

Stronger Together

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Being born at the Peter Lougheed Hospital in Calgary about thirteen years ago, little did I know that the man behind the namesake of the hospital would have such an impact on my life and the lives of fellow Albertans. Honourable Edgar Peter Lougheed once said, "I'm a

community person, I think in terms of community before individual. That's the essence of Albertans and to a large extent that's the essence of Canadians as well." He demonstrated this belief through his contributions to medical research, political actions and views, and his ability to lead the province of Alberta to strength and prosperity.

Honorable Edgar Peter Lougheed was born on July 26th, 1928 in Calgary, Alberta and passed away from natural causes in 2012. Grandson to Sir James Alexander Lougheed, an early senator and accomplished businessman, Mr. Lougheed was destined for greatness. While studying at the University of Alberta he received a BA in 1951 and a LLB in 1952. Later earning a MBA from Harvard University. He then practised law in Calgary, until he joined the Mannix corporation, one of Canada's largest construction business. Quickly moving up to the rank of vice president then director.

In 1965 Peter Lougheed was the elected leader of a small political party, the Progressive Conservatives. At the time the Progressive Conservatives did not have a single seat in the legislature. The start of a strong political party in legislature seemed unlikely. That is until Mr. Lougheed led the party to victory in the 1967 election. Landing 49 out of the 70 seats in the legislature, crushing the Social Party's 36 year reign in office. Then, in 1971, Mr. Lougheed was elected as the tenth premier of Alberta.

He improved Alberta's health care and recreation by providing more hospitals, supporting medical research, and building urban parks to increase the feeling of community in Alberta. One of which was *Kananaskis Country Park* which was renamed in his honor in 1986. His funding in medical research helped the development of medical procedures and cures, saving many lives in the past, present, and upcoming future.

One of Peter Lougheed's greatest achievements was the Alberta Trust Fund. It took a small portion of the profit from Alberta's oil and gas industry and deposited it in long term

investments. This small sacrifice in profit ensured a continued high quality of life in Alberta and that economies in the future do not go down, but up. Having a passion for the oil and gas industry, Mr. Lougheed increased the development in heavy oil and oil sands. Later Mr. Lougheed and his party created the *Alberta Oil Sands and Research Authority*, funding the research and development of non-conventional oil production. Mr. Lougheed also focused a lot on agriculture, and medical research, donating millions of dollars to kick start or hasten the success of these industries.

As I have said before Lougheed's choice in creating the Alberta Trust Funds set down the foundation of Alberta's future. Without his big contributions to the oil and gas industry in Alberta we might not be where we are today. His contributions to the economy, making us prosperous, even though the economy of Canada is currently plummeting down. Peter Lougheed's contributions helped slow the down fall of our economy and perhaps helping to ensure that the state of the economy doesn't worsen.

Peter Lougheed was a great leader standing out from others with his great negotiation skills, charisma, and his will for the people. Along with his will and consideration for the people, was the attitude of not taking the easy way out with money and fame, but doing whatever was necessary for the good of the people of Alberta. His negotiation skills helped Alberta gain power and profit in the political world. In 1971 right before Mr. Lougheed was elected into office, the world was sent into an oil shortage, making world oil prices sky rocket. This sent Canada into a frenzy of federal disagreements and arguments. Peter Lougheed was able to steer us through these obstacles and helped to divert Albertans from many disasters with his great leadership skills.

Currently, in 2018, the completion of the *Trans Mountain Pipeline* between Alberta and British Columbia is a very contentious issue. This is a pipeline that will be used to transport very large amounts of oil at a time between the two provinces and will be a huge factor in increasing Canada's economy. However, the government of British Columbia will not allow it and is opposing the idea quite heavily. I think that if Peter Lougheed was put into this situation, he would use his negotiation skills and try to work out a compromise between the two groups, the ones who support it and the ones who oppose it. Peter Lougheed was a man of peace and I think that he would not like to create conflict between B.C and the rest of Canada. This issue lines up with a problem Mr. Lougheed had in the past. During his time in office, he stepped down temporarily from his position as premier to discuss the terms and benefits of free trade with the United States Of America. Alberta wanted to have free trade between Canada and the United States, he tried to come up with a compromise between the two countries. He tried not to anger anyone, instead he listened to both sides of the story and helped them to reach a amicable compromise.

Peter Lougheed was a great leader, wanting to help build the economy of Alberta and to increase the quality of life for its citizens. He led this province to prosperity and strived not to work above others but with them. He believed that everyone's opinion and ideas were important, and tried to look past his position and to the others around him. His attitude inspires me to look past myself and at others. He wanted to work with others instead of working above them, this gave Alberta a sense of community which has slowly faded away in recent years. I strive to reintroduce the environment that Mr. Lougheed worked so hard to achieve by continuing to be actively involved in my school's community by participating in my school's wrestling and basketball teams. During the recent basketball season, our team were considered the under dogs

but by working together as a team and helping each other improve we came out of it as divisional champions. This victory proves Mr. Lougheed's belief that we are stronger together. I want us to be able to put down our phones and interact with the people around us such as family, friends, acquaintances, or even strangers. At the end of the day we are all living on the same planet, in the same country. We can all relate to one another, from small things such as shoveling a neighbour's driveway to big things such as being an active volunteer in the community. Looking at things from this perspective honors Peter Lougheed's memory, great attitude and leadership, sending the message that no one's better than the other and that if we work together, we can accomplish great things.

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