

**UNIFORM LAW CONFERENCE OF CANADA
CONFÉRENCE POUR L’HARMONISATION DES LOIS AU CANADA**

Remarks delivered by

Darcy McGovern, K.C.

At the ULCC 2024 Annual Meeting Closing Banquet

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In Honour of Peter Lown, K.C.

Thank you. As you all know by now, Peter Lown, K.C., has advised the Executive of the ULCC that he will be stepping down as the Chair of the Advisory Committee on Program Development and Management, also known as the ACPDM. On this occasion, and with the extent of Peter’s future participation within the ULCC somewhat less certain, I was asked to speak today to recognize Peter’s contributions to the ULCC and the ACPDM and to thank Peter on behalf of the ULCC.

Having re-learned how to do research from my 16-year-old son, I of course turned first to Wikipedia, where, I found an entry so brief that it could not possibly have been submitted by my friend Peter. I read that: “Peter Lown competed for [Canada](#) at the [1976 Summer Olympics](#) in [Montreal, Quebec](#), Canada. He finished in tenth place with the [Men's National Team](#).” It then further simply notes that: “Peter has also been instrumental in the ULCC ([Uniform Law Conference of Canada](#)) for several years.”

Instrumental indeed. In fact, I would suggest that his Olympian efforts on behalf of the ULCC certainly constitute a medal worthy performance.

At the very least, this Wikipedia posting should note the following:

Mr Peter J M Lown, K.C., has an LL.B. (Honours) from the University of Glasgow and a master’s degree from the University of Saskatchewan. He joined the Faculty of Law and the University of Alberta in 1969. He was admitted to the Alberta Bar in 1973.

In 2004, Professor Lown retired from the University as Professor Emeritus. He taught Conflicts, Wills, Family Law, Intellectual Property, Communications Law, and Entertainment Law for many years. After a year as special counsel to the Alberta Law Reform Institute to report on electronic depositories and transfer of securities, he was appointed Director of the Institute in April 1988 for a term of five years and reappointed for several further five-year terms until roughly 2014-2015.

Mr Lown was named a Queen’s Counsel in 1994. Amongst many awards, he has been awarded the Canadian Bar Association/Law Society of Alberta Distinguished Service Award for Service to the Legal Profession; the Alberta Centennial Medal in 2005; and the Law Society/Canadian Bar Association Award for Distinguished Service to Legal Scholarship.

He served on the executive of the Commonwealth Association of Law Reform Agencies, has worked on judicial projects in Vietnam and the Caribbean and has been instrumental in the creation of law reform agencies in a number of jurisdictions. He has represented Canada at several Private International Law meetings.

Mr Lown also chairs two of the Uniform Law Conference of Canada’s committees – the Advisory Committee on Program Development and Management and the International Committee. In this latter role, he works closely with the Uniform Law Commission in the United States on program planning and specific joint projects such as Recognition of Substitute Decision Making.

During his time with ULCC, he has spearheaded the implementation of Uniform legislation on: Electronic Wills, enduring powers of attorney; personal directives; limitations of actions; recognition and enforcement of

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judgments; Choice of Law in Consumer Contracts; National Class Actions, Privity of Contract; and Trust Law Reform. I admit I am tempted at this point to simply copy most of our Uniform Legislation into this list but Wikipedia is meant to be brief.

And of course, last as it always is in these things, rather than first as it should be, this Wikipedia entry would say that he is married to Lorette, retired Assistant Principal of Institutional Services responsible for the Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital School. He has two children as well as grandchildren.

That would be a better Wikipedia entry, but still far too short to do him justice.

I will turn now to the ACPDM. As Peter has noted in his final report as Chair of the ACPDM, the ACPDM finds its origin in the Steering Committee of the Commercial Law Strategy. When the Commercial Law Strategy came to an end, and the specific funding, for it was exhausted, the work of the strategy needed to be absorbed into the Civil Section. With significant contributions from Clark Dalton, K.C., Greg Steele, and Arthur Close, K.C., along with Peter, (a veritable Mount Rushmore of ULCC leaders), the Commercial Law Strategy Steering Committee eventually became the ACPDM.

The work of the ACPDM involves essentially two tasks: the first is to identify and assess potential projects and the second is to manage those ongoing projects once they are adopted. In addition to these two primary responsibilities, the Committee, of course, has significant ongoing administrative responsibilities including the budget process.

Simply put, the ACPDM serves as both the long-term planning committee for the Civil Section of the ULCC, as well as its ongoing project management team; critical roles that were crystallized under Peter’s leadership over the past decade and now institutionalized for the ULCC.

In his last report as chair of the Advisory Committee on Program Development and Management. Peter states that: “I have been involved with the Uniform Law Conference of Canada since 1988 in a number of capacities, but this responsibility has been, at the same time, the most challenging and the most rewarding. Participating in the working groups with members and subject matter experts is both intellectually and collegially rewarding. It has been a pleasure to be associated with so many colleagues. It has been a privilege to serve as chair of the Advisory Committee and I thank you for the honour of doing so.”

I think we can all agree that it was we who were honoured by Peter’s drive and commitment.

On a more personal level, I first met Peter when, as a very junior lawyer, I was recruited as a ringer for the West softball team when Saskatchewan was hosting the annual meeting, and Peter was that ‘really serious about the game’ guy who viewed it as a duty to beat John Gregory and Daniel Grégoire in a game being held on western soil.

My next encounter was as the chair of a working group reporting to the ULCC. Doug Moen and Susan Amrud briefed me in advance that Peter was one of the delegates who would ask tough questions but also one of the delegates whose opinion was definitely worth listening to. This was great advice then and it is advice I have since echoed to any of the Saskatchewan or other ULCC delegates who would listen.

Since those early years, I have been lucky enough to work with Peter on a number of projects though the ULCC, the International Committee, and the ACPDM. My own attendance at a handful of the American conferences made it very clear that Peter’s influence and acceptance at the Uniform Law Commission almost matches that of our own ULCC. To say the very least, his personal friendships and professional acumen allowed the ULCC to hit well above its weight in dealing with our American counterparts.

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With Lorette as his secret social weapon, Peter forged great friendships through the ACPDM, the International Committee, and the membership of the ULCC; the types of friendships that sponsor the kind of loyalty that can be called upon to do just a bit more work off the side of your desk for a common cause and enjoy doing so.

When I sit down to think about it, I have several stories about Peter from several different places over a number of years, as do a great many of you. But I am not sure they all rhyme with “thank you” as much as they should, so they can be left for later.

All in all, Peter has been a part of a multitude of meetings, a multitude of projects and perhaps most notably and commendably, a multitude of friendships; including with me and many of you in this room.

For those of us who choose to practise in law reform and legal policy, the highest compliment must be that your work has produced a tangible legacy; and few Canadian lawyers have had a more substantial and substantive legal legacy than Peter Lown. The width and breadth of legal innovation that has grown under his influence or direct scholarship is unmatched in Canada.

We at the ULCC are lucky to have had him as a leader, mentor and friend. His is not just a top ten finish like back in Montréal Olympics. For us, in the ULCC, he has been Golden.

On behalf of the ULCC, thank you, Peter.