

# The Westend Weekly

## Bringing Communities Together



Box 66, 303 Fifth St., Rainy River, ON P0W 1L0 Ph. 807-852-3815, Fax. 807-852-1863, Email. westendweekly@tbaytel.net Vol. 22, No. 24 Wednesday, September 24, 2014  
Serving the Rainy River District for over 23 years! Read us on line at www.westendweekly.ca. Check out the pictures on line. They are so good!

### Rainy River District Court House celebrates 100th Anniversary



Lawrence G. Phillips and Lawrence A. Eustace join Crown Attorney, Robert A. Young at the Special Sitting of the Court.



Regional Senior Justice Helen Pierce delivers her opening remarks.



Elder Gilbert Smith (far right) is joined by drummers from Naicatchewenin First Nation from I. William Jourdain, Andrew Easton and Mike Adams.



Superior Court of Justice – Judges for the Northwest Region from I. The Honourable Douglas C. Shaw; The Honourable F. Bruce Fitzpatrick; The Honourable Terrance A. Platana; The Honourable John dePencier Wright; The Honourable Helen M. Pierce; and The Honourable John S. Fregeau.

By: Teresa Hazel

“The place of justice is a hallowed place”, quoted Regional Senior Justice Helen M. Pierce as she delivered her remarks during a Special Sitting of the Court in honour of the 100th Anniversary of the Rainy River District Court House here last Wednesday.

Taken from the *Essays of Sir Francis Bacon* in 1625, Justice Pierce explained that in those few, poignant words, Bacon acknowledged the value of the law to society, a value that we recognize to this day.

“I think of the law as a river that flows through time. Having lapped up against our ancestors, it glides past us, and will travel onward to touch our descendants. As a judge, I am

part of that river. Many judges have preceded me, many judges will follow”, said Justice Pierce in her eloquent speech to mark the occasion.

“The law may be mankind’s most elegant creation. Over the centuries, we have learned that a principled approach to human interaction is a better way of solving disputes than violence.

The law was so important to civil society that it became institutionalized in special buildings we call court houses”.

She went on to explain that court houses were constructed to promote the exchange of ideas in an orderly way.

“They are also designed so that members of the community can listen, observe, and form their own judgments



Ontario Court of Justice - from I. Justice J. Hoshizaki, Justice D. Fraser, Retired Justice Judythe Little, Justice P. Bishop, Regional Senior Justice Marc Bode, Justice of the Peace, Pat Clysdale-Cornell and Justice of the Peace Ron Beck.

about a case. The court room is an open place. It belongs to the community”.

Prior to the court house being built in 1913-14, there was the construction of a jail in Fort Frances in 1907-08. Until the court house was built, a temporary court room and judge’s chambers were set up at the Fort Frances Town Hall.

The Chief Architect for the construction of the Court House was Mr. F.R. Heakes and the tender for the building was awarded to the Fort William firm of Seaman and Penman.

“The contract price for the building is reported at what now seems like the modest sum of \$54,719”, noted Justice Pierce.

The space was utilized for the court room as well as a judge’s chambers, a jury room, a law library and offices for

the court recorder and Crown Attorney.

Over the years, there has been renovations and maintenance projects. The building now contains renovated court room space in the basement, a motions room on the second floor that is also used for videoconferencing, office space for two judges and for the resident Justice of the Peace, robing rooms for the bar, a law library, a remote testimony room for child witnesses, improved cell space for prisoners who are held at the court house during the day, and the Crown Attorney’s office.

Pierce noted that a source reported that between 1931 and 1945, six men were hanged at Fort Frances as a result of convictions for murder.

“We are no longer hanging people. The nature of the cases heard within these walls varies widely”.

She then went on to explain the various roles of the Justice of the Peace who consider search warrants, preside over bail hearings and Provincial offences trials that might involve driving offences, hunt-



Rainy River Law Library Association – from I. Trudy McCormick, Barbara Morgan, Lawrence Phillips, Lawrence Eustace, Robert A. Young, Wallace Crowe and Clare Brunetta.

ing or fishing infractions, health and safety cases, school attendance, environmental issues or a myriad of other issues.

The Ontario Court of Justice presides over preliminary inquiries, cases about child protection, custody or related matters, young offender charges, criminal trials and pleas or the occasional appeal.

In the Superior Court of Justice, the judge may be occupied with a civil or criminal jury trial, or trials or motions on subjects as diverse as divorce and family law, contracts, aboriginal land claims, negligence, wills and estates, real estate, or municipal law issues.

The Court House employs ten people in the Registrar’s office, two in the Crown Attorney’s office, and two custodians. There are two police officers assigned to the court when it is in session and two additional officers are on duty when there are persons in custody at the court.

Other agencies also provide services to the court when it is in session including a representative from Legal Aid, two

court workers from the United Native Friendship Centre as well as a youth justice coordinator. The Canadian Mental Health Association also sends a court worker and the Family Law Information Centre lawyer is in attendance two half-days per month.

Justice Pierce concluded her remarks as follows:

“The court house has served the District of Rainy River well, for these hundred years. Perhaps our descendants will gather to celebrate her bi-centennial. It is right and proper to wish this grand old dame Happy Birthday!”

Remarks were also provided by Lynne Wagner, Assistant Deputy Attorney General Court Services Division who also acted as Master of Ceremony.

She introduced Elder Gilbert Smith to say a few words on behalf of the First Nations communities.

“This is a very important day for me”, he said. “A lot of good things and sad things happen in this court room. That’s the way the system is”. He reflected on the past 100 years and the evolution

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### Rainy River Fire Dept. is putting out a fundraising calendar



This is a sample page of the new calendar featuring some of the old retired guys. The other pages will feature current firefighters from the department in some pretty “artistic” poses. It will be entertaining for sure. Watch for it, it’s coming out soon! Pictured from left, Martin Dufresne, Don Marquis, Eugene Heyens, George Pratt, Dan Furyk and Tom Irvine. photos are by Mike Fairfield



Court Staff – from I. Barbara Roy, Client Services Representative, Rolanda Peacock, Supervisor of Court Operations (Kenora); Frances Grant, Superior Court of Justice Judicial Secretary; Dawn Helseth, Court Reporter; Jackie McMahon, Client Services Representative, Barbara Brazao, Manager of Regional Court Operations; Jo-Dee Kamm, Director of Court Operation Northwest Region (Thunder Bay); Vicki Jewell, Supervisor of Court Operations; Lynne Wagner, Assistant Deputy Attorney General Court Services Division; Patricia Cupp, Regional Manager Judicial Services; Patrick Monahan, Deputy Attorney General; James Cornish, Assistant Deputy Attorney General Criminal Law Division; Michelle Mauro, Court Reporter; and Kelly Woods, Court Clerk and Registrar.



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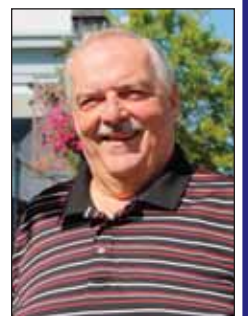


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