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# Three Foundations *Work Together* to Benefit the People of British Columbia

## In Conversation with Val Wilson

*Thanks to Irene Fix who ably transcribed this interview in the Boardroom of The Society of Notaries Public of BC on June 1, 2006.*

**The Scrivener:** Good morning, gentlemen. Let's begin by telling our readers how your foundations work together.

**Braid:** The first thing that comes to my mind is working out the rates of the financial institutions that pay our foundations. Often we do that together.

**Robertson:** We share information about the rates that each of us gets from financial institutions. And we encourage those that aren't paying appropriate rates of interest to do so. Where a particular institution is not paying competitive rates to any of us, on a number of occasions we have collaborated to make a joint approach to that bank or credit union.

This helps all of us, because together we speak for 10,000 lawyers . . .

**Braid:** 300 Notaries . . .

**Pringle:** and 17,000 real estate licensees.

**Robertson:** A joint approach to a financial institution carries considerable weight. We can speak for almost 30,000 people. That's powerful. And we have been successful on a number of occasions in getting a good rate for all of us by working together.

**A joint approach to a financial institution carries considerable weight. We can speak for almost 30,000 people.**

**Braid:** It works for the financial institutions, as well, because they attract those numbers as clients to whom they can market their products. As foundations, we can say to our members, *this is a good organization to deal with because they are helping us through your foundation to do the kinds of things we want to do in the community. Maybe you should look at doing business with them.*

**Pringle:** The members of the Board of Governors of each of the foundations are fiduciaries with a responsibility

to obtain the funds that are due and to achieve that in a way that is competitive and realistic for the conditions that exist in the market. And as staff, we make sure that occurs.

**Braid:** Maximizing that return is one of our jobs.

**The Scrivener:** Do you work with other foundations?

**Robertson:** We compare information with other law foundations in all provinces across the country whose income is generated on the same basis as ours. For example, the size of the legal profession in Alberta is comparable to the profession in BC. If the Alberta group is receiving a better rate from one of the institutions, we can use that information to assist us in our negotiations in BC. That in turn helps the Notary and Real Estate Foundations, too. To my knowledge, there are no similar foundations in other provinces.

**Pringle:** There is an Alberta Real Estate Foundation.

**Braid:** Wayne makes a good point about the Canadian association. Across Canada we are working

together much better over the last 4 years. Frankly, the impetus comes from British Columbia. Wayne and I were able to carry the BC example through to the other law foundations in Canada and create an awareness. We all work much more collaboratively together now than ever before. Do you agree with that, Wayne?

**Robertson:** I agree.

**Pringle:** In the case of working together to negotiate competitive returns from institutions that had been laggards, our efforts for the Real Estate Foundation in the last year have meant about \$60,000 annual extra income. That money will be used as a couple of significant grants for the community.

**Braid:** You bet.

**Robertson:** For the Law Foundation, it has meant perhaps \$400,000 a year in increases. That's a significant amount of money.

**Braid:** It is significant.

**Pringle:** And the benefits are ongoing.

**Robertson:** Yes. Usually, when rates of return are negotiated with financial institutions, they are based on prime, minus a certain percentage rate of interest. The reason the benefits are ongoing for our three foundations is that we have been successful in changing the connection with prime so it doesn't matter whether prime goes up or down. We still get that increased income.

**The Scrivener: Very good negotiating. Please tell us about your respective foundations.**

**Robertson:** The Law Foundation has a Board of Governors of 18—15 lawyers and 3 non-lawyers or lay governors. Twelve lawyers are appointed by the Law Society, the Canadian Bar Association appoints 2, and the Attorney General designates someone to represent him or her. The Attorney General also appoints the 3 non-lawyer governors.

The lawyers hail from across BC. By statute [*Legal Profession Act*], they must represent every region in

the province. My job as Executive Director is to support the board as it carries out the statutory mandate of the foundation, which is to collect the interest on lawyers' pooled trust accounts and distribute it in five statutorily mandated areas: legal aid, legal education, law reform, legal research, and law libraries. In the legal education mandate area, we have included both professional legal education and public legal education.

**Across Canada we are working together much better over the last 4 years. Frankly, the impetus comes from British Columbia.**

A staff of 7 work with me to support the board in its work—2 administrative staff, a controller, and 3 program directors responsible for the grants.

The success of the foundation comes not only from the commitment of its Governors but also its staff. In arriving at the foundation, I was very fortunate to be met by a group of people with incredible competence and commitment. That's essential to a successful program.

**The Scrivener: Are any of them lawyers?**

**Robertson:** One of the program directors is a lawyer. The other two have significant experience in the legal world, either public education or legal advocacy. And of course our controller is an accountant. Our board has a number of subcommittees, including a new grants committee that makes recommendations to the board about funding projects.

We have a policy and planning committee, a finance and administration committee, and a bursary, scholarship, and fellowship committee that oversees scholarships for postgraduate legal studies.

A child welfare fund committee administers the \$3 million we

have received from the Ministry for Children and Family Development to support alternate dispute-resolution mechanisms in child welfare, with a focus on Aboriginal children and families.

A funding-strategies committee is looking at the question of whether we are funding the right groups to do the right work with the right amount of money. The Law Foundation has been in existence for over 35 years. We are undertaking a significant strategic review to determine whether we are continuing to successfully meet our mandate and using the funds the way the statute contemplated.

As you can see, a lot of committee meetings perform a very valuable function in formatting discussions for the board, so that when it meets—which it does three times a year for day-long meetings—the questions and the information are well formulated so the discussion can be focused.

The Governors perform enormous service to the foundation. It is a huge time commitment and attendance at all our meetings is close to 100 percent, which is remarkable when you consider that in addition to serving on likely two committees that meet four times a year and attending five full days of board meetings every year, they are also liaison Governors for some of our 50 continuing programs that meet once a year for a half-day or so.

**The Scrivener: That's excellent. Tim?**

**Pringle:** Our enabling legislation is the *Real Estate Services Act* and we are modelled on the Law Foundation of BC. We came into existence in '85. Our mandate is a non-profit endeavour related to the use and conservation of land and real estate in BC.

Our responsibilities are not as defined as those of the Law Foundation and the Notary Foundation; all our funding is at the election of the Governors who decide where it goes and what emphasis to pursue from time to time.

In addition to the demand for our foundation's funding, people seek our expertise because we have a unique

view of all of BC and the kinds of issues that communities are trying to address regarding the demands placed on the landscape for settlement or the protection of the ecology. Sometimes we see common issues where we can help put players together to create collaborations and efficiencies.

**The Scrivener:** Thank you, Tim. Wayne?

**Braid:** I'm the Executive Officer of the Notary Foundation. The Notary Foundation's legislation was created in 1986 as part of the *Notaries Act*, also based on legislation from the BC Law Foundation. I hope that in our conversation today, Wayne Robertson will talk about the fact that the BC Law Foundation was the first foundation in North America. Foundations in 50 states and 10 provinces are patterned after it. I think we should allow him to blow his horn about that.

In the Notary Foundation, I'm responsible for providing the information to our Board of Governors to operate our foundation to meet the mandate of the legislation, which is exactly the same as Wayne's Law Foundation. The difference is that I don't have the discretionary ability to work with the funds, as do my counterparts here. Our legislation sets out that 50 percent of funds generated must go to Legal Services.

The Legal Services Society automatically receives 50 percent of our funding; they spend that fund within their mandate and their objectives. We have 11 Governors, 8 of whom are elected from the Directors of The Society of Notaries.

The Attorney General appoints three others. One is always a representative from the AG's office; currently, that person is Robert Adamson. Jennifer Harry is a lawyer and Wayne Strandlund is from the real estate industry; he is a past president of British Columbia Real Estate Association.

The Governors are elected for 3-year terms. Traditionally the Chair of our foundation is the Immediate Past President of The Society; he or she serves the foundation for a 2-year term.

**Robertson:** The history of the law foundation concept is interesting. It began in the late 1960s when some senior lawyers in British Columbia became aware of an initiative in New South Wales, Australia. In that state, the interest earned on lawyers' trust accounts was to be used for public purposes, for the public good—rather than having the banks keep the money.

**The Law Foundation has given out more than \$300 million in 35 years.**

These BC lawyers, led by Ken Meredith QC—later Mr. Justice Meredith—and Art Harper QC, approached Les Peterson, the Attorney General at that time, and got the concept incorporated into the *Legal Profession Act*. Last year we held a 35th anniversary event at which Mr. Harper, now 92, shared with us his story of going to Victoria to meet with the Attorney General.

The Law Foundation has given out more than \$300 million in 35 years. As Wayne said, the concept of using the money to support Legal Aid and the other objectives of the foundation has now spread to every province and territory in Canada and every state in the United States.

Its introduction into the United States has an interesting history. Sholto Heberton QC, who was involved in the creation of the foundation, had a friend from his early legal career in New York who had become a Supreme Court judge in Florida—a fellow named Art England. They visited together on vacation one year, spoke about this concept, and Mr. Justice England started a similar program in Florida. From there it spread to every other state.

**The Scrivener:** I understand the concept was challenged in Florida a few years ago.

**Robertson:** Yes. In the United States, they have endured a number of legal challenges. The main basis of the challenge is the *United States Constitution* and whether the states'

taking this money constituted an unlawful taking under the *Constitution*. The argument was that the money was really clients' money and therefore the government's taking the money from clients through passing the legislation was wrongful.

A number of state cases have now resolved themselves through decisions by the United States Supreme Court, which has declared it is not unlawful to do what IOLTA—Interest On Lawyers' Trust Accounts—programs in the United States do, which is use this money for the public good.

One of the reasons the challenge was unsuccessful is because many of the amounts that end up being received by the law foundations—IOLTA programs—from any individual account or any individual client source are very small.

As a result, when you consider the service charges and administration fees and the costs of calculating, on an individual basis, the amount of interest the client might have earned, it is not only a lot of work, the cost of administration exceeds the amount received. Therefore, there was no real loss to the clients because individually, they would not be able to receive money in the end.

**Pringle:** So it wasn't a material issue.

**Braid:** I think, Wayne, that it went through Circuit Court, Supreme Court, and the Court of Appeals. In most of the states now, it's pretty well put to bed.

**Robertson:** Yes. In addition to the interest on lawyers' trust accounts, some of the American law foundations have been successful in getting real estate escrow money; some interest on real estate escrow monies are directed to the law foundation. Ohio is a state where that has happened.

**Pringle:** In Washington, state legislation directs certain escrow interests to go to specific programs related to real estate issues, but it is not done through a third party. It is just delivered directly to purposes.

**Robertson:** There is another way we work together, the three of us, that

I think should be mentioned. It is not uncommon for us to receive applications for funding from the same groups, sometimes for the same project.

If it does happen that we are approached to fund a public legal education initiative or other project, we will consult with each other about the project and its value and share information and thoughts.

On occasion, we will refer groups who have good ideas to each other, to help them get assistance with respect to their proposals. That means good proposals have more access to funds. Clearly, with the Real Estate Foundation, the idea must have a focus that fits with their work.

**Pringle:** Yes. A good example in our case is West Coast Environmental Law, which gets considerable support from the Law Foundation. But we fund quite a bit of activity through the West Coast Environmental Law Research Foundation.

Going back some years, we helped them work on conservation covenant legislation for BC that came into force in '94 and '95. Right now we are working with West Coast Environmental Law on policy around water-sustainability issues.

We make endowment grants to a number of universities and some colleges.

With the colleges, most grants are for bursaries and student aid.

With the universities, the grants are for professorships and research centres and other programs. We help support some ongoing initiatives. We have put out about \$6 million in endowment funding over the years. Our funding goes to projects that financial institutions are also funding. We overlap with Vancity a lot and with some of the other credit unions and banks. Obviously we have mutual interests.

**Braid:** The Notary Foundation is somewhat smaller than these other two foundations. There is basically just me, a part-time accounting person, and a part-time administrative person.

Working together is very helpful for me. If we are looking at a project and I need some background history or other information, the Law Foundation is very cooperative. I can speak to the project director or someone from their grants committee; they are quite willing to share. Then, if we can, we help out that particular group.

**We are a project-funder; that's the difference between the Notary Foundation and these other two foundations...**

We are a project-funder; that's the difference between the Notary Foundation and these other two foundations who will, on a continual basis, fund programs. Perhaps they will tell you a little later about how they do that.

The Notary Foundation likes to fund projects. For example, if a group needs money to build a Website, we would like to help them with it. We don't want to be a core funder; we want the groups to find their core funding. Although we may provide seed money to get a project going, it is always with the understanding that they will make it self-sustaining.

**The Scrivener: That's a clear distinction. Tim, what are your current projects?**

**Pringle:** Right now we have an emphasis in one area—non-metropolitan communities, helping them find resources to address their planning challenges. BC is booming with the demand for resort properties, recreational properties, second homes, retirement migration, and amenity migration.

This movement of people and the real estate demand have a lot of impact on the social and environmental capital of local communities. This initiative is Our Communities in Transition Program. It was established in '04 and is in great demand. We also do quite a bit of funding in relation to non-profit housing in BC.

We, by our legislation, interact with professional associations and other organizations whose members are active in the real estate industry at some level. Not just brokerage but a series of appraisers, developers, architects, landscape architects, and so on. It is a huge field.

We support education and research with these groups. In addition, we work with community organizations that have specific problems. Yesterday I met with Carnegie Community Centre regarding some research they wanted to do, because that area is becoming gentrified.

**The Scrivener: That building housed the original Carnegie Library, down on Main.**

**Pringle:** Yes, at Main and Hastings. Or it might be a group doing watershed planning in Comox. We do a wide range of things.

**Braid:** Before I came to do this job, Val, as you know I was in Terrace for many years. One of the organizations in which I served was the hospital foundation. Terrace is a young community. As it matured, there was little housing for seniors and little assisted-living housing with health care and those sorts of services. We were looking at ways to develop that.

I was able to work with some people to get land donated. To start the process, however, we needed funds to hire the architect. Before we could begin raising money and approach government for assistance, we needed to put the concept on paper.

I don't know if Tim remembers, but I approached the Real Estate Foundation and they funded that project; they gave us \$75,000 to get that project going. Later, after I left Terrace, it became a reality. Today they have a terrific assisted-living facility. It got started because of seed money from the Real Estate Foundation.

**Pringle:** Yes, I do recall.

**The Scrivener: What are your current projects, Wayne?**

**Robertson:** We are different from both our partners here in that most of our money goes for continuing programs.

We draw a distinction between programs and projects—projects are time-limited and programs receive ongoing core funding.

Our foundation has consistently held a commitment to provide core funding for groups. In fact, more than 90 percent of the money we give out each year is for the 50 or so core-funded organizations that receive money from us on an ongoing basis. We have funded some of those groups for over 30 years.

**The Scrivener: Who are some of those groups?**

**Robertson:** Some of the groups we fund on a core-funding basis include the Public Interest Advocacy Centre and the Community Legal Assistance Society. We are the main funder of the British Columbia Court House Library Society. We fund a portion of the professional legal training course for lawyers. We fund 20 community organizations that provide poverty law-advocacy services around the province.

We are the main funder of the People's Law School. We fund the Law Courts Education Society. For the last number of years, we have been the main funder of the British Columbia Law Institute, which does law reform work for the province. In some way or another, we fund the vast majority of the law-related organizations in BC that provide legal aid or legal education services to the province.

**The Scrivener: Without your input, the picture would be very different for the people of British Columbia.**

**Robertson:** It would, when you think of what \$12 to \$17 million worth of funding means. Its impact is significant.

**Braid:** That's true. Our pet project for the last couple of years has been establishing scholarships and bursaries in some of the community colleges and university colleges. While a lot of funding was going to legal education and so on for Notaries and lawyers, we felt we were not helping the people who work in those offices or who might work for the government or in the legal departments of corporations.

The Notary Foundation saw a need, so we started working with the colleges to establish bursaries and scholarships for legal assistant programs and legal administrator programs. I have to say it has been a wonderful project—getting to work with the colleges, identifying their needs, and seeing the work they are doing in our communities. I think it is terrific. There are some very, very fine colleges in this province that we can be really proud of.

That focus will probably continue for another couple of years for us. We haven't reached them all yet or they haven't reached us.

**We give out somewhere between \$600,000 and \$2 million each year in projects, in addition to our core funding.**

**Robertson:** In terms of new initiatives from us, in the past few years we have supported a number of initiatives in the area of poverty law. When the cuts were made to Legal Aid about 4 years ago, one impact was that 38 of the 45 Legal Aid offices in the province were closed. The poverty law service that those offices had provided was essentially extinguished.

We have responded to that need by funding an additional 12 poverty law advocacy offices in communities where there was no access to justice whatsoever. Another key initiative in the last couple of years is reviewing the cost of legal education. With tuition fee increases, the cost of a legal education to become a lawyer was becoming prohibitive.

**The Scrivener: How much is that tuition today?**

**Robertson:** Approximately \$10,000 a year. Spread out over a number of years after a Bachelor's degree, it is not surprising to learn that many law students are significantly in debt at the end of their studies or, in some cases, can't afford to attend. We view that as an access-to-justice issue,

because people should be able to pursue those studies.

So, in the last few years, we've enhanced significantly our support for the law schools to help them assist students to be able to afford their education.

Another area where we have been active is our project funding. We give out somewhere between \$600,000 and \$2 million each year in projects, in addition to our core funding.

We have funded a number of Web-based or online initiatives such as the Family Law Website that the Legal Services Society has put together and the Continuing Legal Education Society's online learning initiative, which has resulted in students being able to take a number of their courses online.

Needless to say, the Courthouse Library Society and others who provide legal education—including the Dial-a-Law program run by the Canadian Bar Association—are more and more using the Web as their medium to transmit legal information to people. Dial-a-Law is a public access Website and telephone service whereby, either going on the Web or by phoning, you can read or hear a script about a particular legal topic.

They have over 100 topics—everything from *What should I do if I'm separating from my husband?* to *Am I entitled to get my damage deposit back from my landlord?* to *What if I'm charged with impaired driving?* The number of topics is large.

**The Scrivener: How is that service promoted to the people of British Columbia?**

**Robertson:** The Canadian Bar Association advertises and we at the Law Foundation pay for ads in every *Yellow Pages* phone book in the province.

**Braid:** We have talked about spending large amounts of money, but the important part is really the people. The process starts with the account manager at the bank or the financial institution. We meet to discuss what we do—all the things we have talked

about today—and how we can partner with that financial institution. They are not just taking this money and making a donation. It comes from a fund that our Notaries, our members, have put into the financial institution as part of commercial transactions with their clients in the community.

The project we fund may be the YWCA's Crabtree Corner. The people there benefit from the cooperative efforts between the Notaries and the financial institutions. Many people are involved along the way as we go through that process. It's pretty cool.

For me, the fun parts of this work are working with people and meeting with these two gentlemen. As Wayne was saying, he has terrific people at the Law Foundation. I get to interact with them. And on the real estate side, I enjoy dealing with Tim's staff at the Real Estate Foundation.

**Pringle:** I would certainly echo that. Going around to the communities in BC, it's amazing to see the kind of energy that people put into volunteer activities and the commitment to make their community a better place.

Although there are lots of challenges, many creative ideas are put forth to help work them out. We often hear the doom and gloom stuff but the other side is that we are fortunate to be immersed in the challenges. That's one of the things I most enjoy about the job—being in a pool of good ideas all the time. I like that.

In a recent meeting together, I had to laugh because there were three Waynes in the meeting and me.

**Braid:** Just one Tim. We called him TimBit. [Laughter]

**The Scrivener:** Please tell us about your early life, Wayne.

**Braid:** I am a Saskatchewan boy, originally. In 1954 the Aluminium Company of Canada had completed a mega project in Kitimat in British Columbia; my father left the farm to take a job in the newly created city.

I was in Grade 1 and 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 boarded a ship bound for Kitimat. The only way in and out then was by boat or floatplane.

My very first job was delivering newspapers. In Kitimat in those days, the papers were 2 days old when they arrived—but 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.

**For me, the fun parts of this work are working with people and meeting with these two gentlemen.**

I delivered papers every day. On the weekends, *The Vancouver Sun* had a special edition that was much larger than the daily issue and most of my customers also got the *Star Weekly*. Because I had so many customers and the Saturday papers were so big, I had to go over my route twice.

It was a great learning experience. I made \$60 a month.

You had to be diligent—people like their paper delivered at the same time every day. You had to be polite and pleasant. My customers eagerly awaited their paper; they would see me coming and would want to chat.

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?

**Braid:** 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. 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—I subdivided some properties, bought and sold some properties, and developed a couple of commercial buildings in the downtown core.

I enjoyed a very busy Notary practice in Terrace for 15 years. I also served as Coroner, School Trustee, Director of BC Winter Games and Northern BC Winter Games, and I am a past president of the Terrace Rotary Club.

My experience and background include a strong interest in the electronic provision of legal services. I have served on the Electronic Filing System Committee for the Land Title Office since my appointment as Executive Director of The Society in 2001.

**The Scrivener:** Your turn, Tim. Where are your roots?

**Pringle:** I grew up in a farming country east of Spokane, Washington. My family moved to BC when I was in high school. I attended UBC, graduated in Arts, worked a year in social work, and thought it was awful. As a social worker in a centre for youth who were the wards of the court, it soon became clear to me that what the kids needed was a friend, not a social worker and a probation officer and a child care worker and a psychiatrist. They all had a long list of professionals hanging on their neck. They just needed somebody who really cared about them.

And that's why most of them were in trouble; they didn't have that. Anyway, that's why I left. I wasn't going to be part of a system that just made life more complex for these people.

I worked for the Anglican and United churches, jointly reviewing their social programming, then went to the Vancouver Foundation for 6 years. I worked in small business for 5 or 6 years, then went to the Real Estate Foundation in '88; I am there right now! [Laughter]

**The Scrivener: Did you have a mentor, Tim?**

**Pringle:** Yes, at various times. There were always significant people who influenced me one way or another about ideas and careers and being decisive in life about what you want to do—and being committed when you made that decision.

**The Scrivener: Are you currently mentoring others?**

**Pringle:** Yes, I do that. I do quite a bit of volunteer work in association with my work. Some mentoring occurs that way. Some occurs with my own staff, in training them.

The intellectual and imaginative and energetic history of the foundation is always attached to someone on staff. Because the board comes and goes more frequently than the staff, you always have to have someone there who can interpret how the foundation works.

This work requires intuition, so you need to have an aptitude for that. Some of the mentoring I'm facing now is transferring the institutional memory and energy.

We have a staff of four-and-a-half people and are increasing it soon to five-and-a-half.

**The Scrivener: Wayne, where were you born?**

**Robertson:** I was born in Fort St. John. My mother's family is from the Peace country and my father's family is from the Cariboo. Horsefly, in particular.

**Pringle:** I've been there! [Laughter]

**Robertson:** My father was in the Army, so my early days were spent travelling. I have lived in five provinces and overseas in England. I attended a total of 13 schools before I graduated in North Bay, Ontario. I went to university in Ottawa—Carleton—where I did an Arts degree, then took a summer job working in a "treatment home for disturbed children."

I loved the work and realized that social workers were the people who made significant decisions about children in those circumstances. I proceeded to do a social work degree

at the University of Calgary. I did a practicum placement at the drunk tank, followed by one at the Legal Aid Society of Alberta, which piqued my interest in law. I went on to law at the University of Alberta.

Partway through law school, I met my wife who got a job as a dietician in north-eastern Alberta at the health unit in St. Paul. I needed a summer job, so I applied to the Alberta Law Foundation in 1978 for a grant to set up the first-ever rural community law office in Canada at that time.

**All the Governors of the Law Foundation bring enormous commitment and wisdom to what they do.**

They gave me the money so I continued my education. I graduated from law school and we decided to move to British Columbia. I articulated in Vancouver in a small firm—Corrigan, Bernardino, Dorman, and Baker—then spent 2 years working on the North Shore at the North Shore Neighbourhood Legal Clinic with Don Jabour, where I did a general practice.

I moved downtown to do litigation at the firm of Lindsay Kenney, where I stayed for a number of years and eventually was a partner. I did general litigation, including 7 years as counsel for the Director of Child Protection in Vancouver. In 1995 I moved to the Legal Services Society to establish the Vancouver Family Law Clinic of Legal Aid, which eventually became the largest family law firm in the province.

After 3 years, I moved to the head office of Legal Services as a client services manager and general counsel to Legal Services. I was responsible for the some of the branch offices in the province until 2002, when I moved to the Law Foundation.

**The Scrivener: Do you miss litigation?**

**Robertson:** I do miss the courtroom. I have days when I miss the prospect of an energetic trial. That said, law foundation work for me is a wonderful

culmination of all my interests—interests in people, community organizations, and a system of justice that is accessible, expeditious, and fair.

In the area of community work, I have been involved on over 15 boards of organizations over the years and have a strong commitment and belief in the power of volunteerism to make a difference in our world. The Law Foundation combines the law, access to justice, and community in a way that for me is fulfilling.

**The Scrivener: Did you have mentors along the way, Wayne?**

**Robertson:** I've been the beneficiary of much guidance and support over the years. One person who helped my thinking develop significantly was a professor of social work at the University of Calgary named Ben Carniol, currently a professor at Ryerson in Toronto.

Ben was one of the first people to combine law and social work as disciplines. And he taught courses in social justice and social action and social work and law. For me, he helped connect the law and our legal system with social issues.

Another mentor was Don Jabour, with whom I worked during the first 2 years of my career as a lawyer. He believed passionately in the public's right to have the law demystified for them.

I also want to mention the Governors of the Law Foundation, particularly Don Silversides QC, Heather Raven, and Warren Wilson QC. All the Governors of the Law Foundation bring enormous commitment and wisdom to what they do. They are continually guiding me in my day-to-day work and in the development of our mutual thinking about how we can best move forward.

**Braid:** One of the things Wayne hasn't said is that he is bilingual. In some of our travels, that has helped us out. Wayne speaks excellent French. He gets me by sometimes. [Laughter]

**The Scrivener: Did you have mentors, Wayne?**

