

PAST PRESIDENT

*The role of the past president is consultative and advisory.
Others will draw on her experience when trying
to make the best decisions for the council.*

DUTIES of the PAST PRESIDENT

The past president shall:

- serve the council and president in a consultative capacity
- be responsible for the archives and history of the council
- facilitate and encourage the study and implementation of the *Constitution & Bylaws*

The past president should:

- advise the president when called upon
- encourage members to become knowledgeable about the *Constitution & Bylaws*
- respond to questions related to the interpretation of the *Constitution & Bylaws*
- refer to communiqués and/or annual reports from all levels
- file with the recording secretary a copy of monthly and annual reports
- be responsible for reviewing annually the council's manual of policy and procedure for any needed additions, deletions and corrections; all changes must be brought to the executive for approval before amending the manual
- be responsible for forwarding to national office proposed revisions to the *National Manual of Policy and Procedure* by December 1st of each year
- monitor/review the *National Manual of Policy and Procedure* and the council manual

ARCHIVAL TIPS

The passing on of history and tradition gives members a sense of pride and importance in belonging to the League.

The past president should:

- prepare an archival index of all materials
- arrange for the safe storage of archival material
- preserve the council history through scrapbooks, photograph albums and minutes.

RESOURCES and REFERENCES

The Canadian League magazine – a list of articles pertaining to each standing committee, as well as copies of individual articles, are available from national office.

Communiqués from national chairpersons are regularly posted on the League Web site: www.cwl.ca.

The following are available from national office:

- *Resource List*
- *Handbook for Past Presidents*

Be familiar with and promote the use of:

- *Constitution & Bylaws*
- *National Manual of Policy and Procedure*
- *Companions on the Journey 1990-2005*

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National Past President



September 1, 2016

Communiqué 01

One Heart, One Voice, One Mission: Palliative and Hospice Care

To:	Provincial Past Presidents National Executive (for information)
From:	Barbara Dowding, National Past President
Encl.	Oral Report of the National Past President presented at the 2016 Annual National Convention List of 2016 Past Presidents/Chairpersons of Laws

The words of the song, "If you don't know me by now, you will never, ever know me..." come to mind when I am supposed to introduce myself in my first communiqué!

By now most of you know quite a lot about me and I won't belabour that any further except that now Alan and I are grandparents to two grandsons (16 and 10 months) and three granddaughters (8, 6 and 4). It will be fun to have more time with them and I look forward, as well, to getting back to running and golf on a more regular basis and undertaking a few new projects. Whether you have been a past president for a term or are just beginning, I hope you are looking at this new challenge with joy and expectation.

In approaching the role as past president, I am sure the feelings are the same for us all, whatever level. Where to start, what to do and how to be the best support for the new president?

Our primary role is to serve in a consultative capacity, be responsible for archives and history and facilitate the study and implementation of the *Constitution & Bylaws*. We have good guidelines to follow in the *National Manual of Policy and Procedure* (page 64) where it suggests that we:

- take charge of League history and archives or appoint an interested member. Bring a scrapbook or history to some meetings for members to see.
- be responsible for reviewing biannually the council's manual of policy and procedure for any needed additions, deletions and corrections; all changes must be brought to the membership (for parish councils) or the executive (for diocesan and provincial councils) for approval before amending the manual
- engage members in the revisions process by inviting them to forward to national office proposed revisions to the *National Manual of Policy and Procedure* by December 1st of each year
- monitor/review the *National Manual of Policy and Procedure* and the council manual.

As past provincial presidents you have a good sense of your province, its needs and how best to get your message across. If looking after old minutes and compiling archival material is not your forte, be sure to invite someone who loves that kind of thing to help. What better way to get someone interested in the League than to prowl through the past!

Please be reminded that the date for submitting suggestions for amending the *Constitution & ByLaws* has now passed.

As for me, I plan to do some research on our earliest beginnings to see what the archives can tell us about our place in Canadian history. After visiting Pier 21 and the Immigration Museum in Halifax, I am determined to see what I can find. Catholic women were an integral part of this as were the Sisters of Service who incidentally were on display there! We were founded to help those women who were new to Canada and we did in countless ways, especially up to and including the war years. I will keep you posted!

Enjoy your past president status, but don't get too comfortable – there is lots of work yet to do!



Barbara Dowding
National Past President

Oral report of the National Past President

Betty Anne Brown Davidson

Presented at the 2016 Annual National Convention

Yesterday, today and tomorrow, this is the broad spectrum of interest to a past president.

The national past president gets to look back, treasure the moments and recount the stories (the “Once-upon-a-times”) of the actions and words of our members over the course of 96 years of League history. She quickly discovers that we stand on the shoulders of courageous, innovative women who broke down barriers and laid the foundation for so much of how our Canadian society operates today.

Well before the days of instant communication and special long distance phone packages, our League predecessors wrote letters, very often on the back side of the pages they had received. Those were the days of twice daily mail delivery, and so, the treasure of their daily letters almost stands as a diary of their thinking, consultations and actions. From these letters, one is able to sense the frustrations and good humour of the times. These personal letters are archival treasures.

Every single member of the League is unique, and thus files exist of many of our interactions. In your councils, when a special award is made to a member, or occasions marked, please submit your precis of her accomplishments to the next higher level of the League for their archives. This will be the first stop for someone working on a thesis or writing a council’s history, when looking for the facts and fleshing out the stories.

Yesterday and today: This day God gives me...

Today, this moment, is the only vestige of time over which we have any influence. What you choose to do or not to do now becomes a part of the big picture that is the League’s story. This is when past presidents are sought out as mentors, advisors and semi-experts, because they have been there, done that in many instances. Our experience actually does teach us ways to help things run smoothly, and where to seek the policies and procedures that help our organization run smoothly.

Like a well-oiled machine, we have adapted to the times and kept on going—an Energizer Bunny within the parishes, regions, dioceses, provinces and nation. Sometimes these policies need a bit of tweaking—the past president then endeavours to clarify, consult and facilitate the suggested improvement for the whole council.

Mahatma Gandhi tells us “The future depends on what you do today.” And so, dear friends, “Let’s press play!” and move forward with bright eyes, hearts full of hope and hands clasped in friendship. Let us share the Good News that Jesus loves us beyond all measure. Let us allow Him to live in us and touch the world by our actions. Let us encourage and invite other women to join us on this marvelous adventure called life in the League

I would be in remiss if I neglected to recall some of the gifts that came to us from honorary life members Mary Matthews and Lucille Cullen. God called both of these League stalwarts home to their heavenly reward this year. Mary Matthews was our national president in 1975. She had a fresh presence about her: she knew that Canada would benefit from hearing our thoughts, and so our annual federal government visits began.

Mary was a dear friend of another honorary life member, Betty Aiken, who went on to become a World Union of Catholic Women's Organization's president. Together, these women toured the world.

The church recognized Mary Matthews' numerous prestigious positions in Canadian Catholic society with her investiture as a member of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher. Many of us will never forget Mary's smile and the sound of her voice. She was always a positive role model and enthusiastic supporter as we progressed in League leadership positions. I particularly liked the fact that she lived for many years on Betty Ann Drive in North York, just north of Toronto.

Lucille Cullen, on the other hand, was like a whirling wind! Her enthusiasm for the League was evident in every breath she took.

She was a charter member of two parish councils. I knew Lucille but had never met her until the day I was elected president of the Toronto diocesan council. She came up to me with eyes shining. "Today is the day that you prepare for the day you leave office," she adamantly advised. Excellent advice, presidents!

Lucille was responsible for the CWL flag. I remember how proudly she carried it in its first liturgical procession.

Lucille and I were both educated by the Grey Nuns and graduated from Immaculata High School in Ottawa, Ontario. Those nuns taught us, "To whom God has given much, much is expected." Lucille was absolutely thrilled to attend the canonization in Rome of Marguerite d'Youville, the foundress of the Grey Nuns.

Lucille was a League history buff like no other you have met; it was she who designed the CWL Jeopardy game. Her TV room was heaped with our story in letters, reports, books and manuals. Lucky for us, the winter project for she and her husband Jim was to organize, categorize and box all those documents. Our archives will be forever blessed by their touch.

Two great women upon whose shoulders we stand, knowing that we are their children, the fruit of their efforts. May God have mercy on their souls!