

## Goyer Award Acceptance Speech

Thank you Sharon. Thank you for your kind words, and thank you for considering me worthy of this award.

I am very proud to have been given this award for many reasons. The first reason is that I had the great good fortune of knowing Georges Goyer. He was a leader of the Criminal Bar when I was a young lawyer practicing primarily criminal law. I first met him when we were both working "in the trenches" at 312 Main and later at 222 Main. But I really got to know him through our mutual involvement in CBA activities. He was a leader in the crusade for better funding for legal aid, eventually becoming Chair of the CBA National Legal Aid Liaison Committee in the days when I was active in the BC Branch and on the National Executive. Knowing the contribution Georges made to the legal profession and the Canadian Public makes this award very special for me.

People have asked me over the years why I've devoted so much time to the work of the CBA, the Law Society, the Trial Lawyers Association, and CLE. And I've always answered, I wouldn't do it if I didn't enjoy it. Over the years, through my work with these groups, I've had so many opportunities to meet and work with wonderful, dynamic, committed people. The whole time, it has been completely rewarding for me. I really believe the work we do as lawyers is important and meaningful. I really believe that the work of the CBA as the voice for lawyers is important and meaningful. And I really believe that the work of the Law Society in regulating the profession is important and meaningful. I want to continue to contribute in any way I can.

I would like to thank everyone I've had the privilege of working with over the years, but that might take a bit more than the 10 minutes they gave me, so I'll keep it to four people.

Barbara Nelson who called me in 1982 and encouraged me to run for Provincial Council.

Art Vertlieb, the Godfather of the Trial Lawyers Association, who encouraged me to become active in the TLABC.

David Hay, who nominated me for this award.

And finally, Rob Gourlay. Rob, his wife Kathleen, and I had worked closely for many years on CBA matters. Rob later became a Bencher. I always said that I liked the work of the CBA and I didn't want to be a policeman toward my colleagues, but over time, Rob convinced me that the work of the Benchers was much more than that, so I decided to run. Rob was right. I came to learn that the very existence of the legal profession as an independent self governing profession in Canada depends on effective regulation by the Law Society, AND on the clear division of roles between the Law Society as the protector of the public interest, and the CBA as the voice of lawyers. A strong CBA is also vital to the independence of our profession.

At this point, some speakers would say thank you to their spouses who supported them through all these years, but I'm not going to do that, because I know that my wife, Margot, has enjoyed all these things, and all you wonderful people as much as I have.

I would like to say how happy I am that my son Zack and his wife Munnarsh, two newly called lawyers, my son Chrys, and my mother, Heather, were able to be here with me to share this wonderful occasion. My daughter Ali is in school in Scotland and couldn't be here.

Finally, I'd like to leave you with some words from Winston Churchill:

*We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.*

That was true for Georges Goyer. It's been true for me.

Thank you.