



the CHURCHILLIAN

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Published by The Rt. Hon. Sir Winston Spencer Churchill Society, established 1964.

The Sir Winston Churchill Society isn't all about the things Winston Churchill did in the past (however profound they may be.) It's about his convictions, his wit, his power to inspire and how those qualities are necessary in the world today. We want to incorporate his values and spread his ways. We want to share what we have learnt and discovered from him, with you.

MEMBERS AND GUESTS!

Sir Winston Churchill Society Annual General Meeting and Reception.

You are invited to our 2024 AGM and reception on Saturday, November 30 at Government House in Edmonton. This will mark Sir Winston Churchill's 150th birthday, and for another round number; sixty years and counting since the birth of our society. The mandated Annual General Meeting will take place in the Alberta Room. Our executive and board of directors will report their activities for the past year and answer questions. The board will entertain nominations for new directors, and the President will deliver an annual message.

The meeting will be followed by a reception and Churchill birthday celebration on the main floor. Her Honour, the Hon. Salma Lakhani, AOE, BSc, LLD (hon) Lieutenant

Governor of Alberta has graciously accepted our invitation to join us for this occasion.

Attendees will enjoy beer, wine, non-alcoholic beverages, canapes, and of course birthday cake. The Vice-Regal presence, occasion, and historical venue suggest business attire.

Doors will be open at 5:30 PM. The AGM will begin at 6 PM. Non-members are welcome to observe but may not vote on business. The reception will follow. Guests should be in place for Her Honour's arrival at 7 PM.

Government House, Alberta's official vice-regal residence from 1913 to 1938, is located at 12845 102 Avenue NW in Edmonton. There is free parking on site.

Please reserve your admission by purchasing your tickets on our website:

<https://www.churchillsocietyofedmonton.com>

or contact our Executive Secretary, Robert Chaffee at chaffee421@gmail.com

Admission price (Members \$30, Non-members \$65) is for the reception and party and must be paid in advance. There is no charge to attend the AGM. There is a limit to the available space. Admission sales will end at midnight November 24, or earlier if sold out.



Government House, Edmonton

2024 ESSAY COMPETITION

This year's High School essay competition brought in some thoughtful and well-crafted entries. The assigned topic was: "Considering Sweden's recent accession to NATO, is state neutrality viable in 21st century geopolitics?". Nicole Chu's essay: "Navigating the Evolution of Neutrality" earned first-place honours and a cash scholarship. Her essay follows. Second and Third place essays from Max Dong and David Qiao respectively will follow in subsequent issues.

Navigating the Evolution of Neutrality

Within the complex folds of international relations, the concept of state neutrality is a delicate balance between sovereignty and cooperation. Although proven useful many times in the past, serving as diplomatic bridges and contributing to peace and stability, shifting alliances, emerging threats, and major global influences cause us to question whether or not neutrality can endure in the face of modern complexities. Inspired by Sweden's recent accession to NATO, historical causes need to be explored to deepen our understanding regarding why it is ultimately impossible to achieve neutrality in the 21st century.

According to the International Committee of the Red Cross, a 'neutral state' "has chosen to be neutral either permanently or only in a particular international armed conflict, or certain cases in a

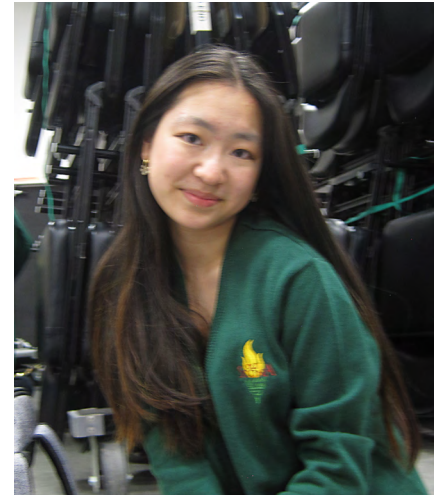
non-international armed conflict." The origins of neutrality are rooted in the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 which marked the end of the Thirty Years' War and the beginning of the modern state system. It played a vital role in allowing sovereign states to determine their domestic policies, including the choice of neutrality in conflicts. Over time, this choice to remain neutral became an internationally recognized and respected position, contrary to its original intent to protect small states surviving in difficult positions. The international significance of neutral states was that they served as mediators in international disputes and contributed to the preservation of stability and peace. In previous geopolitical conflicts like the Cold War, countries had to align with major blocs. However, many countries decided to stay neutral which has several benefits such as allowing them to de-escalate tensions, helping them preserve their sovereignty, and preventing them from adding fuel to the already sky-high fire. The success of these countries during these tumultuous times

remains in the minds of many who continue to believe that neutrality is the best course of action in the current day and age.

As we observe Sweden's decision to join NATO, there are a few things that are important

to take note of. First are the factors leading up to this event, namely, Russia's invasion of Ukraine. This crisis has been the root cause of many security concerns raised throughout Europe, prompting Sweden to reassess its defense approach, tactics, and overall stance. Issues such as regional instability, concerning areas like the Baltic Sea, have compelled Sweden to seek stronger security measures and help among international organizations. Next, analyzing Sweden's previously neutral stance helps us understand the relevance of this issue in the modern day. Historically, Sweden has refrained from military alliances and engagements of any sort, but as the world has changed, so has Sweden's position. With neutrality once serving as protection of sovereignty, in our current society, it faces scrutiny and ultimately harms a country, doing more harm than good. This is why we can see many states moving away from this previous train of thought, and adopting new structures that allow them to have the best of both worlds. Last but not least, what are the implications of Sweden's NATO accession and its impact on the concept of state neutrality?

With the country joining NATO, it marks a departure



Nicole Chu, Old Scona Academic

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2024 ESSAY COMPETITION

from traditional stances and reflects the evolving nature of international relations. This action demonstrates how states are now prioritizing collective cooperation over strict impartiality. It also raises questions about the feasibility of state neutrality amidst the abundance of new and prominent challenges, showcasing how it is ultimately not possible or realistic.

Although many arguments may be made, it is critical to reiterate that state neutrality is nearly impossible in the 21st century, with the main reason boiling down to the current contemporary geopolitical landscape. First, it must be noted that there have been emergences of new threats and challenges in the 21st century that were not present in the past, including cyber and hybrid warfare. These threats challenge the traditional notion of neutrality and require active engagement and cooperation. This differs from traditional solutions of passive actions, demonstrating how drastically our society has changed in the last few centuries. Second, shifting alliances and geopolitical dynamics influence economic interdependence and security considerations. The interconnectedness of economies has many strings attached to it that erode the perfect facade that may appear on the surface to the general public.

This includes a reliance on others, which has compelled states to form partnerships that are crucial stepping stones to the growth of their economies but may compromise their standpoints on certain issues. Next, pressures from global superpowers may also influence the stance of a state, particularly if it is smaller. These large powers can build pressure upon smaller states which can also alter the ways they perceive and act upon certain things. Competition and geopolitical rivalries make it impossible for neutral states to maintain independence and autonomy while also having a functioning society and economy. Lastly, the role of international organizations shapes state policies, engraining biases within their foundations. International organizations such as NATO and the UN create and shape policies that influence decisions that can pose challenges to and ultimately impact the neutrality of a state.

As the world has rapidly evolved, so have the viewpoints and stances of countries around the world. From the example of Sweden and its accession to NATO, we have learned to recognize that the only way for countries to

have a better, more successful future, as a whole, is not to stay bluntly neutral, but to adapt to the ever-changing environment that surrounds them. As Sir Winston Churchill once said, "I can't stay neutral between the fire brigade and fire!" It is only when the best decisions are made regarding the circumstances of the time, that success is truly considered to be achieved.

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ANNUAL MEMORIAL BANQUET 2024

On May 8, the anniversary of VE Day, we gathered again in the Winspear Room in the University Club to celebrate our ties to history and the leadership of a truly great man.

Ninety-one Churchillians attended the 58th Annual Memorial Banquet. At the head table were our president Will Randall and Mr. Graham Axford, with The Honourable Ritu Khullar Chief Justice of Alberta, guest speaker Mr. Randy Otto, Brigadier General Steve Graham, Commander of 3rd Division, and his Divisional Sergeant-Major CWO Wayne Bantock.

The banquet and program were immediately preceded by a student awards ceremony in the Papaschase room. Chief Justice Khullar and Mr. Otto were in attendance to assist in the presentations of scholarship awards to the winners of our speech and debate competitions.

Our head table guests spoke of the significance of the date, and the upcoming 80th anniversary of D-Day, of the sacrifices made, and those yet to come. Chief Justice Khullar spoke about democracy and the idea of rule by law, and not by force. Dr. David Checkel, the first Churchill Scholar, introduced the Alberta Churchill Scholarships Foundation and spoke about university scholarship awards.

He also, uniquely among our keynote speakers, entertained questions from the audience at the end of his performance. Many among the audience weighed in with thoughtful questions as if they were indeed speaking with Winston himself. This was truly a magical experience.



Randy Otto as Winston



Chief Justice of Alberta Ritu Khullar

Mr. Otto, as our keynote speaker, treated us to an amazing performance as Winston, in character and in costume, complete with an (unlit) 7-inch cigar. His presentation included a slide show and discussion about Churchill's career, as Churchill himself might do if he could speak to us.

Earlier in the day Mr. Otto, accompanied by President Will Randall, visited Old Scona Academic and, in character and costume as Winston Churchill, spoke with students there in the Leadership Program. Thanks to speech and debate coach James Kosowan for facilitating that well-received visit. Then on to Capital Care Kipnes Centre, a long-term care facility for Veterans at 4470 McCrae Avenue. Still in attire and character and accompanied by director Stan Guszczewski, Mr. Otto (himself a veteran of the U.S. military), toured the facility and spoke with numerous residents. He was impressed by the military presence of the building and resident veterans, a number who were from the World War II era.

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ANNUAL MEMORIAL BANQUET 2024



Mr. Otto at Kipnes Centre

We are grateful for Mr. Otto's time and talents and his interest in Edmonton's students and veterans.

There are many others to recognize and thank for their work in making this a successful day and evening. Vice-President Jill Wright was our liaison with the University Club, and secured our piper Butch Balch, pianist Sean Fulton, and Ms. Lynn Sutankayo who led us in our national anthem and God Save the King. Jill also provided the beautiful table centrepieces. Elisebeth Checkel coordinated ticket sales and the student awards ceremony, which she co-chaired with director Michael Gibson. Ms. Victoria Jones said grace for the meal. Our good friend Mr. Grant Cree photographed the event and captured audio. Diandra and her University Club staff did an excellent job of our meal and service. Finally and most importantly, our sincere thanks go to all who came out in 'bib and tucker' some of whom bought multiple tickets, to once again support and celebrate the Heroic Memory. See you next year.

HISTORICAL EVENTS

1704 John Churchill, first Duke of Marlborough, with co-general Eugene of Saxony, defeats a Franco-Bavarian army near the town of Blenheim, Bavaria on August 13. The defeat was a severe check to Louis XIV of France's ambitions in the War of Spanish Succession. Churchill would later build Blenheim Palace in celebration of this victory. Winston Churchill was born there by chance, while his parents were visiting relatives there. His keen awareness of his famous ancestry and birthplace would contribute to his ambitious sense of destiny.



John Churchill, first Duke of Blenheim

1914 Germany ignores a British ultimatum to respect Belgium's neutrality. Consequently, Britain is at war with Germany August 4.

1922 In September, Winston Churchill buys Chartwell Manor from Captain Archibald John Campbell Colquhoun, despite Clementine's objections.



Chartwell

1959 Churchill is re-elected to his parliamentary seat for the last time in the general election on October 3.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

During a recent visit to San Diego, I had the opportunity to explore two iconic venues: the San Diego Air and Space Museum and the USS Midway. These institutions offer a profound connection to the themes that resonate deeply with members of the Churchill Society of Edmonton: history, leadership, and the preservation of heritage.

The San Diego Air and Space Museum is a testament to human ingenuity and the relentless pursuit of progress—values that Winston Churchill himself championed. Among the museum's treasures are the Ryan Aeronautical Company archives, where I discovered a deeply personal connection to history. My late grandfather, J.J. Randall, learned to fly at Ryan Aeronautical Company in 1941. During my visit, I found his student card, a tangible link to his early days as an aviator. At that time, as an American, he had not yet been inducted into World War II. However, he ultimately played a crucial role by flying supplies in support of the British in the Gold Coast. This discovery brought to life the individual contributions that, collectively, shaped the course of history, much like Churchill's leadership during the war.

The USS Midway, a decommissioned aircraft carrier turned museum, offers a tangible connection to the naval history that was pivotal during Churchill's time as First Lord of the Admiralty. Walking through the ship's vast corridors and flight deck, I could almost feel the weight of history and the responsibility borne by those who served on such vessels. The Midway's role in numerous conflicts highlights



the importance of preparedness, strategic thinking, and the leadership qualities that Churchill exemplified throughout his career.

Both venues underscore the importance of remembering and respecting our historical resources. My visit to San Diego was a powerful reminder of why we must continue to support and share our heritage, ensuring that future generations understand the lessons of the past and the importance of leadership in shaping the future.

Finally, I hope that all members who are able will join us at our AGM in late November (we are aiming for the 30th) for a celebration of the 60th anniversary of the Society. Details will be forthcoming soon!

Will Randall II

OUR VISION

The leaders we inspire today will rise to meet tomorrow's challenges.

OUR MISSION

The Sir Winston Churchill Society promotes leadership, citizenship, and strengthened communities through civil discourse, connecting to history, and encouraging critical thinking.

SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Our membership roll is growing as more people see the value in our mission and goals. We encourage today's students to acquire and practice the historical knowledge and communication skills of thoughtful voters and enlightened leaders. We all need to see the false prophets and purveyors of lies and conspiracy theories for what they are: the vanguard of chaos.

We need to understand who we are, and how we got to here and now. Historical truth should be accepted without fear: the missteps and crimes of the past should be understood in context, and neither denied by nor projected onto the descendants of perpetrators. A thoughtful view of factual history, untainted by self-serving interpretation is necessary to reconcile with those who have been harmed, and to build a better future.

Our Churchill Society has resources, contacts, and a growing membership. It is time to bring more high schools into our student competitions. We also stand ready to entertain new grant and support applications

consistent with our mission and goals.

Membership is affordable, at \$30 per year, and \$10 for students. We do not oblige our members to 'muck in', but volunteers for committees and projects are always welcome, as are new directors. Why not join us or renew and be part of our 60-year-old tradition of working in support of our community and its future.



Winston arrives at the Hotel Macdonald August 1929

We offer two tiers of membership. You can purchase your membership by visiting our website and following the instructions there:

<https://www.churchillsocietyofedmonton.com/shop>

Or send the form below, with payment, to our Executive Secretary. Memberships are valid for one year from date of purchase.

Regular membership: Annual fee \$30
Confers voting privileges at members' meetings and reduced ticket prices for Churchill Society events

Student membership: Annual fee \$10
Regular members' privileges for registered students

2024 SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Salutation: _____ Name: _____

First

Middle

Last

Email: _____

Mobile: _____

Home Phone: _____

Address: _____

Street

City

Prov

Postal Code

Type of Membership: Regular \$30 Student \$10

Privacy and Consent: By including your E-mail address, you agree to receive future notifications regarding Society activities. Please note, all E-mail messages sent to the membership are sent under the use of the Blind carbon copy (Bcc) tool which means that individual recipients do not see the entire list of addressees. There is no fear of being added to additional mailing lists, etc.

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Maybe you might like to help but do not want to join a board: we can still use your help. Please contact us if you are interested in helping us with our annual dinner, judging high school speech or essay competitions, or joining our board of directors.



Churchill, Hollis, Ismay, and Chiefs of Staff, May 1945

Churchill Society Board and Executives

Will Randall II	<i>President</i>
Jill Wright	<i>Vice President</i>
David Checkel	<i>Treasurer</i>
Stan Guzczewski	<i>Director</i> <i>Membership</i>
Michael Gibson	<i>Director</i> <i>Student Competitions</i>
Robert Chaffee	<i>Executive Secretary</i> <i>Archives</i> <i>The Churchillian</i>

CONTACT US

If you would like to comment on anything in our newsletter, or if you have submissions or suggestions for future articles, we would like to hear from you! Contact our editor, Robert Chaffee at 780.660.6766 or email to edmontonchurchillsociety@gmail.com.

Contact our Executive Secretary at the same email address, or any member or our board If you are interested in serving as a Director or helping out with events.

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