



PASSING OF RETIRED SUPREME COURT JUSTICE D. MERLIN NUNN

Friday, May 22, 2020 (Halifax, NS) – The Hon. D. Merlin Nunn, a retired Justice of the Nova Scotia Supreme Court and former Conflict of Interest Commissioner for Nova Scotia, has passed away. He was 89 years old.

Born in Sydney, Nova Scotia, Justice Nunn was appointed to the Trial Division of the Supreme Court on Sept. 1, 1982. He elected supernumerary status in September 1997 and fully retired on Nov. 19, 2005.

That same year, Justice Nunn agreed to chair the inquiry into the high-profile case of a young offender who was released from custody and later charged in the death of Theresa McEvoy of Halifax. His resulting report, [*Spiralling Out of Control: Lessons from a Boy in Trouble*](#), focused on how charges against the youth were handled in the days leading up to his release on Oct. 12, 2004, and the fatal motor vehicle collision two days later.

“Justice Nunn was a formidable jurist whose passing will touch many in this province’s legal community,” said The Hon. Deborah K. Smith, Chief Justice of the Nova Scotia Supreme Court. “Whether it was his thoughtful and well-reasoned decisions in the courtroom or the countless hours he committed to the Inquiry into a local teacher’s death, Justice Nunn served Nova Scotians with passion and integrity.”

“I know I speak on behalf of all his former judicial colleagues when I say that Justice Nunn will be greatly missed. Our thoughts and condolences are with his friends and loved ones during this difficult time.”

Justice Nunn held several university degrees, including a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Education from St. Francis Xavier University. He graduated with his law degree from Dalhousie University in 1957 and went on to obtain his Masters in Law from Harvard University.

He was admitted to the Nova Scotia Bar in 1958 and spent a year as an Assistant Professor at Dalhousie Law School. In 1959, he became the Assistant to the Vice President of Industrial Relations at Algoma Steel Corporation before he joined the Halifax firm of Rutledge, MacKeigan & Downie. He spent 22 years there and with its successor firms. During that time, he served for several years as Chairman of the Nova Scotia Government Employee Labour Relations Board. In 1973, Justice Nunn was appointed Queen’s Counsel.

Prior to his appointment to the Bench, Justice Nunn was deeply involved in his community, spending six years on the Board of Directors for the Home of the Guardian Angel (1964-70), three years on the Board of Directors at the Convent of the Sacred Heart Private School (1967-70) and six years on the Board of Directors for the Northcliff Senior Citizens Corporation (1968-74).

Following his work on the Nunn Commission of Inquiry, Justice Nunn was appointed Nova Scotia's Conflict of Interest Commissioner, a position he went on to hold for almost 21 years.

The role of the Commissioner is to provide advice and recommendations on possible conflicts of interest involving provincially elected officials and public servants. Justice Nunn retired from that position in June 2018.

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