

Profile of a Notary: Kamloops, BC

Ken MacKinlay: Team Player and Community Booster

Ken was born at Royal Inland Hospital in Kamloops, BC, in 1949. His father had lived in the Kamloops area before the war, then spent 18 months in the Veteran's hospital in Vancouver undergoing surgery and rehabilitation in 1945 and early 1946. In 1946, he married Ken's mother, whom he had met in Enderby where she had been teaching school. They began a family, which entitled him to participate in a war veteran's program for job placement in government offices.

Ken's father was offered a job in the Kamloops Land Registry Office along with affordable housing in a wartime housing subdivision in Kamloops (purchase price paid for the house and property was \$4,950). Ken's dad began work in the Kamloops Land Registry in 1947, two years before Ken's birth. He was in charge of the Kamloops Land Registry survey department throughout the 1950s, overseeing the registration of the subdivision, rights of way, and easement plans that are the basis of title and charge registration in the Land Registry. In 1959, he started one of the first Land Registry agencies in Kamloops, Central Survey Services Ltd. (The family home was now worth \$10,000.)

Ken attended public schooling in Kamloops before trekking off to the University of British Columbia to take a Bachelor of Arts degree, majoring in Economics. But what to do after graduation? He worked odd jobs,

travelled Europe in a Volkswagen campervan, worked in the UBC mail room—but then what?

Living, working, and raising a family in Kamloops has provided Ken with a full and enriched life.

Because his dad and mom had a divergence in the direction of their lives and moved from Kamloops, they thought it would be nice if Ken would go back to Kamloops to tend the family business. Lo and behold, his career as a

land title agent was born in 1973 at Central Survey Services. And so it continues to this day, with only the name changed to MacKinlay Agencies Ltd.

This is one road to becoming a Notary Public. Land title agents work closely with Notaries. Soon some of the agency's Notary clients were encouraging Ken to apply to The Society of Notaries. In 1975, a Notary Seal became vacant in Kamloops. In May of 1976 (that wartime house was sold in June of that year for \$30,000), Ken was commissioned as a Notary Public for the City of Kamloops, just months before his marriage to his wife Maureen.

He was fortunate to open his first Notary office as an associate with a



Photo: Victor Hamm

Notary from “the old school,” John Harvey, with whom he shared offices for the next six years. Ken certainly benefitted from John’s years of experience as a Notary, and no doubt John benefitted from Ken’s land registry knowledge.

For all but one year of Ken’s Notary career, he has been in practice with a Notary associate. For Ken, it is the only way to go. Practising with an associate such as Jim Fulton, his associate for the last dozen years, allows them both more flexibility in their work environment while offering clients uninterrupted service. It also gives them someone off which to bounce ideas and problem situations. They can also share experiences to help each other when they encounter situations one of them may not have come across before.

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A career as a Notary has provided Ken with a great amount of satisfaction through being in a position to help people. The documents for which most of his clients seek help are baffling to them. His experience in dealing with documents’ different applications enables him to help them interpret what is required in completing the document. This is also true in the work Notaries do in real estate conveyancing, making the fairly complex procedure of completing clients’ home purchases seem effortless to them, making sure in the process that clients know what they are buying—especially first-time home buyers.

Having an associate also made the time Ken was on the Board of Directors of The Society, from 1982 until 1998, more manageable. When he routinely travelled to Vancouver for Board and committee meetings, the other Notary in his office could close off any files in his absence. Jim

is very community-minded and is involved in volunteering with a number of organizations so Ken reciprocates by covering for him periodically.

Ken has been a member of a Rotary club in Kamloops since 1980 and is a past president of the club. From time to time, his Rotary duties have taken him out of the office. Again Jim has been there to hold the fort. Ken’s family has been more involved in Rotary than most. Over the past 18 years, through the Rotary Student Exchange program, they have hosted students from Italy, Australia, Thailand, and South Africa—usually for about three months each.

This has been a very enriching experience for his entire family, especially the three daughters. It has really opened their eyes to the world. All are keen travellers. The oldest took her third-year university studies in Sweden as a UBC exchange student. After graduating, she left Canada two weeks after the September 11 tragedy to travel in South East Asia. Kathryn ended up in Taiwan where she is presently spending a year teaching ESL.

Six months after graduating from high school, their second daughter, Jayne, left Canada to spend the better part of a year travelling and working in Australia before returning to Kamloops. She is currently continuing her education at the University College of the Cariboo. The third daughter, Claire, 14 and in grade 9, is constantly on the lookout for exchange programs in which she might participate. It’s only a matter of time before she, too, will be off to foreign parts.

Living, working, and raising a family in Kamloops has provided Ken with a full and enriched life. By a survey done in 2002, Kamloops was designated as the most affordable, small-sized city in North America. The city’s dry climate and proximity to a wealth of recreational resources allow its residents to enjoy a wide range of activities on a moderate income. Sun Peaks ski resort at Tod Mountain—site of BC’s best ski and snowboard runs and facilities—is less than an hour from the city. Shuswap

Lake, possibly the best summer-cottage lake in BC, is also less than an hour away.

Over the years, Kamloops has acquired numerous facilities that allow for high-quality entertainment and recreation within the city.

The Western Canada Theatre Company, a professional theatre company in Kamloops, stages high-quality productions; the 5,700 seat coliseum has seen concerts with the likes of Shania Twain, and is home to the three-time Canadian Major Junior Hockey champion Kamloops Blazers hockey team (and the city has five other hockey arenas); the 50 metre swimming pool and the adjoining modern track and field facility (both legacies of Kamloops' hosting of the 1993 Canada Summer Games) have produced world-calibre athletes and regularly host elite competitions; and the dozens of playing fields used for hosting tournaments for many sports have lead to Kamloops' proclaiming itself the Tournament Capital of Canada.

All these facilities and more have allowed Ken's family to be able to afford to downhill ski, play hockey, attend dance school, swim competitively, play indoor tennis, cross country ski, play broomball, and attend plays, concerts, and other events in the winter. During the summer, they spend time at a lakeside cottage, water ski, play golf, play tennis, play youth soccer, hike, and camp out in nearby mountains with unbeatable scenery.

Ken has gone a long way toward achieving the most important thing to him in life—to raise his family in an environment where everyone has the opportunity for a high quality of life, the chance to have a wide variety of experiences, and an appreciation for the world around them, all of which will help them to make informed choices about the kind of lifestyle they pursue in the future. ▲

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