

# Class of 65 Newsletter **Bulletin d'Information—Classe de 65**

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## **Editor's Corner/Coin du rédacteur**

I hope everyone is still managing this crisis and sharing my fervent wish that we may be on the downslope, at least as far as the health issue is concerned. The economic impact is quite another matter with relief nowhere in sight. This issue contains a couple of thought provoking articles on the crisis by honorary class member **H24263 John Cowan** and by frequent contributor, **6533 Gord Forbes**. We also hear from another regular, **6599 Gerry Mueller** who shares some of his pandemic experiences. I will try to provide an overview of the Foundation financial reports by distilling a couple of fairly lengthy and detailed reports. First off, however, it is my sad duty to report the passing of two more classmates, one of which took place some time ago, but which was only recently revealed.

## **6246 Robert Fraser (1941-2020)**

**Fraser, Robert Russell** – passed away suddenly at his home on Friday, March 27, 2020 at the age of 78 years.



Bob Fraser of Pembroke, husband of Doreen Fraser. Father of Mellissa Fraser (Dushan Horvat), Ottawa and Melanie Lapierre (Derek), Pembroke. Papa to Greyson and Grandpa to Noah & Lucas. Son of the late Russell & Audrey Fraser.

Respecting Bob's wishes, cremation has taken place. A private family celebration of life will be held at a later date.

Arrangements entrusted to the Malcolm, Deavitt & Binhammer Funeral Home, Pembroke. In lieu of flowers, as an expression of sympathy, donations to the Ottawa Heart Institute would be appreciated.



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6437 Pecho, Verne Dwight, (21 Feb 43-22 Mar 15)

Verne passed away at his home in Vancouver, BC. He is survived by his children Jennifer (Colin), Cameron, Janice Schultz (Mike); his sister Evelyn Brown (Keith); his brother Don (Wendy); Susan Pecho; Sheila Bush; numerous nieces and nephews and two beloved grandchildren

Born in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, he began his long career in Finance in Vancouver after graduating with an MBA from Harvard.

An active member of his church and community, he is missed by many former-colleagues, friends and family in Canada and Austria.



Coronavirus: Two nations, two systems,  
one pattern by H24263 John Cowan

To no-one's very great surprise the United States of America handled the first few stages of the Covid-19 pandemic badly. After a period of dithering, denial, and poor attention to expertise, the various levels of government began to act, but unevenly, with poor messaging, fulminating partisanship, and the disadvantage of a thoroughly decayed and resource-poor public health system. The delays have been costly in lives and treasure. But now the United States is picking up steam somewhat, testing more and doing somewhat more, though the lack of even-handedness continues to grate. Eventually, the Americans will solve this problem as they have every other, which is to say by dumping huge amounts of money, scientific talent and industrial power on the problem until it succumbs, which might indeed be a year or two from now.

In any major crisis, the United States is always late-to-task, and not very sure-footed at the outset, but succeeds in the end by bludgeoning the problem to death with overwhelming financial, industrial and intellectual might. This was true of two world wars and a variety of other significant challenges since it became a major power.

The reasons why it always does this are somewhat beyond the control of individuals, because they are rooted in the structure of American democracy. The structure is cumbersome and complex beyond belief. Newcomers to Washington take decades to learn where all the buttons are. And it is not accidental that it is so. The Founding Fathers wanted to create a system where it was nearly, but not quite impossible to get something done from the centre. This appealed to them, because most of them held to the view that they had just finished fighting a seven year long war against over-government, and in the slower-moving times of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a structure where all the balanced parts might eventually agree on something was all they really needed at the centre. Most of the immediate decisions could be made at the periphery, ie in the state or local democratic institutions.

In modern times, when coordinated and speedy action has often been needed, even the most skilled presidents could only make the delicately balanced system work with a modest degree of urgency and coherence at the outset of any challenge. Even to do this, they needed to be able to persuade and coopt a wide range of legislators, office holders and other powerful players. They did so by building trust and commitment by engaging in vast numbers of one-on-one or small group meetings where they were eloquent and understanding, and could



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### Coronavirus: Two nations, two systems, one pattern (Concluded)

build bridges with their interlocutors. Many presidents have not been especially good at this juggling act. The current incumbent shows little inclination and even less capacity to plow that particular furrow.

Structural reform in the US is nearly unthinkable, because its current structure and constitution have become a religion for secular times. But its good fortune is in the accomplishments of its people, institutions and corporations, which have equipped it to face almost any challenge once the needed way ahead becomes blindingly obvious. It lacks alacrity, but it has power.

China, on the other hand, is as far from a democracy as one could reasonably imagine. In the classic style of a dictatorship dressed in the clothes of a democracy, it holds pretend elections within a single party to use as a thin veil over a thugocracy which exercises exquisite control of every aspect of life of the people. In such systems it is often hugely dangerous to tell truth to power, especially if that truth is unpleasant, unwelcome, or threatening.

Little wonder that officials in Hubei province were reluctant to advise the centre of the early stages of the presence and spread of Covid-19. After all, denial was plausible for a while, and, following that phase, cover-up for local mistakes is virtually a tradition. Eventually, but too late, the centre understood what was happening, and it is likely that the centre too had a period of denial, after which point it was too late to prevent the Covid-19 genie from getting out of the China bottle. This is how and why totalitarian structures like that in China are also almost always late-to-task in certain types of emergencies.

But it is often said that what makes us bad also makes us good, and a thugocracy is damned good at making its citizens do what it wants, so China instituted the mother of all lockdowns, accompanied by a maximum effort use of traditional public health techniques, including remarkably coercive ones, and it worked. Meanwhile, China, like the US, is a major scientific, industrial and financial powerhouse, and it too is now well engaged in the titanic struggle to bludgeon Covid-19 to death. Indeed, the race for treatments and vaccines is also a race for kudos and influence.

One could hardly imagine more different political systems or more different notions of personal liberty than in the United States of America and the Peoples Republic of China. But, ironically, both systems share a pattern: the human tragedy and extra cost of always being late-to-task, and the eventual success that comes with the concerted exercise of vast intellectual, financial and industrial power.

*Copied from Ottawa Life Magazine*



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### Catch-Up by 6559 Gerry Mueller

We missed the first two week of March in Canada, and the developing COVID-19 health emergency by going to Cuba for two weeks on March 2<sup>nd</sup>. When we left there were no travel advisories, and on arrival in Cuba there were no apparent health concerns at the airport not at the resort we visited.

By the time we left on March 16<sup>th</sup>, all the officials at the airport in Cuba were wearing cloth-masks, although there was no hint of distancing people standing in the very long (non-VIP) check-in lineups. Nor was there any obvious concern in the VIP departure lounge for distancing or extra sanitation. (Socialist Cuba has monetized privilege, for US\$25 you can avoid long check-in lines, and get a very comfortable departure lounge, with free bar and snack food, and priority boarding – and worth every penny!) However hearing conversations around us it was obvious that some had cut holidays short, and paid to get home early. Air Canada responded by sending a larger than planned aircraft, and some of those like us who had reserved in January ended up with our booked seats being in Premium Economy, a welcome treat on a very full aircraft. Frighteningly, there were still Canadians on the down-bound flight!

Arrival at YYZ at about 1:00 a.m. was no different that at any other time, except on our way from the loading bridge to the customs and immigration check we were handed a one-page flyer by a person in civvies, no protective equipment whatsoever, informing us that we were expected to self-isolate for 14 days, and to monitor ourselves for symptoms of COVID-19. There was not much information what that entailed, except reference to provincial health authorities. The passport and customs form kiosks were operating no differently from any other time; no wiping down between users, the always present sanitizer stations had no sanitizer as always at that time of night, and the immigration officers wore no protection. Nor was there any enforcement of distancing in the line-ups. And then, because Pearson always sends most of the baggage handlers home at 11:00 p.m. we all stood around the luggage carousel for more than an hour to wait for our bags, happily mingling with other travellers from who knows where that had travelled through God knows how many other airports. Then, when we had our bags, we loaded them onto luggage carts that were not being wiped down between users; fortunately we had brought our own supply of sani-wipes.

My car was at Park 'n Fly Valet, and pick-up was another exercise in not socially distancing, but finally we were on our way home and arrived at our front door about 4:00 a.m. My son Scott had done some shopping for us, so we had fresh milk, bread, eggs, and vegetable, and after we did an inventory of our two fridges and freezer he filled another shopping list for us, so we settled in for our two weeks of total isolation. Nothing much changed after that was up, and, taking extreme precautions, I have been out only for a Costco run, and picking up prescriptions for both of us. That and Amazon has given us everything we need.

There have been enough warm days in between the Winter that is hanging on that we were able to order 3 yds. of mulch (more like 4 were delivered by our generous Mennonite source) dropped onto a tarp on our driveway, and over three widely separated days have moved these into our gardens. Also, some much earlier than normal clean-up has happened, and some much-needed pruning. Recreationally, a lot of reading is filling time, and June and I have developed a routine where during much of the day we do our own thing in each of our offices, and we meet evenings for movies (we are getting good use out of our Roku stick and Amazon Prime membership), or we “go” to the opera. Metropolitan Opera has a vast archive of HD videos of their performances, which normally one pays to stream. For the duration of the health emergency they make one available free each evening at 7:30



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### Catch-Up (Concluded)

p.m., and available for the next 23 hours. So we have watched some performances we saw when they were “Live in HD” in our cinema, others are different productions of operas we know, and others still are new to us. And in watching movies, we have discovered some hidden gems, and also hidden “dreck” – with some you wonder why they were ever made, but we keep watching because, surely, it can’t stay this bad for another hour – and it does!

Professionally, by the time our self-isolation period ended the church at which I serve as an Honorary Assistant Priest had been ordered by our bishops to restrict building use to 5 people or less, at 2 metres distance from each other. So our Holy Week was mostly services on Zoom, with one Sunday Service on Facebook Live. We have moved to daily reflections on our Facebook page, with our 4 clergy taking turns, as well as some laypeople, and we are experimenting with Zoom social gatherings, like a virtual coffee hour and next Saturday, a parish dinner with games and puzzles. I have had the unnerving experience of preaching to only a camera in my office but am getting better at it (I think)! All our clergy are doing telephone visiting with our elderly and shut-ins.

The virus has come near to our church. The other Honorary Assistant Priest, Wendy Fletcher, whose day-job is President of Renison University College (my last employer), was exposed through an Asian visitor to the College, and eventually became symptomatic and tested positive. So did her adult daughter, who happened to be visiting, and Wendy’s husband, 14435 Mike Gibson. Fortunately, after quarantining all three are now considered recovered, although under the Ontario rules, still working from home. (Mike is a former military judge, and now a Superior Court of Ontario judge, and they are all working from home anyways. All of University of Waterloo, including the Colleges, are shut down, with only skeleton staff permitted to maintain vital equipment and security, and to provide for some students still in residence who have no place to go.)

If there’s anything that I’d complain about, it’s that our weather is not conducive to the long walks (10 – 20 km) that I like to take several times a week for exercise, but that too will pass. The routes I have mapped out for various distances (mostly along secondary roads) are isolated in any case, and even in normal times I don’t meet many people, so social distancing will not be an issue. Other than that, I would really like that haircut I had booked for March 19<sup>th</sup>, and whose latest postponed date is now May 7<sup>th</sup> – and I doubt that will happen. I’m not ready to trust June with the scissors, so maybe I’ll see what I look like with a ponytail!

I hope all of you reading this are keeping equally well, and staying safe. I suspect you are also finding it difficult to think of yourself as being elderly and “vulnerable”, but we are. Let’s all hang on long enough that we can, hopefully, meet in September for the reunion. June and I have booked our hotel! See you there.



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### Pandemic Pandemonium by 6533 Gord Forbes

This coronavirus has certainly been disruptive for everyone. Here are some observations about how things are going.

I feel sorry for extroverts during these times of social isolation. Extroverts require fairly frequent external stimulation to keep them happy. Us introverts are used to creating our own stimulation from within.

One of the main admonitions that the health authorities keep telling us is to not touch your face. So here are the things that I figure I cannot do:

- Put on my glasses;
- Put in my hearing aids;
- Brush my teeth;
- Shave;
- Blow my nose;
- Eat; or
- Drink.

So, governments at all levels want us to get back to work to “save the economy”. Mr. Trump is very adamant about this. But with the US having the most cases in the world as well as the most deaths, how many more lives is he willing to sacrifice to “make America great again”? Canadian authorities seem to be willing to go very carefully in opening things up, with Quebec apparently willing to be the cat’s paw. In some ways, I’m glad to see some things start up again. I got my lawn fertilized the other day and we’re looking forward to getting our gazebo put up in the next few days; all things that weren’t allowed up to a week ago. But I don’t want to see a lot more people put at risk as a result of the easing.

Everyone talks about “flattening the curve” but that only means that there are only the same number of new cases as yesterday. People still get sick. It is only when the curve starts to go steadily downward that we are making progress.

One of the saddest things to see are all of the statements in the obituary columns of funerals not able to be held and ceremonies to be held at some later, undetermined time. For those of us who have lost a close relative of friend during this period, it leaves a lingering, unfinished business.

Some people think that virus testing is the answer to everything. Supposedly, if you get tested and it is negative, you are free to go. You don’t have to worry about getting sick. But the truth is that the test only shows your condition at the time you take the test. Tomorrow you are just as likely to get the virus as ever. People like health care workers should probably get tested after every shift they work. Those who use the test result to blithely go back to work and socialize should continue to take the same precautions that they have taken up to now that have kept them safe so far.



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### Foundation Funding

I am in receipt of two documents pertaining to the provision of funding to the RMC Foundation and where that funding goes. They are too long to reproduce here. If anyone wants a copy, let me know and I will e-mail it to you. In the meantime the following is a brief summary of both with particular reference to the Class of 65 where appropriate.

**A. Royal Military Colleges Foundation**— provides a breakdown of the various ways that one might wish to leave a “Planned Gift” to the College in their estate. This is referred to as the 1876 Society and the following are ways in which such a gift can be left:

- **Bequests:** allows you to have full use of your money during your lifetime, but leave a legacy gift to supporting a cause you believe in;
- **Life Insurance:** one of the easiest and most affordable ways to leave a gift, and get a current tax deduction;
- **Gift of Appreciated Securities:** you pay no capital gains on the appreciated value of the securities; and,
- **Trusts:** some like to benefit a charity through their will, but feel that they must provide for others first. A Charitable Remainder Trust can help achieve both of these objectives.

Each of these options is explained more fully in this document.

**B. Supporting Canada’s Leaders**—This is a Foundation Information document that, *inter alia*, explains the purpose of the Foundation; provides statistics on “giving” by individual classes (Class of 65 ranks third with \$1,933,049); lists current ongoing class projects including the Class of 65 Professorship prize and the Teaching Excellence Award; Explains the types of funds— Class, Accumulating, and Endowments.

### Letters

From **6630 Peter Glynn:** The attached photo was taken last week on our daily 4 Km. walks. Pretty quiet at RMC, even a gate closed behind the Arch. One can't really wander through the grounds as we want to do. The college is only about 20 minutes from the house. Fortunately, we live in a 40 unit townhouse condo enclave just north of Barriefield, so lots of socializing at 2 metres. Hamish (Jim) Taylor, Class of '64 Pipe Major, lives directly behind us. Arlene and I are doing fine. I have resurrected my stained glass hobby to make windows for my daughter's very old house in Port Hope. Interestingly, it is kitty-corner to Bob Harrison's place. I trust everyone is following "the rules". At least it is not the dead of winter.

