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# Activity Report

The Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell  
Lieutenant Governor of Ontario

*April 2020–March 2021*

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# A note about the content of this report

This report presents the highlights of the Lieutenant Governor's public engagements from April 2020 to March 2021.

*Activity Report: The Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell,  
Lieutenant Governor of Ontario (April 2020–March 2021)*

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OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF ONTARIO  
BUREAU DE LA LIEUTENANTE-GOUVERNEURE DE L'ONTARIO

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*Since 1937, the Office of the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario has occupied a suite of offices and state rooms located in the northwest corner of the Legislative Building at Queen's Park in Toronto.*

# Foreword



GlobalMedic volunteer, Tina Daalderop, assembles a grocery hamper at the Cloverdale Mall, February 2021. Photo courtesy of GlobalMedic.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March of 2020, Ben Gilbank was among the lucky few in the province of Ontario. His job as a Director at QuadReal Property Group was not in danger, nor was it on the frontline. Instead, he was asked to stay home and adapt to a “new normal”. For Ben this adjustment did not mean disengaging or turning inward – but just the opposite. At a time when so many were struggling and needed a helping hand, he looked outward and posed a question that so many Ontarians have over this past year: what can *I do* to help?

His answer was bold and imaginative. Ben and his team reached out to the City of Toronto and informed their Strategic Partnerships office of a remarkable opportunity at Cloverdale Mall, where over 110,000 square feet of retail space lay open – space that could be put to good use. And, thanks to his creative thinking, so it was. Soon, a relationship between QuadReal and the City of Toronto blossomed into a larger association involving community service organizations including The Salvation Army, Furniture Bank, North York Harvest, Humane Society International, the Mississauga Food Bank, and GlobalMedic. Together, they turned the free space in Cloverdale Mall into a much-needed assembly space for food and hygienic care packages, first-aid kits, furniture and much more. As the demand for goods steadily increased, this innovative partnership met it head-on and, to this day, continues to deliver essential supplies to those hard hit by the pandemic across the GTA. At the time of writing, the work of recovery continues at Cloverdale as it now also serves as the site for a COVID-19 immunization clinic.

This is but one story of how Ontarians rose up to face an historic challenge. One out of many thousands that deserve to be told. To be celebrated and cherished.

My profound joy in serving as Lieutenant Governor is the opportunity to share these stories and recognize the compassionate and dedicated citizens behind them. And it is my hope that this year’s annual activity report will help do just that – to hold up a mirror to Ontario and shine a light on those who’ve been hard at work to build it back stronger and more resilient than ever before.



Ms. Dowdeswell's coat of arms. (*Register of Arms, Flags and Badges of Canada, Volume VI*, page 621)

At the same time, it will also serve to illustrate that this was a year unlike any other. At our Office, as it was for Ben and so many people and organizations across this province, making a genuine impact would first depend on answering important and incisive questions. In our case: What is the role of a viceregal during a pandemic? How could we best serve Ontarians?

This report is, therefore, also a document of accountability addressed to the citizens of Ontario who deserve to know not only what I am up to and how public money is spent, but equally how – in the context of suffering, vulnerability and transformation – we sought to make a positive difference in the lives of Ontarians: to show strength and continuity, to demonstrate leadership and courage, and to make good on the extraordinary kindness and support Ontarians have shown me these past six years.

At the Office of the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, we have been hard at work. Despite interruptions generated by the pandemic, our small but mighty team did not miss a beat. To maintain our service to, and engagement with, the people of Ontario, we quickly adapted to new working conditions, learned new technologies and found ways to innovate and expand the Office's constituency. Indeed, with the support of my staff, I undertook 796 public engagements during the fiscal year (April 2020 – March 2021). All the while, I continued to fulfill my constitutional duties. Given the rapidly evolving nature of the pandemic, it was important for me to be at the Office every day – ready to do my part.

Near the outset of the crisis, my response began with an effort to stay connected with the people of Ontario during a moment of unparalleled complexity. I spoke with volunteers and medical professionals battling on the front lines. I phoned Indigenous leaders, mayors, and those engaged in the civic and cultural life of their communities. Leaders in every sector told me they were facing the greatest challenge of their lifetime. I took the opportunity to ask how they were coping and to remind them that they were not alone.

As the year progressed, it became necessary to not only continue reaching out virtually, but also to show my support in person for those who were safely and thoughtfully reopening. I visited tourism destinations, met with representatives from the hospitality industry, and spoke with small business owners throughout the province. Many shared heartbreak stories about their fight to make ends meet, about the pandemic's impact on their mental health and on their family's struggle to adjust to new circumstances both at home and school.

Indeed, no matter where I went or from whom I heard, a constant refrain was that the pandemic's toll had not been distributed equally. The crisis had only deepened pre-existing inequalities and further entrenched fault lines between rich and poor, between the privileged and the underserved and underrepresented. Meanwhile, powerful peaceful protests against racism took place throughout the world and right here in Ontario. In the midst of our province's greatest crisis in living memory emerged a clear and urgent call for societal change.

To lend my support, I used the unique platform of the Lieutenant Governor's Office to host conversations led by those in marginalized communities on topics concerning racial and social injustice. These events attracted our largest-ever virtual audiences (far exceeding the capacity of our Suite)! As we face the long road of recovery ahead, the Office of the Lieutenant Governor will continue to stand for equity, inclusivity and open dialogue.

Throughout my journey as Lieutenant Governor, I have always drawn inspiration from the people of Ontario. This past year has been no exception. Your generosity of spirit and exceptional drive for resilience has propelled us through the darkest of days and has left us poised for a brighter future.

The challenges of this past year will never define this province. But the determination and compassion you have shown in rising to this moment will forever stand as a testament to the strength and character of our democracy. For this, and for so many other reasons, it has been the greatest privilege of my career to serve as your Lieutenant Governor.

*Elizabeth Dowdeswell*

# Her Honour



The Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell is the 29th Lieutenant Governor of Ontario. As the representative of Her Majesty The Queen, Ms. Dowdeswell carries out constitutional and ceremonial duties and facilitates healthy citizen and community engagement.

Ms. Dowdeswell has served the public interest at all orders of government and in the private sector. She contributed globally as Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme. In Canada her diverse portfolios ranged from education and culture to environment and the management of complex public enquiries. She was the founding president and CEO of the Nuclear Waste Management Organization, and later the president and CEO of the Council of Canadian Academies. She has served on the boards of Canadian and international corporate and non-profit organizations.

Since taking office in late 2014, Ms. Dowdeswell has challenged Ontarians to think deeply about their role not just as residents of a province, but as global citizens. Building resilience and sustainability through inclusive economic prosperity, environmental stewardship, and social cohesion, as well as safeguarding democracy, has been the focus of her mandate.

Ms. Dowdeswell has a bachelor of science in home economics and teaching certificate from the University of Saskatchewan and a master of science in behavioural sciences from Utah State University. She is an Officer of the Order of Canada, a member of the Order of Ontario, and the recipient of numerous distinctions and fellowships. She holds 12 honorary doctorates.

*The Lieutenant Governor, Mayor John Tory and artist Emmanuel Jarus tour the StreetARToronto Frontline Heroes Art Project, August 2020.  
Photo courtesy of the City of Toronto.*

# COVID-19 Response



Beginning in March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic significantly altered the Lieutenant Governor's routine programming. With in-person gatherings and meetings suspended or severely restricted, most planned public engagements were cancelled or postponed. Her Honour's focus immediately shifted to remote and virtual programming intended to support the wider community response and ensure that vital stories of the pandemic were heard.

Ms. Dowdeswell's response centred on four key activities: staying connected with Ontarians, supporting organizations demonstrating leadership and providing vital community services, shining a light on industry and business striving to return to work safely, and facilitating and participating in conversations about Ontario's future – the effort to build back a stronger, more resilient, province.

## ***Staying Connected:***

Starting with a single impromptu phone call in March 2020, Ms. Dowdeswell ultimately made 185 calls over the course of the fiscal year. During this time, she spoke to a wide spectrum of leaders, from virtually every major sector, in business, civil society and government to better understand how people were coping.

These intimate conversations provided insights into a complex social phenomenon as it was unfolding. They underscored the importance of all orders of government working together in common cause to respond to something so frightening. Frontline volunteers relayed to Her Honour that the pandemic was taking a disproportionate toll on marginalized and impoverished communities, that both seniors and young people were struggling to cope, and that mental wellbeing alongside physical health would be of considerable importance in the months to come. Leaders in Northern Ontario and remote Indigenous communities highlighted issues of supply chains and connectivity. Mayors and municipal government leaders in Southwestern Ontario spoke about

*Her Honour records a promotional video in support of the province's Agritourism sector, August 2020.*

the unfortunate impacts of the border closure on their communities. Crucially, at the same time, they shared with her stories of incredible generosity and empathy, of everyday people stepping up to the plate, testing themselves and the potential of their imaginations. It was apparent from the very beginning that the service and sacrifice of frontline workers and volunteers would be the driving force of Ontario's recovery.

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**185 calls** to a wide spectrum of leaders, to better understand how people were coping with the pandemic.



#### ***Support for Organizations:***

In July 2020, Ms. Dowdeswell accepted an invitation from GlobalMedic, an international relief agency based in Toronto, to visit one of their packing facilities at the University of Toronto Scarborough Campus (UTSC). At UTSC's Highland Hall, Her Honour joined student volunteers, City of Toronto staff and other community members to help pack food and hygienic necessities destined for food banks across Scarborough.

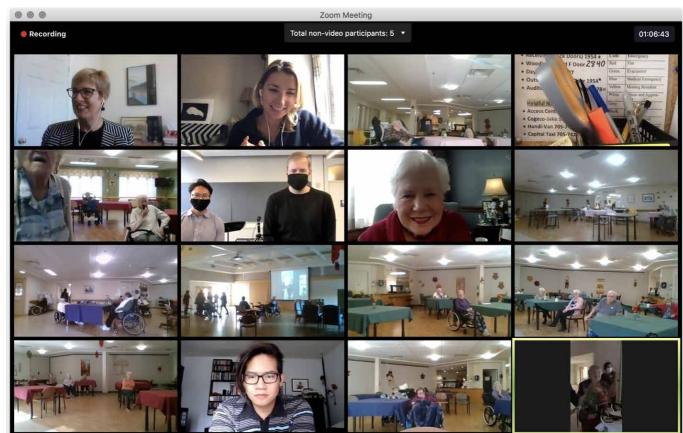
Later that same month, Her Honour visited the Toronto Public Library's (TPL) Albion Branch in Etobicoke. With branches closed to regular patrons, the TPL had pivoted to support vulnerable community members by partnering with North York Harvest Food Bank, Daily Bread Food Bank, and Second Harvest to set up meal distributions from library branches across the city. Her Honour thanked TPL staff and food bank leadership for their timely work in addressing the rising instances of food insecurity brought about by COVID-19.

In August, the Lieutenant Governor met with members of the Queen's York Rangers, many of whom served in Ontario's most stressed long-term care facilities for over two months as part of Operation LASER. During the event, Her Honour informally met with troops, heard about their experiences and thanked them for their service to Ontario.

The COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted the lives of Ontario's seniors – especially those living in congregate care settings. In the Fall of 2020, Ms. Dowdeswell partnered with Concerts in Care, a charity and honorary patronage group which organizes classical music concerts in retirement homes, to host 13 virtual meetings with residents of long-term care facilities throughout the province. Her Honour first held conversations with seniors to listen to their stories, and shared some of her own learnings and reflections, before all participants shared collectively in the healing and communal power of a live music performance. It was evident as well that the musicians embraced the opportunity to be able to perform for an audience.

#### ***Coming back Safely:***

Right across the province, businesses and tourism sites continued to provide valuable services, working diligently to adapt many of their practices and physical spaces to ensure the safety of their clientele. To express her support for their work, Ms. Dowdeswell visited many of these destinations.



*Her Honour attends a virtual Concerts in Care performance for St. Joseph's at Fleming in Peterborough. The event featured Concertmaster Jonathan Crow and violinist Jonathan Chan, October 2020.*

In May, Her Honour joined Mayor John Tory to officially open the Toronto Zoo's Scenic Safari Drive-Thru – a driving tour with a guided audio program to allow visitors to enjoy the zoo while practicing physical distancing.

In August, Her Honour recorded a series of commercials produced in partnership with Destinations Ontario and Foodland Ontario in support of the province's Agritourism sector – an important facet of Ontario's agricultural economy the pandemic had deeply impacted. In the videos shared across social media during Ontario Agriculture Week, Ms. Dowdeswell encouraged Ontarians to explore the delicious offerings of their nearby producers, noting: "as Ontario reopens, our producers need our support. It was not an accident that one of my very first road trips during this pandemic was to a farmer's market ... why not visit some of the places where Ontario food and drink are made, take some of their products and their stories back to your table?".

#### ***Focusing on the Future:***

Throughout the pandemic, Ontarians not only focused on meeting the immediate challenges posed but also started planning for a stronger, more resilient, future. Ms. Dowdeswell has taken part in many such conversations – a crucial part of the province's successful recovery.

The scientific, academic and research communities responded to the pandemic with amazing speed and ingenuity. In September, Ms. Dowdeswell held an inspiring discussion with #HowsMyFlattening. This interdisciplinary team of volunteers – including physicians, data scientists, engineers and designers – built a publicly accessible website to serve as a centralized data analytics and visualization hub to monitor and support Ontario's response to COVID-19. This multidisciplinary collaboration was helping to predict where the pandemic was going and promoted active dialogue about how to slow – and eventually stop – the outbreak in the province. Daily, scientists and health practitioners in Ontario and around the world are documenting lessons learned and continuing the search for greater understanding, preventive actions and treatments. Their critical work will continue to inform the path forward.

Societies rely on the arts to help us heal following disasters and disruption. Those in the arts and cultural sector who were significantly impacted by closed venues and reduced opportunities to showcase their talents and life's work, found new supporters by experimenting with digital offerings. But they too have an eye on the future.

In June, Her Honour hosted a roundtable about design and the role it could play in helping to build resilience. Led by Bruce Mau, co-founder of Massive Change Network, the event brought together a diverse cross section of leaders whose sectors had been deeply affected in the early stages of the pandemic, including representatives from: academia, media, industry, public service, health, innovation and Indigenous community leadership. The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic caused participants to consider how their approach to design could help plan for a future where prosperity is fairly achieved, people are included and the environment is secure.

Finally, throughout the year, Her Honour tuned in to numerous webinars to keep informed about how Ontarians planned to adapt to future challenges and to build back better, including conversations on the needs of municipal governments, the future of work and the impact of COVID-19 on women in Canada. Although there is an unmistakable desire for "normalcy", many Ontarians, in concert with other global citizens, see this as a moment in time to ask some fundamental questions about what really matters and have respectful dialogue about what needs to change.



**We will get through  
this together**

**On s'en sortira ensemble**



*The Lieutenant Governor meeting with troops from the Queen's York Rangers, August 2020.*

# Constitutional Role



**Elizabeth Dowdeswell**  @LGLizDowdeswell

Today I was pleased to grant Royal Assent to a number of bills that received all-party support that will help Ontario to remain resilient, while practicing social distancing! The work of the Crown continues.



## Representing the Crown

Canada is a constitutional monarchy with The Queen as Sovereign and head of state. In Ontario, the Lieutenant Governor is The Queen's representative. In Canada's system of parliamentary democracy, the head of state (commonly called the Crown) holds supreme power on behalf of the people and lends it to be exercised by the Government of the day.

Throughout the year, Her Honour was in regular contact with members of the Viceregal Family, including her fellow Lieutenant Governors, Territorial Commissioners and the Governor General/Administrator of the Government. During several video and conference calls, Her Honour and her colleagues shared best practices, discussed issues of mutual concern and compared experiences during the pandemic.

Her Honour additionally pursued avenues for collaboration and support for the activities of Viceregal colleagues. In December, Her Honour recorded a video for the Governor General's year-end holiday montage featuring reflections and new year messages of hope from Viceregals across Canada. In February, Her Honour contributed to a youth literacy initiative organized by the Honourable Angélique Bernard, Commissioner of Yukon, by recording a reading of two children's books written by Rosemary McCarney.

*Her Honour presides over Royal Assent in the Music Room, April 2020.*

# Responsible government

The foundation of Ontario's democracy is "responsible government", which simply means that:

- The Crown acts upon formal advice
- The Executive (Government) is responsible to the Legislature for its advice

The Government (Premier and Cabinet ministers) is formally appointed by the Lieutenant Governor and advises on the use of the Crown's authority according to law and is accountable to the elected Legislative Assembly for its decisions and actions while in office.

Provided the Government enjoys the "confidence" of the Legislative Assembly, its advice is invariably accepted and legitimized by the Crown. If the Government loses a confidence question raised in the Legislative Assembly, then it must either resign, making way for a new Government to be appointed, or submit to the will of citizens in a general election.

The Lieutenant Governor holds regular meetings with the Premier, during which she has the right to be consulted, to encourage and to warn on government matters. This past year, to ensure social distancing, the Lieutenant Governor and the Premier held several conversations virtually. As with all communications between the Lieutenant Governor and the Government, these meetings remain confidential to promote an open and productive exchange of views.

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**Although always integral**   
to the sound and smooth functioning of government, Her Honour's role and responsibilities take on an even greater significance during times of crisis. This past fiscal year coincided with the onset and development of the COVID-19 pandemic and significantly affected the rhythm and pace of the legislative process. As the Government sought to respond rapidly, it was important for the Lieutenant Governor to be available consistently to perform her constitutional duties.

Her Honour made it a priority throughout the pandemic to contact, thank, and encourage both elected officials and public servants. Indeed, Ms. Dowdeswell held a total of 38 formal calls with leaders from all levels of government from April to December 2020.

## Powers and responsibilities

In Ontario, the Lieutenant Governor exercises the powers of the Crown, which derive from the written constitution, constitutional convention (political rules of the constitution), and statute law. These powers are similar to those of The Queen and Governor General with regard to Parliament and the federal government.

## The Lieutenant Governor:

- Ensures that Ontario always has a Premier who is able to command the confidence of the Legislative Assembly
- Appoints members of the Executive Council (Cabinet ministers) on the advice of the Premier
- Summons, prorogues, and dissolves the Legislature on the advice of the Premier
- Reads the Speech from the Throne at the beginning of a parliamentary session
- Grants Royal Assent, the final step of the legislative process, to bills passed by the Legislative Assembly
- Orders elections to the Legislative Assembly on the advice of Cabinet, in accordance with the *Election Act*
- Approves government business such as regulations and public appointments by signing Orders-in-Council on the advice of Cabinet

The Lieutenant Governor remains strictly nonpartisan in carrying out her constitutional duties. In doing so, the Lieutenant Governor ensures that the democratic will of Ontarians and their elected representatives is upheld and that the constitutional conventions of responsible government are respected.

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## Facts and figures

The Lieutenant Governor routinely reviews and formally approves parliamentary and government decisions. In 2020, the Lieutenant Governor granted **Royal Assent 16 times** to a total of **51 bills**, and approved **1,807 orders-in-council**, in addition to:



**72**  
proclamations  
(75% increase from 2019)

**579**  
regulations  
(70% increase from 2019)  
including 1 emergency declaration

**73**  
Great Seal letters patent  
and lease letters patent issued under the *Public Lands Act*

**98**  
Great Seal letters patent  
under the *Mining Act*

**15**  
Deputy Minister appointments

**14**  
Justice of the Peace appointments

**30**  
Provincial Judges' appointments

**19**  
Annual Reports acknowledged by Her Honour prior to tabling in the Legislature

## Administrator

If the Lieutenant Governor is absent, ill, or unable to act, the Administrator of the Government of Ontario may execute the office and functions of the Lieutenant Governor. By order of the Governor-General in Council, the Chief Justice of Ontario and other judges of the courts of Ontario, in order of seniority, are empowered to act as Administrator as needed.

# Areas of Focus



Successive Lieutenant Governors have chosen personal themes or priorities while in office, focusing on relevant, cross-cutting issues rising above politics. Upon taking office, Ms. Dowdeswell decided that, instead of immediately declaring a theme or area of focus, she would begin her tenure by engaging with Ontarians and seeking to listen and learn what resonated with them.

*Her Honour tours the Port of Hamilton, September 2020.*

Throughout, she has emphasized the imperative of fostering resilience in a time of rapid and often disorienting change. While many Ontarians may not necessarily use the word “sustainability”, Ms. Dowdeswell has noted that the concept nonetheless aims to achieve the desire many Ontarians have for a world in which prosperity is fairly shared, people feel included and live with dignity and the environment thrives under our mutual care.

There are many made-in-Ontario success stories of sustainability to be shared. They are often informed by the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Lieutenant Governor has challenged Ontarians to think deeply about their role not merely as residents of a province within Canada, but also as global citizens with as much to learn from people and places beyond our borders as they have to contribute.

Noting the profound societal changes caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and their ability to reveal both the strengths and weaknesses of our cherished democratic inheritance, Ms. Dowdeswell continued to encourage Ontarians to consider the role of citizens, acting both individually and collectively, in supporting our democratic institutions and in ensuring the long-term health of democracy itself.

## Sustainability

The COVID-19 pandemic provided a renewed sense of urgency to elements of the sustainability agenda and the diligent work of those striving to fulfill its objectives. In fact, the sustainability framework provides a practical blueprint for addressing many challenges, including the longstanding systemic ones that the pandemic has thrown into stark relief.

In June, Her Honour completed the final installment of the *Stories of Sustainability* initiative. The project brought to light stories of Ontarians driving sustainability at home and around the world. The 40 unique vignettes highlight the successes, aspirations and innovative approaches to challenges faced by many Ontarians and reflect the incredible breadth of stories Ms. Dowdeswell has had the privilege to hear while in office.

The stories reveal that our understanding of sustainability is a work in progress. Increasingly, organizations have searched for practical ways to focus on the connections between inclusive economic prosperity, social cohesion and environmental stewardship – rather than approaching them as silos.

Indeed, this was the underlying objective of the Elevate C-Suite Roundtable in December. There, Her Honour participated in a conversation with business executives from across Canada who have embraced sustainable approaches during the pandemic.

**The Lieutenant Governor has challenged Ontarians to think deeply about their role not merely as residents of a province within Canada, but also as global citizens with as much to learn from people and places beyond our borders as they have to contribute.**

In August, Her Honour joined The Possible Now Podcast for an interview. Ms. Dowdeswell spoke about personal experiences in striving to illustrate how the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) involve more than only environmental concerns and touched on the wide breadth of her engagements that focused on highlighting, exploring, educating and discovering how Ontarians are being challenged by, and achieving, the 2030 Agenda.

In September, Her Honour toured the Port of Hamilton at the invitation of the Hamilton-Oshawa Port Authority. The visit consisted of a meeting with members of the Brigs Youth Sail Training program, a boat tour of Hamilton Harbour and a land-side tour of a port terminal (Parrish & Heimbecker, Pier 10). Her Honour's hosts highlighted their work in environmental reclamation and economic diversification while additionally showcasing the Port's transformational capacity to ensure that space on the waterfront is available to everyone in Hamilton.

In January 2021, Ms. Dowdeswell discussed an innovative proposal from Evergreen and the urban design and landscape architecture studio PUBLIC WORK about the creation of a 90-acre continuous green space in the heart of Toronto and how it might contribute to climate resilience and social harmony.

Throughout the year, Ms. Dowdeswell demonstrated her support for organizations committed to the cause of sustainability by attending thought-provoking virtual conversations, often providing pre-recorded greetings. Events included: in April, Hatch Engineering's special event for Sustainable Development Week; in May, Together|Ensemble, Canada's national conference devoted to tracking progress on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) organized in partnership by SDSN Canada, Waterloo Global Science Initiative and Université Laval; in July, the Globe Virtual Series webinar; and in September, the Recovery Summit led by Global Progress, Canada 2020 and the SDG Business Forum.

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## In April, Her Honour celebrated Earth Day by speaking with children across the province in an interview with TVOKids.

### ***Environmental Stewardship:***

While the immediate challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic preoccupied Ontarians this past year, for many, climate change is another existential crisis that urgently deserves attention. There are transferrable lessons from the battle against COVID-19 to the fight against climate change: a trust and confidence in science; collaboration amongst all levels of government; a recognition of interdependence and mutual vulnerability; the requirement for holistic and inclusive approaches; and the opportunity afforded by bold and creative thinking.

In addition to climate change, a great many Ontarians expressed their concern for the province's natural landscapes and waterways, sharing a desire to contribute in their communities and beyond to act as stewards of the environment. Her Honour challenged Ontarians to consider the link between a thriving economy and a healthy environment upon which it depends. She also encouraged active engagement with Indigenous people from whom so much can be learned on this topic.

In April, Her Honour celebrated Earth Day by speaking with children across the province in an interview with TVOKids. During the program, Ms. Dowdeswell spoke with host Lucas Meeuse about why protecting the environment is so important to Ontario's future and all the ways young people have been contributing to this cause.

In February 2021, Ms. Dowdeswell turned her focus to the pivotal role of government in environmental protection and stewardship. In a series of phone calls Her Honour first spoke with both Ontario's Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk and Acting Assistant Auditor General and Commissioner of the Environment Tyler Schulz. In the call, Her Honour was briefed on their important work: the 2020 Annual Report of Environmental Value-for-Money Audits and the operation of the Environmental Bill of Rights. Shortly thereafter, Ms. Dowdeswell also spoke with the newly appointed Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development, Jerry DeMarco, to congratulate him on his new role.



*Her Honour and TVOKids host Lucas Meeuse, April 2020.*

Later that month, Her Honour participated in the Our Sustainable Future Webinar hosted by the Institute of Southern Georgian Bay – a not-for-profit community “Think and Do Tank” consisting of talented community members working together to promote social and economic prosperity. In her remarks, Ms. Dowdeswell emphasized the transformative impact that municipal governments and local actors could have by collaborating to achieve the SDGs.

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**Attended 20 webinars covering a diverse array of topics related to environmental stewardship.**



Throughout her tenure, Ms. Dowdeswell has consistently prioritized fostering inclusive and productive dialogue on water quality issues and the Great Lakes. In February, Her Honour provided pre-recorded greetings to the Dr. George Fulford Water Symposium hosted by Queen’s University and the University of the West Indies (Jamaica). This inaugural gathering brought together researchers and graduate students from both institutions to present their water-related research initiatives. In March, she provided keynote remarks to the virtual State of Lake Ontario Conference, a gathering aimed at promoting interdisciplinary collaborations, particularly between the science and policy communities.

Later in March, Her Honour attended the Women4Climate virtual event organized by the City of Toronto, offering remarks and participating in a fireside chat. She took the opportunity to highlight the role of women in combating climate change, and how their unique perspectives and experiences are central to formulating holistic solutions.

In addition, Her Honour attended over 20 webinars covering a diverse array of topics related to environmental stewardship.

#### ***Inclusive Prosperity:***

Ontarians are fortunate to live in a comparatively prosperous country in which a vast majority of the population has seen rising standards of living over the past century. The COVID-19 pandemic has underlined that not all have fairly benefitted from access to prosperity, notably Indigenous and racialized people and women. These are deep-seated inequities for which there is no vaccine.

In light of these stark realities, many individuals and organizations in Ontario are thinking carefully about the concept of inclusive prosperity, which recognizes that resources are not evenly distributed, that economic uncertainty has a social cost, and that the road to prosperity depends on one’s lived experience, community and region. Ms. Dowdeswell has noted that successfully translating this concept into real world solutions depends upon creating opportunities for a diversity of voices to be heard and collaborate. Wherever possible, Her Honour has sought to bring people together to participate in this vital conversation.

In September, Her Honour moderated a panel discussion on International Policy, Trade and the SDGs hosted by Competent Boards and supported by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce along with the Global Compact Network. The event provided an opportunity to engage business leaders on a range of important issues of environmental, social and corporate governance, including leveraging the SDGs to achieve a more sustainable and competitive Canadian economy.

Later that month, Her Honour opened the Habitat in Towns: Collingwood World Summit – a virtual gathering of mayors, municipal professionals, and academics from around the world to share their practices in building sustainability in cities and towns. The conversation provided insight into the potential for societal transformation at the local level. The event was organized by the Town of Collingwood in partnership with the Urban Economy Forum. Shortly thereafter, in October, Her Honour addressed the second annual Urban Economy Forum. The forum brought together cities, financial institutions, and the private sector to discuss enhancing the efficiency of the urban economy with a view to creating sustainable development markets.

Her Honour also took time to support organizations and events striving to learn and examine the pivotal lessons that were quickly emerging during the early stages of the pandemic. In June, Her Honour attended Public Policy Forum's virtual conference entitled "Turning Point 2020" about the future of work. Later that month, Her Honour helped to recognize some of Canada's top companies for their leadership in sustainability at the Best Corporate Citizens in Canada virtual gala hosted by Corporate Knights. In November, Ms. Dowdeswell attended a timely discussion on the future of the Canadian economy as part of the Future of the Good Summit, including conversations on the alarming lack of reliable access to the internet for low-income, northern, rural, remote, and Indigenous communities, and a panel discussion on the role of corporations in creating social impact post-pandemic.

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## The COVID-19 pandemic has underlined that not all have fairly benefitted from access to prosperity, notably Indigenous and racialized people and women. These are deep-seated inequities for which there is no vaccine.

### ***Social Cohesion:***

Since the outset of the pandemic, Ms. Dowdeswell has spoken with leaders in virtually all sectors – from local government to not-for-profit organizations; from hospitals to women's shelters; from educational institutions to businesses and industries. Her Honour heard that the stress and strain of the pandemic had challenged Ontarians' sense of collective identity and that the imperative of social distancing left many feeling lonely and disconnected.

At the same time, however, Her Honour heard stories illustrating that truly successful communities are greater than the sum of their parts. These were communities that sought to build social cohesion, to understand collective aspirations and to embrace diversity as a strength.

In April, Her Honour addressed the Peacebuilders Gala. She congratulated the organization for providing restorative services to vulnerable youth and for their advocacy for change in Canada's justice and education systems.

In May, Her Honour hosted a virtual screening of the award-winning documentary *Salaam B'y* – the story of a young Muslim Newfoundlander returning to his home province to share a message of hope in a time of great economic uncertainty. The screening was followed by a Q&A session with co-founders Aatif Baskanderi and Nazia Sharfuddin, along with director Amar Wala.

In August, Ms. Dowdeswell participated in a virtual Emancipation Day Celebration hosted by the Royal Commonwealth Society (RCS). During her address, Her Honour spoke about the significance of Emancipation Day, the advocacy of the RCS and the ongoing quest for equity in Ontario. Later that month, Her Honour also contributed a video message to the Virtual Afro-Caribbean Cultural Festival hosted by Moksha Canada.

To gain a better understanding of the impacts of the pandemic on racialized communities and new Canadians, the Lieutenant Governor hosted a series of roundtables with members of ethnic media groups in partnership with the National Ethnic Press and Media Council of Canada. Her Honour heard stories from participants about their community's experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout August and September, Ms. Dowdeswell spoke with media representatives from the Arab, Black/Caribbean, Iranian, and South Asian communities.

In November, Her Honour held a Zoom call with Mohammed Hashim, Executive Director of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation to discuss the unique challenges faced by racialized communities during the pandemic.

## Ontario in the World

The Lieutenant Governor has noted that many Ontarians view engagement with people and places beyond our borders as both an opportunity and an obligation. The COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced the imperative of global cooperation and engagement. Humanity will not fully recover from the pandemic until all nations have, individually, overcome their wide-ranging challenges – most especially developing nations in need of support.

Therefore, Her Honour regularly undertook engagements focusing on two key objectives. First, to tell the stories of Ontarians contributing beyond the province's borders. Second, to stay informed about the ever-evolving status of issues on the global stage – with an emphasis on the insights and lessons that could apply at home.

2020 marked the 75th anniversary of the United Nations. Through both celebratory events and conversations about the organization's future, Her Honour reinforced that the UN's relationship with sub-national governments and citizens is crucial for building international collaboration, particularly during times of global crisis.

In September, Her Honour attended the UN75 Global Governance Forum that explored how global governance could address 21st-century threats, challenges and opportunities. Topics included the Future of the Paris Agreement, countering nationalism and the new UN75 Declaration. Later that month, in a conversation with the Honourable Bob Rae, the newly appointed Ambassador and Permanent Representative-Designate of Canada to the United Nations, Her Honour shared stories of sustainability in Ontario.

From May to July, Her Honour attended various TED-style talks, moderated dialogues and group discussions that provided an opportunity for sharing Ontario's story and learning lessons from the global community. Speaking to an international audience during the Humanity Rising Summit, Ms. Dowdeswell relayed stories of how Ontarians were navigating the pandemic and striving to build the conditions for sustainability and resilience. Chief among these examples were accounts of collaboration among all orders of

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This year, as we look to the start of the United Nations 75th General Assembly, we are facing challenges that no one in attendance last September could have imagined. A global pandemic that reaches everyone, everywhere has brought into stark reality the need for a universal framework like the 2030 sustainability agenda and the SDGs that will help us meet the challenge of a recovery that is fair and inclusive. Each of us is vulnerable and dependent upon those with whom we share this planet.

As a middle power Canada has a history of persistent commitment on the international scene. The Ontarians I have met are global citizens and it is through collaboration, partnerships, and a firm belief in multilateralism that they will continue to be a beacon of innovation and solidarity in the world. As we celebrate the 75th anniversary of the UN and consider “the future we want, the UN we need”, this is a moment for Ontario to demonstrate who we are as a province, and how we build back better while leaving no one behind.

”

*The Lieutenant Governor's Statement on the 75th anniversary of the United Nations.*

governments, community building and volunteerism, and solutions to inequality. Similarly, in July, Ms. Dowdeswell was invited to share lessons learned at the international Victoria Forum Webinar on the topic of the pandemic's toll on trust in multilateralism.

Throughout her tenure, Her Honour has highlighted the special relationship between Ontario and the United States, undertaking four working visits south of the border where she has emphasized the deep cultural ties between our two nations, the enduring cross-border significance of the Great Lakes, and the role of subnational jurisdictions in addressing the management of a shared water ecosystem, the climate crisis, and other environmental challenges. These conversations continued, in virtual format, with the Wilson Centre and the Canadian American Business Council, among other organizations.

## Democracy

But what has happened  
to the positive allure  
of liberal democracy?

Where are the voices  
trumpeting its capacity  
to bring dignity,  
to empower, and  
to build collective  
consciousness?

Growing inequality has  
fostered widespread  
amnesia about  
democracy's positive,  
foundational values—  
above all the value  
of fairness.

Jennifer Welsh

“ ”

All of us  
*who have been blessed  
with young families  
know from long experience  
that when one's house  
is at its noisiest,  
there is often less  
cause for anxiety.*

Queen Elizabeth II

The above quotations are part of the Lieutenant Governor's art exhibition *Speaking of Democracy*. In their own way, these statements capture the obstacles democracy has faced both at home and abroad this past year.

Her Majesty The Queen reminds us that, even amidst the turmoil and disruptions generated by the pandemic, dialogue – citizens speaking up and speaking out – remains a key part of a healthy democracy. Jennifer Welsh, a Metis political scientist who co-founded the Oxford Institute for Ethics, Law and Armed Conflict, underlines that inequality has diminished liberal democracy's standing and allure – something that has recently become all too clear. There is, therefore, no doubt that much work remains to both strengthen and uphold Canada's democratic way of life.

As such, Her Honour has encouraged Ontarians to consider how democracy might be improved to meet contemporary challenges and has used her platform to facilitate open and honest dialogue.

In September, Her Honour joined a virtual event featuring Hillary Clinton and Madeleine Albright to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the UN Fourth World Conference on Women. Ms. Dowdeswell was a participant in that conference (Beijing, September 1995) – a watershed event for women's right and global democracy.

In addition, Ms. Dowdeswell attended a virtual conversation on a topic of crucial importance for the fabric of democracies worldwide: "The Growing Threats to Media Freedom" hosted by the World Press Freedom Canada. The event featured a keynote address from Maria Ressa on her personal knowledge of and experience with abuses to media freedom. Ms. Ressa is an award-winning Filipino journalist who has been recognized for her work on human rights in Southeast Asia and is featured in *Speaking of Democracy*.

In October, the Lieutenant Governor continued her support of independent media while addressing the 2020 Global Conference for Media Freedom. In her remarks, Ms. Dowdeswell spoke about the dangers of misinformation and how the pandemic underscored the crucial role of media in a functioning democracy.



**Canada in SA**  @CanHCZA



**Canada in Hong Kong**  @CanCGHongKong



**Canada in Jordan**  CanEmbJordan

### ***Speaking of Democracy:***

*Speaking of Democracy* is the current art exhibition on display in the Lieutenant Governor's Suite at Queen's Park. Presented in partnership with the Samara Centre for Democracy, the exhibition features quotes considering the roots, threats to, and promise of democracy. In light of guests being unable to visit the Lieutenant Governor's Suite and tour *Speaking of Democracy* in-person, the exhibition moved online to reach both Ontarians and an international audience.

In September, in coordination with Global Affairs Canada, to celebrate the International Day of Democracy, several Canadian Missions abroad, including Jordan, South Africa and Hong Kong, shared quotes from the exhibition and directed their followers to its website. Her Honour took the opportunity to share a message on the value of democracy and international collaboration in fighting the pandemic.

This past year, the Office additionally created a printable version of the exhibition while also translating its full text and word art to Spanish. With this update, the exhibition can be printed and displayed at Canadian Missions abroad once physical distancing is no longer required.

What do scientists , journalists  and educators  have to say about #democracy?

"Speaking of Democracy" is a digital exhibit that explores the roots of, threats to, and promise within democracy.

Check it out!  [arts.lgontario.ca/democracy-demo...](https://arts.lgontario.ca/democracy-demo...)

@LGLizDowdeswell #CanadaCulture



Canadian Missions abroad share messages featuring the *Speaking of Democracy* exhibition on social media in recognition of the International Day of Democracy, September 2020.

# The Lieutenant Governor continued her support of independent media while addressing the 2020 Global Conference for Media Freedom. In her remarks, Ms. Dowdeswell spoke about the dangers of misinformation and how the pandemic underscored the crucial role of media in a functioning democracy.

## ***Democracy at the Local Level:***

This year Her Honour continued her effort to engage women in leadership positions at the municipal level by convening them to discuss relevant issues.

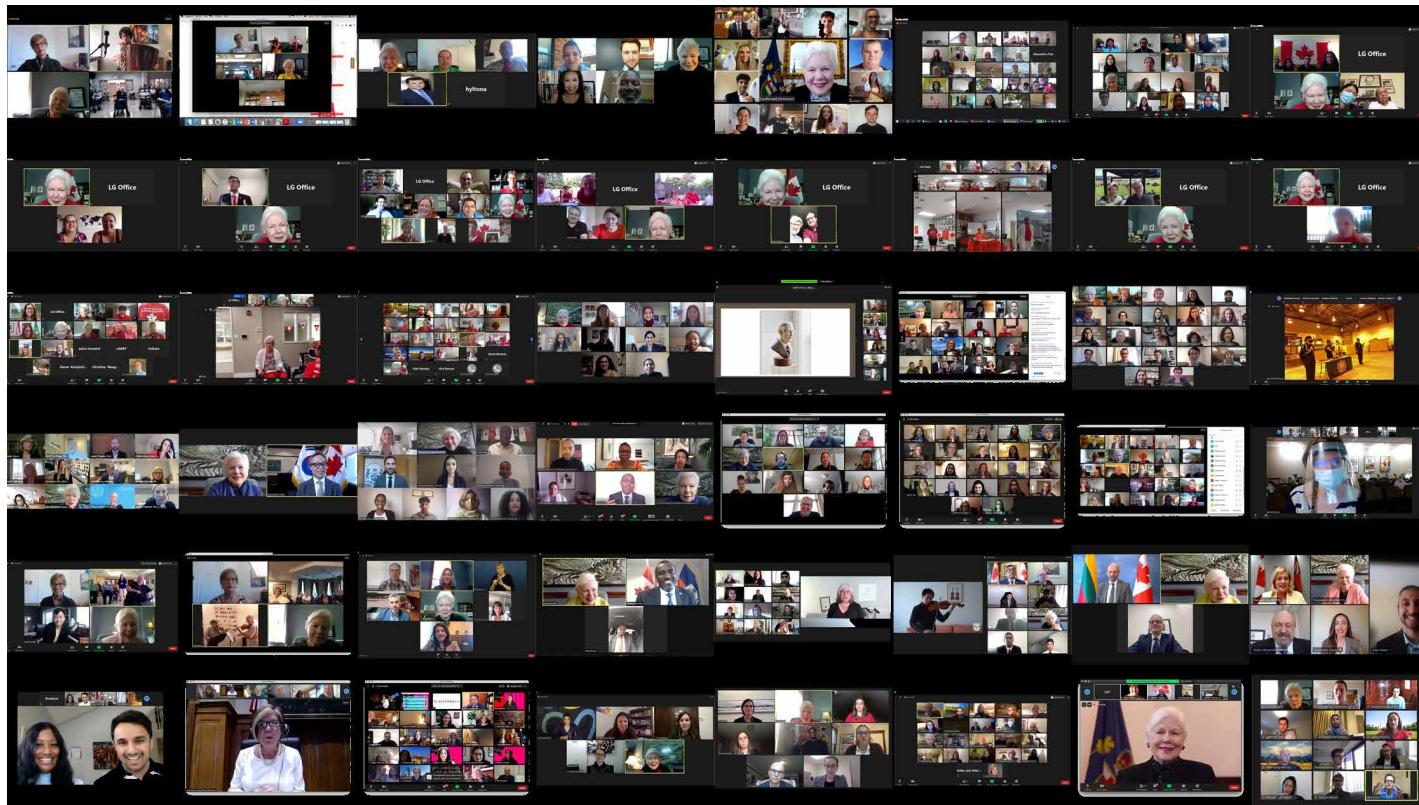
In early October, the Lieutenant Governor hosted a Zoom call with women mayors from across Ontario, co-hosted by Armine Yalnizyan, to discuss the phenomenon of COVID-19 on women and the impacts of a “she-cession”. The event welcomed over 50 female mayors from towns, townships, counties, cities and municipalities. Participants shared stories of leadership during the pandemic and discussed issues of importance for their female constituents, including early childcare, the challenges of single parenting, and mental health.

Inspired by the gathering’s spirit and robust discussion, participants from Middlesex County formed the Women’s Caucus of Middlesex County to advocate for women in their communities. In November, Her Honour addressed their inaugural meeting, congratulating organizers for their ingenuity and encouraging their very practical work in strengthening democracy.



*Malala Yousafzai’s quote “We realize the importance of our voices only when we are silenced” holds a position of prominence in the Lieutenant Governor’s Suite – above the podium in the Drawing Room from which Her Honour routinely deliver remarks.*

# Staying Connected with Ontarians



The impact of the Office of the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario may be partially defined by the quality and quantity of its engagement with Ontarians. For an organization that measures impact in this way, the COVID-19 pandemic posed important questions that required innovative responses, including: How could the Lieutenant Governor remain in contact with Ontarians? How might she continue to bring people together?

Until the pandemic, the Lieutenant Governor's Suite has often served as a gathering place for people from across the province and beyond to participate in open discussion on timely issues. With the Suite closed to the public for all of this past fiscal year, the Office was presented with the chance to gather and engage with more Ontarians than ever before – albeit in a new way.

Her Honour continued the Office's tradition of leading bold and inventive programming by hosting virtual conversations that reached far more Ontarians than could be gathered physically on topics ranging from Black representation in the arts to the contributions of the Ontario Public Service. In each of these dialogues, the COVID-19 pandemic was ever-present, both its profound impact and the unique opportunity it presented to build back a more resilient Ontario.

Volunteerism and philanthropy have always been features of Ontario society. From the start of the pandemic, from March to July 2020, Her Honour turned to 18 leaders in community and non-profit organizations and learned of their extraordinary efforts to meet the growing needs of Ontarians.

In February 2021, Her Honour hosted a Zoom reception for participants of the Ontario Public Service United Way Campaign. The Lieutenant Governor took the opportunity to recognize the valuable, often unseen, contributions of public servants – particularly in times of crisis, and to thank the United Way for their hard work during the pandemic.

*The Lieutenant Governor participated in virtual conversations with Ontarians across the province.*

In April, Ms. Dowdeswell provided a video message for the Ontario IODE's 101st Annual Meeting. Chartered in 1920, IODE is a national women's charitable organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for individuals through education support, community service and citizenship programs. In her remarks, Her Honour congratulated them for their significant and ongoing contributions to Ontario, and for the inventive ways the organization found to continue their legacy of dedicated service during the pandemic.

## Indigenous Peoples

The Lieutenant Governor engages with representatives of Indigenous communities, ensures Indigenous representation at viceregal events wherever possible, and creates opportunities for meaningful dialogue between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in the spirit of reconciliation. Throughout the year, Ms. Dowdeswell focused on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in conversations with Indigenous leaders, demonstrated continued support for Indigenous related initiatives, and helped to recognize significant occasions, including National Indigenous Peoples Day and Treaties Recognition Week.



In October, the Lieutenant Governor was honoured as one of the inaugural recipients of the Eagle Awards from the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation (MCFN) in recognition of her support for the treaty lands and territories of MCFN and their initiatives. A formal presentation ceremony and feast have been delayed until it is safe to host gatherings.

*Her Honour presents a gift of tobacco to Ontario Regional Chief RoseAnne Archibald of Taykwa Tagamou Nation, November 2020.*



It is with great humility that I accept the honour of being chosen to receive the inaugural Friend of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation award. I do so in recognition of the steps we have taken together on this journey of reconciliation. Over the years I have cherished my relationship with the Mississaugas of the Credit and have learned from this friendship in so many ways. I look forward to continuing our collective efforts to create a brighter future for a country shared by Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.”

**Elizabeth Dowdeswell**

### ***Conversations with Leaders:***

From March to July 2020, Ms. Dowdeswell spoke with dozens of Indigenous leaders, including Chiefs and representatives with expertise in business, governance and community building.

From Chiefs, Ms. Dowdeswell learned more about the challenges faced by reservations across Ontario, including access to clean water. From Elders and business leaders, Her Honour heard that a genuine recovery would depend upon a renewed commitment to reconciliation and putting Indigenous voices front and centre in conversations about building back.

In June, the Lieutenant Governor joined the Chiefs of Ontario for a regularly scheduled Zoom meeting with their membership. The call included the Leadership Council of the Chiefs of Ontario,

featuring the various Grand Chiefs from different confederacies, and served as a wide-ranging and collaborative dialogue on both routine and pandemic related issues. During the event, Her Honour reiterated her solidarity with First Nation leaders and extended a solemn promise to meet again in ceremony when it was next possible to do so.

In November, Her Honour met with Ontario Regional Chief RoseAnne Archibald and presented her with the ceremonial gift of tobacco from the Chapel Royal at Massey College.

#### ***Supportive Activities and Events:***

In July 2020, Ms. Dowdeswell participated in a panel discussion on the impact of the pandemic on Indigenous communities hosted by the Trudeau Foundation. Her Honour, alongside Senator Patti Laboucane-Benson and Dr. Dawn Lavell-Harvard, discussed issues facing Indigenous peoples during the pandemic and the importance of reconciliation.

In November, Her Honour participated in the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation's Moccasin Trail initiative. This project builds awareness of Indigenous placemaking by decorating public places with a characteristic moccasin design. The steps outside the Lieutenant Governor's Suite were decorated with colourful chalk moccasins for the occasion.

Her Honour also continued to support the Lieutenant Governor's Indigenous Summer Reading Camps, a joint partnership between Frontier College and several First Nations in Ontario, aimed at reducing summer learning loss and building enjoyment in reading among young people. In December, she hosted a virtual panel discussion and annual report launch. The event included the Honourable James Bartleman, 27th Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, and many of the program's leadership, who reported that – despite the pandemic – the Camps had partnered with 19 First Nations in Ontario to support over 1200 children and had distributed nearly 3,000 at-home learning kits and 3,800 books.

Later in December, Her Honour attended a webinar on Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women hosted by Journalists for Human Rights. The event examined the role of media in bringing the stories of Indigenous women and girls to the fore and asked how coverage could be improved to better inform public discourse.

In March 2021, Ms. Dowdeswell attended a virtual announcement by the Indigenous Advanced Education and Skills Council (IAESC) to recognize the launch of a framework by which Indigenous Institutes can apply to grant degrees. During her remarks, Her Honour congratulated the Council for their commitment to engaging Indigenous students in their efforts to build a stronger model for post-secondary education in Ontario and for providing Indigenous youth with the opportunity to gain important skills for future careers.



**Elizabeth Dowdeswell**  @LGLizDowdeswell

The stencils are part of the @MoccasinIdentifier project honouring #TreatiesRecognitionWeek. Learn more about this fun initiative: <https://moccasinidentifier.com>



### **Recognition:**

In June 2020, Her Honour helped to mark National Indigenous Peoples Day by addressing the Honouring Indigenous Peoples webinar hosted by the Rotary Club of Toronto. Ms. Dowdeswell commended Rotary for their good work in delivering emergency kits to Indigenous communities in need and their support of Indigenous youth exchange and skills training programs.

In October, the Lieutenant Governor helped to launch Treaties Recognition Week 2020 (Nov 1 – 7) by providing a video message posted to her social media channels. This annual observance was created in 2016 to honour the importance of treaties and to help Ontarians learn more about treaty rights and relationships. During her remarks, Her Honour spoke about the special relationship between the Crown and Indigenous peoples, how Canada's treaty commitment must be met with a sense of urgency and how the week provided a renewed opportunity to listen and learn from the voices of First Peoples on the journey of reconciliation.

In February 2021, Her Honour attended a virtual event to celebrate Roberta Jamieson's achievements as President & CEO of Indspire – a national charity that helps Indigenous peoples in Canada to achieve their potential. Ms. Dowdeswell offered a surprise video message tribute, thanking Ms. Jamieson for her service to Ontario and Canada.

## **Her Honour helped to mark National Indigenous Peoples Day by addressing the Honouring Indigenous Peoples webinar hosted by the Rotary Club of Toronto.**

### **Women and girls**

The Lieutenant Governor frequently conducts engagements underscoring the endless potential of women and girls to make meaningful contributions to social and economic life in Ontario and elsewhere. In doing so, Her Honour has emphasized the importance of engaging everyone in addressing the challenges, and exploring the opportunities, brought by a complex and interdependent world.

COVID-19 laid bare that issues long considered "women's issues" such as childcare and early childhood education have always been critical to a healthy economy and society. This past year, however, women have disproportionately borne the costs of the pandemic. Indeed, during her conversations with Ontarians, Her Honour heard far too many stories of women suffering in silence from domestic violence, robbed of the continuity of a career path, or exhausted by trying to work, care for elders, educate young people and maintain personal physical and mental health.

Throughout the year, the Lieutenant Governor continued to focus on women's excellence and the imperative of gender equality, particularly in the wake of stories of women who have been abused and silenced.

In July, Her Honour provided a video message for the "Her Voice" virtual arts festival: a showcase for art, music, dance, and poetry by women of colour on the topics of gender equity, equality, and empowerment. In her message, Ms. Dowdeswell commented upon the role women play in building strong, safe, and inclusive communities and how art can help tear down systems of racism and discrimination.



**Elizabeth Dowdeswell**  @LGLizDowdeswell

As we marked the 50th anniversary of the report on the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada on Dec 7 we noted that women are still losing much of the ground gained in 50 years as a she-cession caused by the pandemic limits our equality and future.

December 2020 marked the 50th anniversary of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada. The Commission's report – a landmark document in Canadian history – was tabled in 1970 and included 167 recommendations for reducing gender inequality across the various spheres of Canadian society. To celebrate this important anniversary and call attention to the unfinished business of equality and empowerment of women and girls, Her Honour hosted a panel discussion that would itself prove a milestone as the most widely attended event ever hosted by the Office – with over 1,200 guests tuning in. The panel was moderated by CTV's Lisa Laflamme and featured five other remarkable women:

- The Honourable Monique Bégin, PC, OC, FRSC
- Ms. Maureen O'Neil, OC
- Ms. Lorna Marsden, CM, OOnt
- The Honourable Jean Augustine, PC, CM, OOnt, CBE
- Roberta L. Jamieson, OC

In January, Her Honour spoke to "Women in House" at McGill University – a program designed to promote women's representation in government. During their conversation, Ms. Dowdeswell spoke with participants about how COVID-19 had intensified the longstanding costs of women's underrepresentation in political leadership and took the opportunity to remind her audience that their voices and visions were essential to Canada's recovery.

To offer reflections on the impacts of the pandemic on women and to celebrate International Women's Day 2021, Ms. Dowdeswell participated in a radio interview with broadcaster Ann Rohmer from 105.9 the Region FM (the voice of York Region).

Later that month, Her Honour provided video greetings to Women in Government in honour of International Women's Day. In her message, the Lieutenant Governor spoke about the unique insights and contributions that female public servants bring to their work and thanked the group for their tireless efforts to deliver services promised to and relied on by the public.

Finally, Her Honour celebrated International Women's Day by hosting an event on a subject that was close to home: the Aides-de-camp (AdeCs) and volunteers in the viceregal household. On a virtual platform, Ms. Dowdeswell personally interviewed a panel of seven female AdeCs and volunteers to explore their unique career paths and their roles and experiences at the Office of the Lieutenant Governor. The event was a success, hosting a virtual audience greater than the capacity of the Suite and can be viewed in its entirety here:

 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=312QVTVFct0&feature=youtu.be>



*Her Honour and panelists participate in a virtual event on the 50th anniversary of the report on the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada, December 2020.*

# Young People

In light of the pandemic and the drastic changes for young people both at home and school, Her Honour made it a priority to continue engaging with youth: to learn how they were coping and provide a platform for their voices to be heard.

## ***Support for Youth Organizations during COVID-19:***

In June, Ms. Dowdeswell held a Zoom call with members of the 2019-20 Ontario and Manitoba Legislative Internship Programs. In December, she met with the 2020-21 cohort of Ontario's Legislative Internship Program and their counterparts from the (federal) Parliamentary Internship Program. Her Honour congratulated the groups for adjusting to new work-from-home circumstances and spoke about her role, responsibilities and priorities.

In July, the Lieutenant Governor invited a youth group from the United Nations Association of Canada to share their personal experiences with COVID-19. Participants spoke about the heavy toll the pandemic was taking on their mental health and their ideas on how to build a more sustainable future for Canada.

In August, Ms. Dowdeswell met with youth participants of the Pathways to Education Rexdale program, of which she is Honorary Patron. At the time of the event, the Rexdale neighbourhood of Toronto had the third-highest rate of COVID-19 cases in Ontario. The bright and determined participants of the Pathways Program told the Lieutenant Governor about the challenges of learning from home with unreliable internet connections, living in crowded quarters with very little space to work and the difficulties of balancing school with part-time work.

In September, Her Honour joined the Halton Hills Culture Days Youth Quiz Night over Zoom, reading out quiz questions and congratulating the winners. The event provided youth, coping with the stress of the pandemic and social isolation, with safe and engaging programming. In November, Ms. Dowdeswell provided opening remarks at the Youth Unlimited City-Wide Listening Circle to engage with young people on the topic of climate action. The gathering served to underline the importance of the 2030 Agenda and to inspire the next generation of young leaders combating climate change. Finally, in December, the Lieutenant Governor met with Young Ontarians United, a youth group dedicated to presenting youth-led recommendations to government and key youth-sector stakeholders by surveying young people.

## ***Celebrating Youth Service and Achievements:***

In the new calendar year, Ms. Dowdeswell took up an invitation to meet with Mr. Javon Samuel, a member of the City of Toronto's Youth Council who serves as Ward 10's Junior Councillor. Her Honour and Mr. Samuel discussed youth engagement in civic affairs. Ms. Dowdeswell offered reflections from her meetings with youth throughout the pandemic and congratulated Mr. Samuel for fostering civic participation among young people in Toronto.

Towards the end of the calendar year, Her Honour took part in a Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award Ceremony, presenting gold certificates to over 40 young people from across Canada. In her remarks, Ms. Dowdeswell underlined the value of their service during the pandemic and thanked staff and supporters of the Duke of Edinburgh Awards for their work in helping Canada's young leaders realize their full potential.



*The Lieutenant Governor with the 2019-2020 cohort of the Ontario Legislative Internship Programme, June 2020.*

In March 2021, Her Honour addressed a webinar with Ontario participants of the Commonwealth's Queen's Essay Contest. During the event, organized by the Royal Commonwealth Society, Ms. Dowdeswell congratulated the Canadian winner of the junior essay competition, Cassandra Nguyen, and encouraged participants to persist in their efforts to make their voices heard and to bring their ideas to life.

## Higher Education

With places of higher education adjusting to the new realities of learning from home, the Lieutenant Governor sought to contribute by meeting with students on virtual platforms and supporting special education ceremonies and achievements. During the early stages of the pandemic, Ms. Dowdeswell spoke with leaders of post-secondary institutions throughout the province to offer her support and to learn about their unique challenges.

In June, Her Honour received an Honorary Doctorate from OCAD University during a virtual convocation ceremony. Later that summer, Her Honour welcomed the incoming president of OCAD U, Ms. Ana Serrano, following the retirement of long-time president Dr. Sara Diamond. In the Fall, Her Honour participated in a virtual gala recognizing Dr. Diamond's many achievements.

In October, the Lieutenant Governor spoke to the Wilson Leadership Scholar participants at McMaster University via Zoom. The conversation was an opportunity for Her Honour to share her reflections on the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and to hear about the educational experiences of young people in a post-secondary setting.

In November, Her Honour participated in an interview with University of Toronto graduate students on the subject of multilateral diplomacy and global governance. During the conversation, Ms. Dowdeswell shared her experiences with climate change negotiations.

Early in the new year, Ms. Dowdeswell held a Zoom meeting with Dr. Rhonda Lenton, President of York University, to learn about the new CIFAL Centre at York University. Founded in 2020, CIFAL (a French acronym for International Training Centres) at York is part of a larger global network of training centres run by the United Nations that serve as platforms for capacity-building of government authorities and civil society leaders on topics related to sustainable development.

In March 2021, the Lieutenant Governor addressed *How to Change the World Canada*, a hands-on conference organized in partnership with the Canadian and Ontario Societies of Professional Engineers. The event seeks to equip early-career engineering, business, and policy professionals with the skills to create sustainable change. Her Honour was particularly encouraged by the inclusion of the human element in their problem-solving approaches.

Later in March, Her Honour addressed another class at the University of Toronto; this time it was former Lieutenant Governor David Onley's course "Sources of Power: The Crown, Parliament and the People". In conversation with students, Ms. Dowdeswell spoke about the role of a viceregal during a pandemic and how the office has transitioned to virtual engagements.



*Her Honour offers a virtual address for OCAD University's convocation ceremony, June 2020.*

## Science, technology, health and innovation

The Lieutenant Governor recognizes the importance of scientific exploration and encourages innovation, frequently noting that societies are most successful in addressing shared challenges when they are able to combine conventional wisdom with new modes of thinking. Her Honour often takes part in events supporting Ontario's leading role in promoting knowledge-based economies.

From March to August 2020, Her Honour spoke with over 40 leaders in Ontario's business, innovation and health sectors to learn more about their urgent efforts to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic.

In place of in-person courtesy calls, Her Honour held several virtual meetings with leaders of key organizations. These included a meeting in August with Dr. Josipa Petrunic, President & CEO of the Canadian Urban Transit Research & Innovation Consortium (CUTRIC) about economic recovery projects and CUTRIC's vision for a green recovery. Later in the year, the Lieutenant Governor welcomed the new Director of the Perimeter Institute, Dr. Rob Myers, and discussed Perimeter's activities during the pandemic.

In September, Her Honour enjoyed the first of several interactions with Razor Suleman and Lisa Zarzecny, the co-founders of Elevate, to hear more about their plans for the Elevate Social Innovation Exchange (Elevate SIX) – a social innovation hub to empower the tech and innovation community to tackle the complex social, economic, and environmental challenges facing Ontario and the world.

In November, Ms. Dowdeswell was awarded the Louie Kamookak Medal by the Royal Canadian Geographical Society for her work in support of their mission. In her thank-you address, Her Honour spoke about Louie Kamookak's legacy as a leading Inuit historian and educator and the Society's many contributions during the pandemic. Ms. Dowdeswell also took the opportunity to pay tribute to the late Alex Trebek, the well-known Canadian host of *Jeopardy* was a long-time fellow member of the Society.

i

**Presented** the 2020 Sandford Fleming Medal for Excellence in Science Communication to Professor Timothy Caulfield.



Towards the conclusion of the month, Her Honour presented the 2020 Sandford Fleming Medal for Excellence in Science Communication of the Royal Canadian Institute for Science, of which she is Vice-Patron. This year the award recognized Professor Timothy Caulfield for his timely contributions to scientific literacy and work in combating misinformation.

In December, Her Honour presented the Government of Ontario's John Charles Polanyi Prizes. This award is given annually to up to five postdoctoral researchers in the fields of physics, chemistry, physiology or medicine, literature, and economic science. In her remarks, Ms. Dowdeswell noted the significant role of Canada in championing innovation on a global scale and for the need to break down and work across silos during Ontario's recovery.

# Arts and culture

The arts are particularly important in fostering social cohesion and promoting shared cultural understanding. In a moment of uncertainty and complexity, the healing power of the arts is more necessary than ever before.

At the outset of the pandemic, Her Honour made calls to leaders in the arts and culture sector, including the heads of theatre companies and festivals, museums, galleries and charitable foundations that support artists. She heard that artists were working tirelessly and with great ingenuity to better reach Ontarians by bringing their work to a digital format. To show her support, Her Honour interacted with heritage, arts, and cultural organizations in a range of both in-person and online events, noting their unique ability to unite community members from all walks of life.

In January 2021, Her Honour met virtually with representatives of the Ontario Society of Artists to receive an update on their 150th anniversary programming scheduled for 2022.

In February, the Office hosted a panel discussion on Black leadership in the arts and culture entitled “Designing Leadership in a Time of Change” to celebrate Black History Month. The conversation was moderated by Josh Dyer, the Director of Marketing at Myseum of Toronto, and brought together an esteemed panel including:

- Gaëtane Verna, Director, The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery
- Shelley Falconer, President and CEO, Art Gallery of Hamilton
- Karen Carter, Executive Director, MacLaren Art Centre

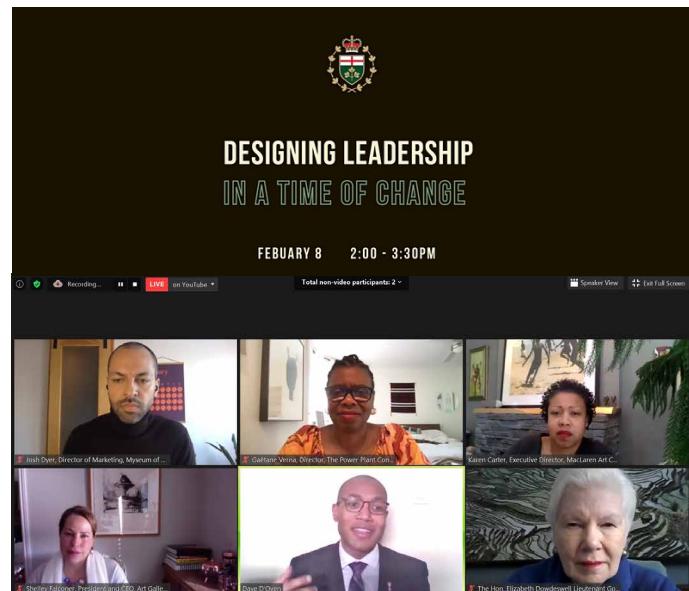
The event provided an opportunity for Her Honour to help shine a light on issues of racism and access that were gaining momentum worldwide. Speakers touched on the importance of re-imagining the purpose of museums given their colonial underpinnings and how museums might better serve all communities. Panelists also shared their perspectives about systemic barriers to advancement in the arts and culture sector.

In light of her support of this sector, Ms. Dowdeswell was invited to serve as Honorary Patron of the newly created BIPOC Fellowship. This initiative of Business / Arts will provide mentorship and career advancement for Black, Indigenous and People of Colour working in galleries, libraries, archives, and museums. The program provides opportunities for talented professionals to work in leadership positions in some of Canada’s most respected institutions.

## ***Fashion and Textiles:***

Recognizing the broad, cross-cultural appeal of art and clothing, the Lieutenant Governor sought to engage established and emerging figures within the fashion and textiles industries in dialogue about ways for the sector to advance the sustainability agenda.

In August 2020, Her Honour attended the reopening of the Textile Museum of Canada. Ms. Dowdeswell toured the new exhibition *Anna Torma: Permanent Danger* and joined the Museum’s leadership in welcoming visitors.



*Her Honour and panelists participate in the virtual event “Designing Leadership in a Time of Change”, February 2021.*

Later that month, the Lieutenant Governor offered virtual greetings for the George Brown Fashion Exchange's Hidden Talents Initiative. During her remarks, Her Honour congratulated the Fashion Exchange for empowering artisans, fostering a greater appreciation for textile hand-skills and building community through workshops.

In November, Her Honour took up an invitation from the Stratford Garment Guild, who knew of Ms. Dowdeswell's passion for sewing, to engage in an informal conversation with members of the Guild about her sewing journey. Towards the end of the evening, Her Honour even showcased a few of her very own wardrobe pieces!

In December, Her Honour hosted a panel conversation in honour of the Campaign for Wool's 10th anniversary. The event provided the Lieutenant Governor with an opportunity to recognize the Campaign's contributions to sustainability and the chance to learn about the Canadian wool industry. Towards the conclusion of the event, organizers unveiled a remarkable wool bust of His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales.



*Her Honour poses with a wool bust of His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, December 2020*

#### ***Cultural Institutions and Events:***

In June, Her Honour paid a visit to the Aga Khan Museum, in support of their public re-opening following the end of the initial pandemic lockdown. Her Honour toured *Sanctuary*, an exhibition that explored the many dimensions of safe havens through 36 contemporary artworks.

In September, Ms. Dowdeswell continued her participation in the Halton Hills Culture Days by interviewing local dance instructor Meagan Speakman. During their conversation, Ms. Speakman described the impact of the pandemic on dance and teaching and how she was able to adapt.

In February, Her Honour delivered remarks before the screening of *The Essential Link: The Story of Wilfred Israel*, a film about German businessman Wilfred Israel's heroics saving thousands of Jews during the Holocaust, hosted by the Consul General of Israel. The event was an occasion for Ms. Dowdeswell to stress the importance of Holocaust education.

In March, the Lieutenant Governor attended a virtual retirement celebration for Tim Jones, the CEO of Artscape. In her capacity as Honorary Patron of the Artscape Foundation, Ms. Dowdeswell spoke to the many successful collaborations between Artscape and the Office of the Lieutenant Governor and underlined Mr. Jones' significant impact on Toronto's arts community.

#### ***Support for the Written Word:***

In October 2020, Her Honour paid tribute to writers and lovers of the written word during several events taking place as part of the International Festival of Authors in Toronto, including a celebration of Toronto's Literary History with Anne Michaels. Ms. Dowdeswell also took the opportunity to welcome Mr. Roland Gulliver, the Festival's new director, to Toronto.

In March, Ms. Dowdeswell participated in Utah State University's Institute of Government and Politics Book Club. Her Honour, an alumnus of the university, selected the book *Commanding Hope: The Power We Have to Renew a World in Peril* by Thomas Homer-Dixon. As part of the event, Her Honour was joined by several graduate students who regularly invite a distinguished member of the university's alumni community to guest host the book club.

## **Visual Arts, Performing Arts and Film:**

In May, Her Honour presented the Pauline McGibbon Award to Ms. Deanna Choi as part of Toronto Alliance for the Performing Arts' (TAPA) live stream announcement. The Award, named after the former Lieutenant Governor, is presented to a member of Ontario's professional theatre community in the early stages of their career who has displayed a unique talent and a potential for excellence. Later that spring, Ms. Dowdeswell also tuned into TAPA's "Dora Mavor Moore Awards" virtual ceremony, celebrating Toronto's professional performing arts sector for theatre, dance and opera.

In June, Her Honour attended several virtual events as part of the Luminato Festival, an annual celebration featuring commissioned works from a diverse group of artists representing dozens of countries. The festival highlights the indispensable role of the arts in supporting dialogue and inclusion.

Throughout the year, Her Honour visited powerful works of public art. In June, Her Honour toured murals that were part of the Paint the City Black initiative in Toronto, featuring compelling pieces in support of the anti-racism movement by more than 40 Ontario artists. Later that summer, Her Honour joined Toronto Mayor John Tory for a tour of 15 murals dedicated to the frontline heroes of COVID-19 supported by the City's StreetARToronto Frontline Heroes Art Project. Finally, near the end of the calendar year, Her Honour toured the *Portraits in COVID Times* exhibition at the Harbourfront Centre. This outdoor exhibit featured murals created from photos submitted by Canadians on Instagram expressing their COVID-19 experiences.

In August, the Lieutenant Governor attended the Toronto premiere screening of the film *FATIMA* at the pop-up drive-in theatre at Ontario Place, at the invitation of His Excellency João da Câmara, Ambassador of Portugal to Canada. In the fall months, Her Honour also showed her support for Ontario's film industry by attending virtual screenings at two longstanding film festivals that greatly contribute to the province's cultural vibrancy: the ReelWorld Film Festival and the Toronto International Film Festival.

In March 2021, the Lieutenant Governor toured the Tom Patterson Theatre in Stratford. The spectacular new theatre will soon become a centrepiece of the Stratford Festival.

*Her Honour tours the new Tom Patterson Theatre at the Stratford Festival, March 2021.*



## **Sports and recreation**

The Lieutenant Governor recognizes the significant role of sports and outdoor activities in our culture to promote active lifestyles, develop leadership skills, and foster social cohesion. While the pandemic greatly reduced the opportunity to attend live sporting events, it was, nevertheless, important for Ms. Dowdeswell to continue showing her support.

In June, Her Honour provided a video message for the opening ceremony of the Special Olympics Ontario 2020 Virtual School Championships hosted by the Kingston Police Service. The following month, Her Honour offered a similar message for the Special Olympics Virtual Games 2020 hosted by the Waterloo Regional Police Service. In both addresses, the Lieutenant Governor thanked the Games' many supporters for their work to nurture the competitors' talents and help them build self-confidence.

In September, Her Honour attended the 161st running of the Queen's Plate at Woodbine Racetrack in Toronto as the guest of honour.

## Celebrations

In keeping with her focus on social cohesion, the Lieutenant Governor endeavoured to pay tribute to individuals and community organizations honouring excellence and achievement. Her Honour additionally contributed to celebrations of national and provincial significance.

In May, Her Honour provided a video message for the Victorian Order of Nurses Week (May 17-23, 2020). Founded in 1897, the Victorian Order of Nurses is a national, non-profit, community-health organization that provides nursing care in the home, particularly for the elderly and chronically ill.

On Canada Day 2020, Her Honour shared a video message to Ontarians on her social media channels. In it, the Lieutenant Governor reflected on the uncommon generosity of spirit and an exceptional drive for resilience displayed by Ontarians throughout the early stages of the pandemic. Her Honour also took the opportunity to thank frontline workers.

Typically, Her Honour has enjoyed Canada Day in the company of Ontarians by taking part in community festivities. While traditional celebrations were not possible due to the pandemic, Her Honour was able to innovate on this tradition by meeting for Zoom calls with a wide array of citizens to help celebrate the occasion. Calls included the following communities: Village of Westport, North Algona Wilberforce Township, North Grenville, Moonbeam Township. Additionally, Her Honour joined several families and community groups for Canada Day Zoom Parties. The Lieutenant Governor additionally provided recorded greetings to over 25 Ontario communities, reaching a total of 32,864 views.

In August, the Lieutenant Governor attended an induction ceremony for the Toronto Beyond Difference Lions Club. Her Honour congratulated the new inductees of the Club and thanked them for their role in serving their community.

During the winter season, Ms. Dowdeswell shared her annual holiday address. In her remarks, Her Honour acknowledged the profound pain many Ontarians were feeling during a usual time of joy while, at the same time, noting the many reasons to be hopeful for the future. In February, Her Honour provided a Chinese New Year Video Greeting for Fairchild TV.



*Her Honour is gifted flowers upon her arrival at the Queen's Plate, September 2020.*



*Her Honour celebrates Canada Day virtually with residents from North Algona Wilberforce Township, July 2020.*

# Representing Ontarians



## Community engagements

Throughout her tenure, the Lieutenant Governor has made it a priority to visit Ontarians in their own communities. Since the beginning of her time in office, Ms. Dowdeswell has conducted engagements in 115 municipalities across all of Ontario's 124 provincial ridings. These extensive travels have provided Her Honour with insight into the differences, challenges and shared opportunities that face citizens from every corner of the province.

Of necessity, with limitations to travel, this year was different. Nonetheless, in an effort to stay connected, the Lieutenant Governor reached out to 28 mayors throughout the province to check in. She then sought to recognize specific communities – both in-person and online. Her Honour's physical travel was focused on those cities and towns working diligently to reopen in a safe and responsible manner. In addition, Ms. Dowdeswell participated in several virtual events hosted by municipal leaders who were eager to show Her Honour the very best of their communities and their hard work to recover.

For example, in recognition of the importance of food security Her Honour visited several farmers' markets. In June, she saw the extensive efforts and community partnerships that had been designed to make the Evergreen Brick Works' Saturday Farmer's Market in Toronto compliant with public health ordinances. The following month, Ms. Dowdeswell visited another farmer's market – this time in St. Jacobs – to show her support for local agriculture. Her Honour spoke to several farmers and producers about the challenges involved with reopening.

In August, the Lieutenant Governor paid a visit to Peterborough County where she toured local tourism destinations and businesses to highlight the safe re-opening of the province. During her

*The Lieutenant Governor thanks frontline workers at the Health Sciences North COVID-19 assessment centre in Sudbury, October 2020.*



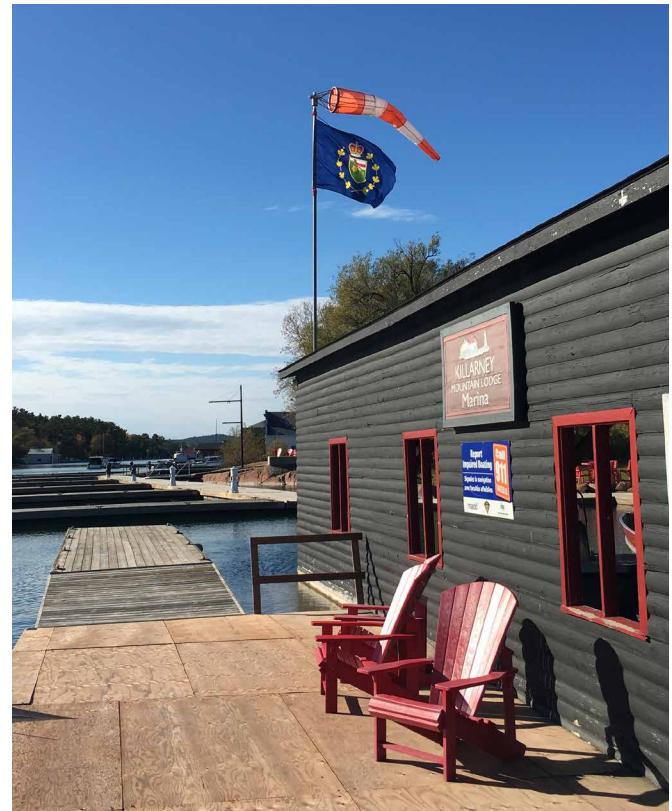
*Her Honour tours Harley Farms in Peterborough County, August 2020.*

day in the County, Her Honour celebrated local food and beverage by visiting vineyards, restaurants and local farms. Her Honour also toured the ZimArt, Rice Lake Gallery, the Peterborough Lift Locks and Lang Pioneer Village.

In October, Ms. Dowdeswell continued to show her support for Ontario's agri-food and tourism industry by taking part in "Farm to Fork" in East Gwillimbury – a self-guided tour highlighting the region's fresh local produce along with its farming community. Her Honour visited local farms and met with the families who operate them, learning more about their sustainable and ethical practices.

Later that month, Ms. Dowdeswell traveled to Northern Ontario to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Town of Killarney. As part of the community celebrations, Her Honour was received by the Mayor, joined a civic luncheon at the Veterans Hall, and participated in a walking and boat tour. Her Honour also met with members of the town council to discuss issues relating to COVID-19, tourism and sustainability.

The following day, Her Honour proceeded to Sudbury to recognize the extraordinary efforts taking place in Northern Ontario to fight the pandemic. Ms. Dowdeswell first toured the Health Sciences North (HSN) Assessment Centre, and thanked the hardworking individuals conducting drive-through COVID-19 tests. Her Honour next visited the Ramsey Lake Health Centre, where she toured the hospital and expressed her appreciation to the many dedicated front-line staff. The day concluded with a visit to Collège Boréal to mark the institution's 25th anniversary. During the visit, Her Honour toured the College Centre for Applied Research in Biodiversity and held an informal discussion with a small group of staff and students.



*The Lieutenant Governor's Standard flies during her visit to Killarney, October 2020.*

i

**Toured the Health Sciences North (HSN) Assessment Centre, and thanked the hardworking individuals conducting drive-through COVID-19 tests.**



#### ***Virtual Engagements:***

In October, Her Honour addressed the Canadian Club of Lindsay during their first event of the 2020/2021 season. Drawing on conversations with key stakeholders in multiple sectors across the province, Ms. Dowdeswell reflected on equity, social and economic sustainability in a post-COVID world. In November, Her Honour held a call with the Toronto City Manager to discuss the challenges Toronto has faced throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Finally, to celebrate the New Year, Her Honour participated in a community Zoom call with the Village of Westport. During the event, featuring both community leaders and elected officials, Her Honour spoke about the importance of democracy, global citizenship and her reasons to be optimistic for 2021.

*– Please see earlier "Celebrations" section for Her Honour's participation in other community celebrations –*

# Hosting visitors

During a truly global crisis, cultivating and strengthening Ontario's ties with the world was important.

With the necessity of physical distancing in place throughout the entirety of the fiscal year, the Office worked to maintain Ontario's important relationships with other nations by ensuring Her Honour could meet virtually with members of the diplomatic community, or in reorganized spaces in the Lieutenant Governor's Suite that allowed for safe and socially distanced in-person meetings.

Both in-person and online, Her Honour met with 17 foreign diplomats including ambassadors, high commissioners, and consuls general.



*Her Honour meets with Ms. Takako Ito, the Consul General of Japan, during a farewell courtesy call, August 2020.*

# Service to the Crown and Remembrance

The Lieutenant Governor regularly promotes volunteer and public service in communities across Ontario. She maintains strong links with those who serve their neighbours, including members of the Canadian Forces and police, fire, and paramedic services. During a year when Ontarians depended on members of the uniformed services perhaps more than ever before, Her Honour sought to maintain traditions and a high level of engagement with these dedicated men and women.

## ***Canadian Forces:***

In May, Her Honour addressed the Province of Ontario's virtual ceremony in honour of the 75th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day.

Towards the end of that same month, the Lieutenant Governor presented Memorial Crosses and Memorial Ribbons to several relatives of Sub-Lt. Abbigail Cowbrough – who died in a helicopter crash on April 29, 2020.

In September, Ms. Dowdeswell addressed the True Patriot Love Annual Tribute Gala to express her support for the charity and veterans in Ontario. Her Honour additionally supplied virtual remarks for The Queen's Own Rifles Regiment in celebration of the 50th anniversary of their museum at Casa Loma.



*The Lieutenant Governor honours the fallen at the province's Remembrance Day Ceremony in Toronto, November 2020.*

In October, the Lieutenant Governor participated in a virtual event where she received the ceremonial first poppy in Ontario from the Royal Canadian Legion.

On Remembrance Day, Ms. Dowdeswell participated in the unveiling of the Memorial to Honour the Heroes of the War in Afghanistan at Queen's Park and attended the Government of Ontario's Remembrance Day ceremony in which she spoke about the importance of remembrance during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since 2011, the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario has served as Colonel of the Regiment of The Queen's York Rangers (1st American Regiment), a Primary Reserve unit in the Canadian Army. In December, Her Honour delivered virtual greetings to the Queen's York Rangers during their annual Holiday Zoom event. She offered her profound gratitude to all members of the unit on behalf of the people of Ontario for their unique service during the pandemic.

In March, Ms. Dowdeswell celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Army Cadet League (Ontario). Her Honour serves as Honorary Patron of the Cadets in the province and took the opportunity to thank the many parents, volunteers and staff who work tirelessly to support the development of young leaders in the program.

**First Responders:**

In October, Her Honour visited the Ontario Firefighters Memorial, in lieu of the annual remembrance service. On social media, the Lieutenant Governor noted that “in turbulent times, we lean more than ever on those willing to confront situations that are difficult or dangerous. Firefighters are such people. It is my solemn privilege, as Her Majesty The Queen’s representative in Ontario, to honour those firefighters who have perished.”

In November, Ms. Dowdeswell attended the funeral for Constable Marc Hovingh, a member of the Ontario Provincial Police, who died in the line of duty on Manitoulin Island.

**The Lieutenant Governor’s statement at the Ontario Firefighters Memorial, October 2020:**

**In turbulent times, we lean more than ever on those willing to confront situations that are difficult or dangerous. Firefighters are such people.**

**Funerals and Memorial Services:**

Throughout the year, the Lieutenant Governor additionally attended funerals and virtual memorial services for citizens who made a profound impact on Ontario.

In May, Her Honour attended a webinar in honour of Allan Gotlieb, a Canadian public servant and author who served as the Canadian Ambassador to the United States from 1981 to 1989. In July, Her Honour attended the visitation and funeral (virtually) for Thomas Brzustowski – a Canadian engineer, academic, and civil servant. In November, Ms. Dowdeswell attended the funeral for Anne-Marie Applin, a lifelong proponent of arts & culture who championed arts organizations in Ontario such as Tafelmusik, the St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, the Gardiner Museum, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, and so many more.

“

Professor Thomas Symons CC OOnt FRSC, was a beacon of intellectual light and Canadian scholarship. He loved this country and brought this love to the world. His legacy is an inspiration and his contributions will continue to benefit all those who seek understanding and who ask the great Canadian questions. My deepest condolences to his family and all who knew him.”

**Elizabeth Dowdeswell**



# Honouring Ontarians



As the Crown's representative, the Lieutenant Governor plays an important role in recognizing Ontarians through the honours system. Honours and awards strengthen the fabric of Ontario's communities and shape the aspirations of Ontarians. They are a way to formally and publicly acknowledge the excellence, achievements, and contributions of role models from all walks of life.

*The insignia of the Order of Ontario consists of the royal crown and Ontario's shield of arms superimposed on a stylized trillium.*

## National honours

The Lieutenant Governor may present national honours, including the Order of Canada, bravery decorations, the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers, and commemorative medals, on behalf of the Governor General.

In August, Her Honour presented the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers to Christopher Carnegie of the Town of Caledon.

In December, the Lieutenant Governor's Chief Aide-de-camp delivered, in a socially distanced manner, a Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers to Major Greg Merrill (Ret'd) at his home in Midhurst.

# Order of Ontario

The Government of Ontario has established several official honours and awards, including the Order of Ontario, which are conferred by the Lieutenant Governor on the Government's formal advice. In all cases, members of the public submit nominations to an honours advisory council, which provides the Government with recommendations. The administration of all provincial honours, including the Order of Ontario, is the responsibility of the Honours and Awards Secretariat in the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries.

On New Year's Day 2021 the Lieutenant Governor announced 47 new appointments to the Order of Ontario for 2019 and 2020. During her video message for the occasion, Her Honour noted that the announcement on January 1st was a special opportunity for both celebration and reflection. She additionally remarked that new appointees could serve as inspiration for Ontarians called to act in support of their community during the pandemic.

In previous years, Her Honour invited each of the new appointees to meet with her after their investiture. While awaiting the occasion of the in-person investiture and to help preserve this tradition of a personal meeting, Ms. Dowdeswell instead spoke over the phone with the new members to learn more about their contributions and to offer her thanks on behalf of the people of Ontario.

In March 2021, Her Honour presented the Order of Ontario to the family of Dr. Marilyn Sonley who, due to ill health, would have been unable to receive it in person. A pioneering pediatric oncologist for more than 30 years, Dr. Marilyn Sonley led the creation of childhood cancer divisions at Princess Margaret Hospital and the Hospital for Sick Children, helping them become world-renowned centres of excellence. She is known as an extraordinary clinician to the children she cared for and an incredible mentor to many leading physicians.



*Dr. Marilyn Sonley with the Order of Ontario, March 2021.*

## Ontario medals and awards

The Government of Ontario has established several official honours and awards, which are conferred by the Lieutenant Governor on the government's formal advice, including:

- The Ontario Medal for Firefighter Bravery
- The Ontario Medal for Police Bravery
- Ontario Medal for Young Volunteers
- Ontario Medal for Good Citizenship
- Ontario Senior Achievement Award
- Lincoln M. Alexander Award (for leadership in eliminating racial discrimination)
- Hilary M. Weston Scholarship (for graduate studies in mental health)
- James Bartleman Indigenous Youth Creative Writing Award
- David C. Onley Award for Leadership in Accessibility

This year, Her Honour was delighted to present many of these awards virtually to citizens who had made incredible contributions to Ontario both before and during the pandemic.

In all cases, members of the public submit nominations to an honours advisory council, which provides the government with recommendations.

# Lieutenant Governor's Awards

The Lieutenant Governor's Community Volunteer Award for Students pays tribute to students who not only exceed the number of volunteer service hours required to graduate, but also go above and beyond. Each year, one graduating student at each of Ontario's high schools receives the award, which includes a certificate and a commemorative pin.

Independent organizations have created awards in partnership with successive Lieutenant Governors to recognize achievements in fields of endeavour, including:

- Lieutenant Governor's Award for Design Excellence in Architecture (Ontario Association of Architects)
- Lieutenant Governor's Medal of Distinction in Public Administration (Institute of Public Administration of Canada in Ontario)
- Lieutenant Governor's Cup (sport horse breeding), (Royal Agricultural Winter Fair)
- Lieutenant Governor's Ontario Heritage Awards (Ontario Heritage Trust)
- Lieutenant Governor's Award for Marketing Excellence in Ontario (Economic Developers Council of Ontario)
- Lieutenant Governor's Distinguished Service Award (Royal Ontario Museum)
- Lieutenant Governor's Award for Excellence in Ontario Wines (Ontario Wine Awards)

This past year, the Lieutenant Governor presented many of these awards during virtual ceremonies.

## Viceregal patronage

The Lieutenant Governor plays a key role in supporting outstanding contributions to civil society. To this end, the Lieutenant Governor from time to time grants viceregal patronage to organizations and initiatives, lending them vital support and recognition.

To date, Ms. Dowdeswell has granted patronage to 47 organizations:

- Aga Khan Museum
- Air Cadet League of Canada (Ontario Provincial Committee)
- Army Cadet League of Canada (Ontario)
- Artscape Foundation
- Canadian Centre for Ethics and Corporate Policy
- Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons
- Children's International Learning Centre
- CNIB (Ontario)
- Commissionaires Great Lakes
- Corporation of Massey Hall and Roy Thomson Hall
- DAREarts
- The Duke of Edinburgh's Awards (Ontario)
- Friends of HMCS Haida
- Haven Toronto (formerly The Good Neighbours' Club)
- Concerts in Care (Health Arts Society of Ontario)
- IISD Experimental Lakes Area
- IODE (Ontario)
- Last Post Fund (Ontario)
- Learning for a Sustainable Future
- Let's Talk Science
- The Lifesaving Society
- Magna Carta Canada
- Monarchist League of Canada
- Mon Sheong Foundation
- Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations
- Ontario Historical Society
- Ontario Society of Artists
- Pathways to Education Canada
- Provincial Council of Women of Ontario
- Quarter Century Club
- Royal Canadian Humane Association
- Royal Canadian Institute for the Advancement of Science
- Royal Canadian Legion (Ontario Command)
- Royal Canadian Military Institute
- Royal Canadian Sea Cadets/ Navy League Cadets
- Royal Commonwealth Society

- Royal Niagara Military Institute
- Royal Ontario Museum
- Institute for Advancements in Mental Health
- Scouts Canada
- Textile Museum of Canada
- Toronto Children's Chorus
- Travellers' Aid Society
- Variety Village
- Warriors' Day Parade Council
- Waterlution: A Water Learning Experience
- Women's Musical Club of Toronto

In addition, Ms. Dowdeswell has granted patronage to the following special initiatives:

- Wounded Warriors Canada Highway of Heroes Bike Ride (August 2016)
- Greatness: The Great Lakes Project (launched in October 2016, ongoing)
- The Toronto School: Then, Now, Next (October 2016)
- Pollution Probe Gala (November 2016)
- 104th Grey Cup Festival (November 2016)
- UNCEDED: *Voices of the Land*, an initiative of the Douglas Cardinal Foundation for Indigenous Waldorf Education (May–November 2018)
- Canadian Business Frontiers (November 2018)
- Ontario Science Centre 50th anniversary celebrations (2019)

This past year during the pandemic, the Lieutenant Governor made it a priority to remain in touch with patronage organizations, especially as many underwent drastic operational changes while others pivoted to provide timely and critical care to vulnerable populations. Through both personal calls with the leaders of patronage organizations and participation in their virtual events, Her Honour continued her engagement with this important community, offering her support and recognition for their outstanding contributions to society.

# Office operations



## The Lieutenant Governor's Suite

*The Music Room in the Lieutenant Governor's Suite at Queen's Park.*

Since the closure of Chorley Park in 1937, Lieutenant Governors of Ontario have operated out of offices and state rooms in the northwest wing of the Legislative Building at Queen's Park, located in downtown Toronto. The Lieutenant Governor's Suite is a working office and also serves as the setting for official functions and hospitality.

## Communications

### ***Engaging Ontarians Online:***

The Lieutenant Governor maintains an active social media presence on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. Public explanation of Her Honour's responsibilities continues to form an important part of the office's online outreach. To this end, the Lieutenant Governor's website is frequently updated to include current and accessible information relating to Her Honour's role and activities.

Please note that links to many of the activities covered in this Activity report can be found on the website at:

 [www.lgontario.ca](http://www.lgontario.ca)

## **Correspondence:**

The Lieutenant Governor showed her support for charities and community organizations celebrating significant anniversaries, hosting conferences and galas, and organizing cultural and sporting events by sending hundreds of signed messages of congratulations.

The Lieutenant Governor provided 47 special event messages and sent 2,306 signed congratulatory greetings to Ontarians celebrating birthdays (90 years and over) and to couples celebrating anniversaries (50 years and over).

## **Serving the Lieutenant Governor**

Led by Chief of Staff Anthony Hylton, the Office of the Lieutenant Governor comprises a team of nine full-time staff members and one part-time member.

In addition, a corps of more than 50 aides-de-camp and volunteers serve the Lieutenant Governor by contributing thousands of hours of service each year. Aides-de-camp are current or retired uniformed service members who accompany and assist Her Honour during events. The position of aide-de-camp is honorary and those appointed serve at pleasure. In Ontario, aides-de-camp are selected from the three branches of the Canadian Armed Forces, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Ontario Provincial Police, regional and municipal police services, and local emergency services and first responders, including St John Ambulance.

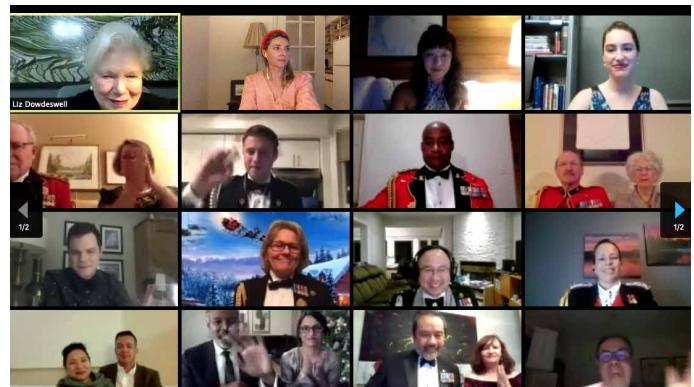
This past year, in October, Lieutenant Commander (retired) Albert Wong, resigned from the role of Chief Aide-de-Camp having been in the position since April 2013. Throughout his tenure, Lieutenant Commander Wong served with grace and distinction, helping the Lieutenant Governor's Office achieve record levels of engagement with the people of Ontario thanks to his leadership.

In turn, Deputy Chief Robin McElary-Downer was appointed Chief Aide-de-Camp, the first woman to hold this distinction. In addition to her many volunteer duties, Deputy Chief McElary-Downer has had a long and distinguished career in policing. She joined South Simcoe Police Service (SSPS) in May, 2017, becoming the service's first female Deputy Chief. You can read more about Deputy Chief McElary-Downer's career and historic appointment here:

 <http://www.lgontario.ca/en/2020/10/16/deputy-chief-mcelary-downer-chief-aide-de-camp/>



*Her Honour with newly appointed Chief Aide-de-Camp, Deputy Chief McElary-Downer and, former Chief Aide-de-Camp, Lieutenant Commander (retired) Albert Wong.*



*Although the Office's annual holiday party took place virtually, that did not stop the household from looking their best, December 2020.*

# Finances

## *Provincial funds*

The Government of Ontario provides the principal means of financial support for the Lieutenant Governor's activity program.

### **Operating expenses: 2020-21**

| <b>Operating expenses: 2020-21</b> |                    |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Salaries and wages                 | 1,254,000          |
| Employee benefits                  | 118,600            |
| Transportation and communication   | 92,100             |
| Services                           | 245,000            |
| Supplies and equipment             | 37,500             |
| Discretionary allowance            | 155,800            |
|                                    | <b>\$1,903,000</b> |

Year ending March 31

All amounts rounded to the nearest \$1. Amounts may not add up precisely due to rounding.

Source: Estimates Briefing Book 2021-22. Treasury Board Secretariat.

## *Federal funds*

The Lieutenant Governor receives a salary from the Government of Canada, the amount of which is determined by Parliament. The Department of Canadian Heritage provides the Lieutenant Governor with funds for the purpose of defraying operating expenses not covered by the provincial government.

### **Lieutenant Governors' Annual Grant (Department of Canadian Heritage): 2020-21**

| <b>Lieutenant Governors' Annual Grant (Department of Canadian Heritage): 2020-21</b> |                |
|--|----------------|
| Travel and accommodation   | 0              |
| Hospitality  | 0              |
| Operational and administrative expenses  | 2,879          |
|  | <b>\$2,879</b> |

Year ending March 31

All amounts rounded to the nearest \$1. Amounts may not add up precisely due to rounding.

Source: "Expenses incurred by the Lieutenant Governors in the exercise of their official duties." Department of Canadian Heritage.



**Elizabeth Dowdeswell** ✅ @LGLizDowdeswell

This year on [#WorldHealthDay2020](#) there can be only one thing to say:

Thank you.



This year on World Health Day, there can be only one thing to say:

Thank you.

Thank you to the dedicated, courageous and compassionate people in our healthcare system—those on the front lines and those supporting them quietly behind the scenes.

We are surely in your debt. We will play our part.

April 7, 2020



**Elizabeth Dowdeswell** ✅ @LGLizDowdeswell



On behalf of all Ontarians, we send our best wishes to Her Majesty The Queen on her official birthday in Canada. Let us take strength from her leadership, service, and continued tribute to frontline workers across Canada and the Commonwealth helping us through COVID-19. (AP)



**Elizabeth Dowdeswell** ✅ @LGLizDowdeswell

Surprise your mom with a special guest at your Canada Day Zoom party. Invite the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario!



**Elizabeth Dowdeswell** ✅ @LGLizDowdeswell

As Lieutenant Governor of a province so large & so full of caring & kind people, thank you for inviting me into your homes. Today was a chance to reflect on how proud we can be of the way in which we've come together & how we can continue to be better & more resilient. #CanadaDay



**Elizabeth Dowdeswell** ✅ @LGLizDowdeswell

I am convinced that art is a central way for Ontarians to find strength and heal together as we continue to persevere through a global pandemic.





**Elizabeth Dowdeswell**  @LGLizDowdeswell

In these turbulent times, we lean more than ever on those willing to confront situations that are difficult or dangerous. Firefighters are such people. It is my solemn privilege, as Her Majesty The Queen's representative in Ontario, to honour those firefighters who have perished.



**Elizabeth Dowdeswell**  @LGLizDowdeswell

As Honorary Vice Patron of @RCIScience, I am delighted to congratulate Professor @CaulfieldTim, winner of this year's Sandford Fleming Medal for outstanding contributions to the public understanding of science.



**Elizabeth Dowdeswell**  @LGLizDowdeswell

The Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada. 50 years later.

Join us December 7.



**Elizabeth Dowdeswell**  @LGLizDowdeswell

As Chancellor of the Order of Ontario, it is with great pride that I congratulate the 2019 and 2020 Order of Ontario appointees.

Read about the 47 new appointments



**Elizabeth Dowdeswell**  @LGLizDowdeswell

While spring is in the air, it is important to remember that we're all in this together.

Today, Ken Dryden sent me this photo.

Wear a mask.



## **A statement from the Lieutenant Governor on the National Day of Observance for COVID-19**

"On the anniversary of the World Health Organization's declaration of a global pandemic we pause to commemorate those who tragically lost their lives due to COVID-19. So many continue to grieve. As flags fly at half-mast we will not forget them.

It is also an opportunity to reflect upon the way in which the people of Ontario have come together in this year of extreme stress and unprecedented change. The stories of kindness and compassion are overwhelming and with each new day comes further evidence that we are a courageous and generous society.

As Lieutenant Governor, I am filled with pride in those caring Ontarians showing creativity and resilience. My deep thanks and respect go to the municipal leaders, medical and health professionals, media, business and industry, volunteers, public servants, front-line workers, scientists, parliamentarians and many more who have persisted daily in keeping the province moving forward.

In solidarity, it has been my privilege to contribute to the continuity of our constitutional functions and to reach out to and recognize so many individuals and organizations who have risked so much.

My hope is that we are all able to stay healthy, to remain strong, and to continue to hold each other up when we falter. The lessons we have learned will surely provide the foundation for a brighter future.

We will get through this together."



The Hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell took office in September 2014 as the 29th Lieutenant Governor of Ontario. This report presents the highlights of her public engagements from April 2020 to March 2021.

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