

Honouring a Leader

Written by Lynn Moir Hopkins

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Fifty years ago, Walter Pitman was elected by Peterborough as the first New Democrat Member of federal Parliament. This community gave launch to a Party and a movement which would change Canadian politics forever. The budding movement to reform the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation blasted off after Walter's victory, and from Peterborough a new Party was formed that would spread across the nation

Under the leadership of the first NDP leader Tommy Douglas, many of the institutions Canadians take greatest pride in were shaped in cooperation with the Pearson minority government. Public healthcare, student loans, and the minimum wage were pioneered in large part by the bold step the people of Peterborough took.

On February 13th, we want to do far more than honour the successes of the past. We look to the future, we look to you, to help us ride history's progressive momentum forward to the next election

Andrea Horwath and the Ontario New Democrats are at the forefront of the issues that effect everyday families. The McGuinty government has failed to keep abreast of the needs and concerns of Ontarians. While giving away billions in corporate tax-cuts to the wealthiest companies, McGuinty chose to finance this vast wealth transfer by imposing the Harmonized Sales Tax on the wallets of everyday consumers. It's time for a government who puts the priorities of everyday families first.



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Walter Pitman stood against this same unfairness in his day. A Kenner Secondary School teacher who became a politician, Walter would later go on to represent us provincially as an MPP. In a friendly rivalry, in 1971, Walter Pitman ran for the leadership of the Ontario New Democratic Party against Stephen Lewis. After leaving the Legislature, he taught history at Trent University and later became Registrar and Dean in the University Administration. After leaving Trent, Walter was appointed President of Ryerson University, and was then Head of the Ontario Arts Council. Before retirement, Walter was the Head of OISE (Ontario Institute for Studies in Education) and has written several books since retirement.

Walter Pitman is an exceptional man, a fine human being patterned along the line of Tommy Douglas. Admired and liked by all who know him, this is our opportunity to honour a true community leader.

Our team of passionate, dedicated New Democrats invite you to join us in marking the historic moment which began fifty years ago in Peterborough, and ask for your help in making history once again in the upcoming provincial election.

We look forward to seeing you here in Peterborough on Sunday, February 13th!

Lynn Moir Hopkins, Chair
Honouring Walter Pitman Committee