

## Reception at Rideau Hall, Ottawa, Thursday, 28 June 2012

On Thursday, 28 June 2012, my wife, Grietje McBride UE, and I, along with eight other invited UELAC guests: Heritage Branch President, Robert C. Wilkins UE, and his wife, Maura; Sir Guy Carleton Branch President, Lynn Webb UE, and her husband, Gary Bagley UE; Sir Guy Carleton Branch Immediate Past President, Sylvia Powers UE, and her husband, Bill; Kawartha Branch President, Doreen Thompson UE, and her daughter, Karen Little UE, attended a reception to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, at Rideau Hall.

We were hosted by the Governor General of Canada, His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston and Sharon Johnston as well as Philip Richards, the Canadian artist commissioned to paint the portrait of Her Majesty for this Jubilee year.

Philip Richards was educated in Toronto at the Ontario College of



Art and has been a visual artist for over forty years. This painting is rich in symbolism. As one gazes at the enormous eleven by seven foot canvas, the extent of the daunting two-year project can't fail to impress the audience with its display of light.

There are six sources of light, one for each decade of Her Majesty's reign. The British North America Act is set next to two Victorian ink pots. The pink rose in the silver vase is the Queen Elizabeth Rose introduced in 1954 in honour of the new monarch. The vase is embossed with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Emblem and there is at least one playful reference to her beautiful Corgis set in the carving on



the chair beside her. In the background is the portrait of Her Majesty's great grandmother, Queen Victoria, the only other monarch to celebrate a Diamond Jubilee, in 1897.

As His Excellency, David Johnston said, "*Rideau Hall is the home of the people of Canada but it is also a testament to the Crown of Canada of the great tradition and history that we all share as Canadians.*" Thus this occasion highlighted the installation of the new portrait of her Majesty in the Ballroom.

A second recognition

was also on display in the front foyer at the grand entrance of Rideau Hall. Beside the marble banisters were installed new brass handrails with the Diamond Jubilee symbol on a brass plate at the base of each one.



After the reception a few of our group visited the War of 1812 display at the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa. This display is free to the public after 4:00 p.m., is open daily until 6:00 p.m., and is worth your visit if you have the opportunity as the War of 1812 is interpreted from four perspectives: Canadian, British, Aboriginal and American. The exhibit is well worth a look.

Sincerely and loyally,

Robert C. McBride UE,  
UELAC Dominion President, 2011 – 2013.