

Cover Story

Wayne Braid: Contributing in a Positive Way



Alexis Bird Photography

G. W. (Wayne) Braid, Secretary/Executive Director of The Society of Notaries Public of BC

In Conversation with Val Wilson

Secretary/Executive Director of The Society for over two years, Wayne Braid has focused on taking BC Notaries into the 21st century—with all the accompanying Internet technology. (Check out *The Scrivener's* snazzy new Website at www.notaries.bc.ca/scrivener.)

In any good Leadership Organization, the practice of strategic, accountable, and intuitive leadership is key. Wayne keeps the members in touch. Julie Boness, Administrative Assistant, says Wayne regularly sends a letter to all BC Notaries. His message, "From the Desk of the Secretary/Executive Director," receives positive and popular response!

The Scrivener: *Where did you spend your formative years and attend school?*

GWB: I was born in Weyburn, Saskatchewan, where my parents had a farm. When my sister and I were about to enter school, my mother and father decided that our riding a school bus into town an hour a day each way was not a good thing. In 1954 the Aluminium Company of Canada had just completed a mega project in Kitimat in British Columbia; my father left the farm and took a job in this newly created city. Because the homes in Kitimat were not quite ready for the workers' families, I actually started school in Burnaby and spent the first half of grade one there. I can still remember the day word came that our new house was ready. My mother packed us up and took us to the dock where we all boarded a ship bound for Kitimat, in December 1954. The only way in and out of Kitimat then was by boat or by floatplane.

The Scrivener: *What was your very first job?*

GWB: My very first job was delivering newspapers. In Kitimat in those days, the papers were two days old when they arrived; everyone in the community just had to have one. There was no TV and radio was very hard to receive. On good days Dad could get CBC but the antenna had to be just right. I delivered papers every day. On the weekends the *Vancouver Sun* had a special edition that was much larger than the daily issue; most of my customers also got the *Star Weekly*.

Because I had so many customers and the papers were so big on Saturdays, I had to go over my route twice. I made \$60.00 a month. It was a great learning experience. You had to be diligent—people like their paper the same time every day! You had to be polite and pleasant. My customers eagerly waited for their paper; they would see me coming and would want to chat. There

were no subscriptions. I collected cash for the paper once a month, so I learned accounting. I also learned that if you gave good service, people would tip!

The Scrivener: *You were in the insurance business before you became a BC Notary. What other business experience did you have?*

GWB: Living in a small town and being a businessperson, people thought you did everything. Early in my career, I worked for a group that owned insurance offices, real estate offices, travel agencies, movie theatres, and golf courses. Working with this group, I was called upon to do a little bit of everything in the organization. I also had a chance to do some property development in my hometown. Subdivided some properties, bought and sold some properties, and developed a couple of commercial buildings in the downtown core.

The Scrivener: *What was the most enjoyable aspect of being a Notary Public in Terrace, BC?*

GWB: Dealing with the people. Every day brought different issues, various people. Being a Notary means involvement in people's lives. Purchasing a home, selling a home, preparing a Power of Attorney or a Will, assisting a person with personal documents—it all gives you a glimpse of a person's or a family's life. It is a great responsibility and a trust not usually given lightly.

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The Scrivener: *What motivated you to apply for the position of Secretary/ Executive Director of The Society?*

GWB: Being a Board member and watching Stan Nicol and viewing the challenges first-hand gave me a new appreciation for who Notaries are and what Notaries mean to the economic structure of our province. When Stan

decided to retire, I was at a stage in my life where I was ready for a new and diverse challenge. The only problem was leaving my home of 35 years; I do not get to see my grandchildren and children as often as I would like.

The Scrivener: *What are the most enjoyable aspects of your responsibilities?*

GWB: I enjoy dealing with our members. It is bit like being in practice: each day brings a new challenge to my desk, a new problem or situation; being able to help our member through it is satisfying.

I am also the Executive Officer of The Notary Foundation. That position brings me into contact with a lot of people who are involved in the legal community and with individuals who provide services to British Columbians who can't afford legal representation. I am also in contact with those who provide legal education to Notaries, lawyers, and citizens all over the province.



The "Yes, We Can" Leadership Team of The Society of Notaries Public of BC: From left: Marilyn Taylor, Julie Boness, Judy Bowring, and Marny Morin, with CEO of The Society, G. W. (Wayne) Braid. Absent: Cindi Hawkins

The Notary Foundation funds many legal education projects wherein simple and helpful information is provided to the public. An individual can then deal with the matter at hand or is at least able to approach his or her situation or problem from an educated point of view.

The Scrivener: *How much do you travel?*

GWB: Because we have members all over the province, I travel a great deal. I am determined to visit all of the Chapters around the province at least once each year. To respond to the needs of our members and the communities they serve, it is important that The Society knows and can see those communities first-hand.

The Scrivener: *What do you consider the most challenging part of leadership?*

GWB: Waiting for others to catch up! For me the most challenging part is having an idea and then putting the idea to process. Communicating the idea to others can be a challenge. Getting others

to not only buy into the idea and the process, but motivating them to get excited about what the end result might be is a tremendous communication challenge. When I was in business, I could just take an idea and proceed. Now I have committees to deal with, and Boards and members. It is a great challenge, one that I am enjoying, for the most part. It brings me into contact with a lot of people and many different opinions; ideas get shared that way.

The Scrivener: *Which leaders do you admire most?*

GWB: There have been so many, it is hard to answer in a few words. I think we often look to politicians as the great leaders—Churchill, Thatcher, Kennedy, Lincoln, Trudeau, Pearson, Diefenbaker, de Gaulle, Stalin, and Lenin—or at least I do. I love to read about these people; it will be my retirement project to study their lives in more detail to figure out what made these people tick—how they could influence so many others to carry out their ideas.

And then there are the leaders with whom I am involved every day, people I have admired in our Society—George Tanco, the quiet, efficient leader; Ken Sherk, the outgoing, determined leader; Chris Dupuis, who always challenges our Board by asking the questions: *What is in the best interest of the public? What is in the best interest of our members?*; Dr. Hoeter, intelligent and connected; Sally O’Sullivan, the first woman President of The Society; and our current and capable President, Leta Best. I have watched them and admire not only their hard work but their determination to accomplish tasks that will benefit the people they serve.

I admire Ron Usher over at the Law Society of British Columbia—a person so full of ideas and energy, working hard to make a difference. In my article for this issue of *The Scrivener* [page 6], I talk about some of the people in my personal life that I admire as leaders.

The Scrivener: *Do you believe a leader acts differently in good times than in more difficult times?*

GWB: My dad used to say: *when the going gets tough, the tough get going*—one of those sayings that, as a kid, I wondered what the heck he was talking about! It was only later in life that I understood. It is simple; when things are difficult, you can either face the issue with your best efforts or retreat. Sir Winston Churchill is a good example. Here was a man who struggled to even get elected but when the going got tough, he certainly came through!

The Scrivener: *You are a firm believer in continuing education. How do you increase your knowledge and nurture your leadership skills?*

GWB: I “learn on the job” these days. Coming out of my Notary practice into a more corporate environment has brought a lot of somewhat unfamiliar areas into my workday. I now deal with financial institutions, groups, lawyers, and government departments that I did not

deal with in private practice. I am learning how other not-for-profit associations handle matters such as governance, benefits for members, and conference planning. I have also been taking some association management courses that have been very helpful in developing skills for this job.

The Scrivener: *Did you have mentors? Do you have a mentor or a coach today?*

GWB: Oh, I have mentors, and I am sure some of them don’t know it. I have a person that I use as a personal coach. This person is very good at the reality check, at observing and asking the hard questions, and at getting me to really look at motives and biases and keep me focused. Sometimes I need a reminder of what the original goal was. In a busy environment, it is very easy to become distracted and get one-too-many projects going.

The Scrivener: *You were a member of “Grays on Trays” in Terrace. Do you still snowboard, now that you are based in Vancouver?*

GWB: I don’t get out as much as I used to. In Terrace it was an easy 35-minute drive to the mountain. It’s not so easy here in the city. This year, I was able to ride for three or four days. I miss the friends I used to ride with, as well as the exercise!

The Scrivener: *What vision do you have for The Society?*

GWB: My vision is to have a group of well-trained Notary professionals who continue to provide competent legal services to the people of British Columbia.

The Scrivener: *What is most important to you in life?*

GWB: My children: Shayne, Sean, Jason, and Ambur; my grandchildren—all seven of them; my wife Laurie and my two stepchildren, Nick and Morgan; my friends; our Notaries. Being a part of their lives, watching them grow and mature, contributing to their lives so that they may be happy and positive people. Most important, I want to be a person who contributes in a positive way to this world. ▲