grants of arms of Nanaimo, North Vancouver, Duncan, Matsqui and Vancouver could be seen by everyone.

Very few B.C. municipalities were armigerous at the time; now, there are some 61 with arms out of 160 municipalities, plus a few that have assumed arms.

## OUR BRANCH BADGES



To dexter is the assumed branch badge we used from 2000 to 2004. On September 15, 2004, our current branch badge, shown to sinister, was included in the new grant of arms of the Society, and this included the other five branches at the time; refer Volume IV, page 400 of the Public Registry. This also shows the following details of the “new” BC/Yukon branch badge:

Blazon - British Columbia/Yukon Branch: Within an annulet of eight points set on the outer edge Or, a hurt charged with a demi sun in splendour Or issuant from a base Barry wavy Argent and Azure;

Symbolism - The sun and the waves allude to the provincial arms of British Columbia.

No artist for the new branch badges is mentioned in the grant; each branch submitted their own badge design in 2003. Both the assumed badge and the official badge for the BC/Yukon branch, shown above, were designed by branch member Laurie Patten of Nanaimo B.C., pictured with his arms in column 1.

Digital artwork of both badges shown by branch member Steve Cowan.

## THE FIRST BRANCH

This branch was the first such regional “chapter” formed with the Society. While the Society enjoyed gatherings in Ottawa, Toronto and Montreal, these regions or populated areas had not been developed into branches.

On May 12, 1984, the national board of the H.S.C. approved granting five branches within the BC/Yukon Chapter. This was under Article XXI of the Society’s bylaws, at the time. The new branches were Victoria, North and West Vancouver, Vancouver, Fraser Valley West and Central Vancouver Island.

I have no archived material or Blazon copies that mention any subsequent organization or formal use of these branches. It may have been a good idea, at the time but of little practical use. It appears that these branches were simply used as names for

Continued on page 14



the geographical groupings of the members; none of these branches appear to have had any executives or structure other than a branch name.



To dexter, founding branch member and first branch president Robb Watt. To sinister, the arms of Robert D. Watt originally recorded in the records of the Court of the Lord Lyon, Edinburgh, Scotland, 9 November 1987.

Photo source: [www.saint-catherines.org](http://www.saint-catherines.org)

### VICE REGAL PATRONAGE

Soon after the branch was formed in 1982, the membership grew noticeably with the Lieutenant Governor of B.C. becoming a member. While His Honour Robert Rogers, O.C., O.B.C., (1919-2010) was not our official Patron, he was the harbinger of the six subsequent Lieutenant Governors of B.C. becoming our Distinguished B.C. Patrons.

In 2019 we achieved total Vice Regal Patronage of our territory when Her Honour, Angélique Bernard, O.Y., Commissioner of the Yukon, became our Distinguished Patron for our northern area.

The arms of our Vice Regal Patrons will be featured in later Blazon issues this year.

### IN SUMMARY

This article is to commemorate the beginning of our branch 40 years ago. During this year I want to explore other branch details to help us get to know our common history. I also want to show the arms of various members from the past four decades. We are a



The arms of founding branch member Robert Norman Thompson originally recorded in the records of the Court of the Lord Lyon, Edinburgh, Scotland, 20 May 1987.

### OUR BRANCH PRESIDENTS

The following is a summary of the members we know who have served as our branch president. There is a gap from 1987 to 1997. This gap matches the time when no Blazon was published or archive copies located.

Robert D. Watt 1982 - 1987

Donald William Rae 1997

Charles Buchanan 1998

Rean Meyer 1999 - 2001

David Ruddy 2002

Laurie Patten 2002 - 2005

Carl Larsen 2006 - 2010

John Neill. 2011 - 2015

Steve Cowan 2016 - present

Source: Branch secretary 2022

visual art group, albeit with a special language called Blazonry and with formal rules in how our art is generated. To me this implies putting lots of colourful heraldry in our publication.



If you have any details of branch members - past or present - and events that will be of interest or significance, please let me know.

The arms of founding branch member George Alfred Brown registered October 25, 1993 Volume II, page 238 of the Public Registry.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am very grateful to Robb Watt for generously donating his time and knowledge in providing details and historical aspects of our branch history. I must also thank branch board members Gary Mitchell, Lesley Patten, Lee Van Horne and John Neill for helping to track down images and archives. Steve Cowan, Comox B.C.





# The Royal Heraldry Society of Canada

British Columbia / Yukon Branch

Under the Distinguished Patronage of

Her Honour  
The Honourable Janet Austin, O.B.C.  
Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia



Her Honour  
The Honourable Angélique Bernard, O.Y.  
Commissioner of Yukon

## BC/Yukon Branch Annual General Meeting

Saturday March 12, 2022

Online Zoom Meeting

At 1:00pm Pacific Standard Time

Following the General Meeting members and guests are welcome to enjoy our

Special Guest Speaker

Dr. Charles Maier, C.D., F.R.H.S.C.  
Athabaska Herald (1988 - 2001)

On a presentation on  
The Heraldry of Sir Winston Churchill



Dr. Charles Maier was appointed as Athabaska Herald of the Canadian Heraldic Authority in 1988. He was born in B.C., educated at the University of B.C. and King's College in London. His career includes being the Archivist of the Yukon Territory in 1981 prior to becoming a Canadian herald. He joined the R.H.S.C. in 1972 and achieved a Fellowship in 1991. He now lives in Ottawa.



This presentation begins at 1:45pm Pacific Standard Time

To access our scheduled event join Zoom at:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81808398338?pwd=NXFMUFNEZIJEQ3Z6Wnk1QWlqUkNhUT09>

Meeting ID: 818 0839 8338

Passcode: 688332

The virtual meeting room will be opened 15 minutes prior to the meeting to allow members time to be ready for a prompt start. Please mute your microphone upon entering the virtual meeting room as this will reduce the background noise coming through everyone's speaker.

The meeting agenda, previous minutes and nomination details are being sent as separate items.



## A BRANCH WEDDING

Branch members will be interested to learn of the very recent wedding of our Past-President, John Neill.

John and Mary Jo Van Order were married on January 14, 2022, in Gibraltar. They were in Spain for the month and skipped over to The Rock for the special day. This was a well kept secret and none of the branch board were aware of their cunning plans.



The happy couple at Gibraltar  
John Neill and Mary Jo Van Order

Photo courtesy of John Neill

Witnesses were Dr. David and Dr. Elizabeth Watson of Burnaby, John's cousin and fellow branch member. Mary Jo wore her Grandmother's wedding dress; John was wearing his regalia of a Knight Commander of Justice in the Military and Hospitaller Order of St Lazarus of Jerusalem, and Commander's Collar as Commander of the British Columbia Commandery, Grand Priory in Canada. And both David and John are also wore the Watson (ancient) sept tartan of their clan.

We wish Mary Jo and John our best wishes and every heraldic happiness together.

## THE BLAZON

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Articles are welcome for submission  
to the Blazon Editor

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