

QCGN mourns the loss of Gretta Chambers, une Grande Dame of Quebec

A funeral service will be held at 11 o'clock on Saturday, the 16th of September at Saint Léon de Westmount. In lieu of flowers, donations to Centraide would be gratefully appreciated
<http://bit.ly/GiveGretta>

Montreal – September 9, 2017 – The Quebec Community Groups Network is deeply saddened to learn of the passing of community leader and trailblazer Gretta Chambers. She died Saturday morning, at the venerable age of 90.

“Her contributions to Quebec were nothing short of outstanding,” said QCGN President James Shea. The insights Mrs. Chambers provided during more than four decades as a social commentator for The Gazette and the CBC, from the mid-sixties to the early 2000s, helped shape the province’s understanding of itself during some turbulent times. “As a journalist, she explained French-speaking Quebec to English-speaking Quebecers and Canadians,” Shea noted. “In so doing, she became an important bridge builder between Quebec’s Two Solitudes.”

“I just always felt the importance of explaining, English and French, one to the other, of who we were,” Mrs. Chambers said in an interview upon winning the QCGN’s Distinguished Community Service Award in 2012.

“Gretta Chambers was une ‘Grande Dame’ of Quebec,” said QCGN Director General Sylvia Martin-Laforge. “She was a force of nature, blazing trails wherever she went. Chambers was the first female chancellor of a major university in Quebec (McGill) and the author of a seminal report on English education in Quebec that led to the creation of the Advisory Board on English Education, of which she was named the first chair. Many of the recommendations brought forward in her report, which aimed to preserve the vitality of English-language school boards, remain relevant today.”

“She was a woman with influence, vision and power, and a role model for me and many of my contemporaries,” added Martin-Laforge. “She was feisty and did not take no easily for an answer.”

Mrs. Chambers and her late husband, Egan Chambers, a former MP, were models of leadership in many circles, including family. Their son, Geoffrey, is vice-president of the QCGN.

“The QCGN wishes to extend its deepest sympathies to Geoffrey as well as to the rest of the Chambers family and many friends,” said Shea. The style, grace and verve which Mrs. Chambers exemplified, he added, will very much be missed.

The Quebec Community Groups Network is a not-for-profit organization bringing together 53 English-language community organizations across Quebec. As a centre of evidence-based expertise and collective action it identifies, explores and addresses strategic issues affecting the development and vitality of the English-speaking community of Quebec and encourages dialogue and collaboration among its member organizations, individuals, community groups, institutions and leaders.

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