

Summer Snapshot

July 2007

This Summer Snapshot provides a mid-year update on the British Columbia Law Institute (BCLI) and Canadian Centre for Elder law Studies (CCELS). We introduce this change in our communications practice as we replace our two Annual Reports with the Summer Snapshot and a combined BCLI/CCELS Annual Report in the first calendar quarter. As we work to improve our communications, we welcome your feedback on the new format.

Completed Work

The Succession Law Project with a Final Report entitled "Wills, Estates and Succession: A Modern Legal Framework";

A Review of Section 90 of the **Family Relations Act** with a Report recommending that the section be deleted from the Act;

Aging with Challenges Project a major Project led by Laura Watts on challenges of aging in different ways - completed by CCELS in July 2007;

A contract project with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador relating to **Neglected and Vulnerable Adults** – completed in June 2007.



We are blessed with a diverse, dedicated and expert Board, with Ann McLean as Chair, and a professional, experienced and dedicated staff - all committed to a bright future for law reform. Our values include excellence in law reform, continuous improvement, respect for people, and inclusive, collaborative community engagement. With the support of our many friends, we will strive for profound results. Our clear strategy and full plate of relevant and important law reform projects provides every reason for our robust commitment and optimism.

Jim Emmerton, Executive Director – BCLI

Highlights to June 30, 2007

BCLI and CCELS have realized significant success and renewal during 2006 and the first six months of 2007. We initiated several Projects, including:

- A major law reform project on the **Society Act** – a two year review with Project Committee chaired by Ms. Margaret Mason, with Mr. Kevin Zakreski as Project Manager;
- Review of the **Privacy Act** – Mr. Greg Blue is leading the Project with a target of completing a Report early in 2008;
- A major review of the **Commercial Tenancy Act** – with Mr. Richard Olson, as chair of the Project Committee and Mr. Kevin Zakreski as Project Manager;
- **Vanguard Project** supporting the BC Prevention of Adult Abuse and Neglect Collaborative with research and analysis toward creating a provincial strategy on capability and capacity issues;
- Phase 1 of a potentially large Project led by Mr. Greg Blue to review **real property** law in British Columbia; and
- Joint BCLI and CCELS large Project on the laws relating to **family caregiving leave**.

We recognize the great importance of public education relating to law reform and are continuing our efforts in this area.

The second Canadian Conference on Elder Law was held in October 2006, attracting over 150 participants, and built on the conference's past success, featuring Sue Field, Public Guardian and Trustee New South Wales as Distinguished Lecturer.

We engage in a range of other outreach activities through news releases, media interviews, speaking engagements and supporting other organizations to provide increased public education and awareness of law reform and elder law issues.

Collaborations and Initiatives:

- An active member of the National Initiative for the Care of the Elderly (NICE), a network focused on knowledge mobilization of research and best practices for the care of older adults;
- Supporter with BC Coalition to Eliminate the Abuse of Seniors (CEAS) in a successful grant application for a needs assessment for a civil legal aid clinic for older adults in British Columbia; and
- In June 2007 we participated in a national conference of the Federation of Law Reform Agencies of Canada and have collaborated on the Enduring Powers of Attorney Project with the Western Law Reform Agencies.



The Canadian Conference on Elder Law

**November 8-10, 2007
Sheraton Wall Centre
Vancouver, BC**

The Canadian Conference on Elder Law is a conference directed toward educating professional groups, lawyers, community members, advocates, health specialists, researchers and interested individuals on important legal issues relating to older adults. The goal of the Conference is to promote contribution and access to a knowledge base pertaining to legal issues affecting older adults, with a view to reducing vulnerability, social isolation and abuse.



The 2007 Keynote Address will be given by the Right Honourable Chief Justice of Canada Beverley McLachlin, P.C. on Saturday, November 10, 2007. A Dinner Address will be given by Mr. Michael Valpy, Senior Writer for the Globe and Mail.

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We are convinced of the ongoing need for law reform and outreach relating to law reform. Our sincere thanks to our numerous friends and partners who support efforts to advance British Columbia and Canada to a society with just and efficient laws, in a well understood and respected legal system which serves the community's continuing needs. We are inspired by the opportunities currently available to lead ground-breaking research and important reform projects on elder issues.

Laura Watts, Program Director – CCELS



A Look to the Future

We are building a promising future with a series of progressive changes led by our Chair, Ann McLean.

Our Board has seen several changes.

New Directors:

- Ms. Kathleen Cunningham
- Mr. Kevin Woodall

Returning Directors:

- Mr. Greg Steele, Q.C.
- Mr. Tom Anderson, Q.C.
- Mr. Arthur Close, Q.C.
- Ms. Kim Thorau
- Professor Peter Ramsay, Q.C.

Resignations and Retirements:

- Mr. Craig Goebel
- Professor James MacIntyre
- Professor Keith Farquhar

While maintaining a core of dedicated and experienced Board members, BCLI welcomes our new Board members to provide the new perspectives and energy which we will bring to law reform and elder law studies. BCLI expresses its thanks and gratitude for the great effort and expertise which has been provided by the recently retired Directors – your efforts and expertise have been inspirational and vital to the ongoing success of BCLI.

In March, 2007, Mr. Arthur L. Close, Q.C., retired as Executive Director of BCLI after ten years of successfully leading BCLI from its formation. Mr. Close will continue on the Board where we will benefit from his expertise gained during a long and highly-regarded career

in law reform, including, as a member of the newly-formed *Commercial Tenancy Act* Project Committee.

In March 2007, Mr. Jim Emmerton joined BCLI as Executive Director replacing Mr. Arthur L. Close, Q.C. Mr. Emmerton comes to BCLI following an extensive corporate career as Secretary, Treasurer, General Counsel and in senior management positions with major Canadian public companies. One of his first major tasks has been to complete the development of a Strategic Plan. The draft Strategic Plan has been distributed to our 'critical friends' for review and comment prior to presentation for Board approval.

As of August 1, 2007, we are also pleased to welcome Ms. Krista James, a new Staff Lawyer.

We are also considering a number of new law reform Projects and other initiatives directed to increase our community outreach, support of the continuity of law reform and continue to expand our competencies in the elder law field.

All of these changes and successes have infused BCLI with energy and confidence in a bright future in law reform in British Columbia and an increasing positive impact in elder study issues in Canada.

The British Columbia Law Institute

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The Canadian Centre for Elder Law Studies

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