When I arrived at McGill, I was much like any other student discovering university life in the fifties or sixties, seeking out the classes, students and extra-curricular activities that piqued my interest. En route to obtaining my degree, I played squash at the Sir Arthur Currie gym, joined the Debating Union, somehow got the job of crowd control at the Winter Carnival, and wore my Scarlet Key sweater coat with pride (in later years it was unceremoniously discarded by a close family member who shall remain nameless).

Most of all, McGill was where my studies and my interest in politics intersected and flourished. I majored in political science and history. At the same time, I became involved in student government, the nascent National Federation of University Students and the McGill Conference on World Affairs that featured then Prime Minister Lester Pearson as a speaker. Everywhere on campus it seemed that change was not just possible but inevitable and that, by working together, we could make a difference.

There’s no doubt that the education and experience we received at McGill helped set the course for our generation, shaping our perspective on the key issues facing our country, and inspiring us to dedicate our efforts in support of positive change. I’m proud to say that today’s students manifest that same commitment. The challenge for us now is to lead change once again by supporting this next generation and fostering their ability and desire to make a difference. There’s no doubt that they are up to the challenge – and we can help them make it happen through our planned gifts.

The Hon. Michael A. Meighen, CM, QC, BA’60, LLD’12
Chancellor, McGill University
Change was in the air during Ann Longhurst Vroom’s years as an undergraduate.

“When we entered McGill we were still wearing twinsets and pearls. When we graduated kids were starting to wear jeans. It happened almost overnight. The change was unbelievably radical and fast,” recalls Vroom. “We were the front edge of the baby boomers – on the cusp of protesting everything from the University administration to the war in Vietnam,” she says.

Vroom graduated with her Bachelor of Arts in 1967, continuing a family legacy that started with her grandfather, who graduated from the Faculty of Medicine in 1915.

A cheerleader and all-round keener, Vroom made many friends as a member and later president of Kappa Kappa Gamma. The sorority demanded high marks, as well as community service. As part of that requirement, Vroom volunteered as a “Droplet,” which made her a member of a McGill team that played a broomball game against the Montreal Alouettes football team to promote a blood drive on the downtown campus (pictured above).

The summer she graduated from McGill she was chief hostess for the Canadian pavilion at Expo 67 – the cover shows her in a Montreal Star photo of the famed uniforms.

“It’s hard to describe the sense of exhilaration and hope and excitement that all of Canada felt, but in particular here in Montreal and Quebec. We hosted the world.” She spent every day she wasn’t working visiting the other pavilions at Expo.
When Professor Emeritus Kohur GowriSankaran (affectionately known as “Gowri”) first arrived at McGill in 1968 as an Associate Professor of Mathematics, he was looking for a meaningful career. In his new department, he found a family. “I felt very comfortable, right from my first day here,” he says.

Arriving from Mumbai, he was among the first wave of researchers to join. “There was hardly anybody doing mathematical analysis,” he recalls. “I found great satisfaction in being part of building that area.”

The campus was heating up as social change spread across North America. “Those were the days. There was a lot of action by youth,” he says. He even took part in a few marches, but the University was still relatively conservative, he says. “In those days, we used to wear a jacket and tie to go to lecture.”

At McGill, Gowri discovered a new passion: teaching. “One thing that’s really rewarding about being a professor is being in contact with young people all the time, their fresh minds,” he says. “And I don’t think that’s changed at all.”

In fact, he’s still in touch with a student from the class of 1976. Gowri helped him transfer from Economics into Mathematics – no easy feat at the time. The student went on to excel in the field, even completing a PhD.

“It was very rewarding to be involved with students and to help shape their careers,” Gowri says. When he retired in 2010, the McGill Association of University Teachers wanted to give him a gift. Instead, he asked that they establish a prize to support the next generation.

The latest winner, Megan Roda, BSc’18 (pictured above), was thrilled to learn she had received the GowriSankaran Prize in Mathematics and Statistics.

Like the young man many years ago, Megan, a biology student, changed majors when she discovered her love of math: “I took one class, Analysis I, that wasn’t part of my major – and I loved it, so I took Analysis II. And I just never stopped!”

Megan found out that she had won the prize on the same day she picked up her cap and gown for convocation. Now, she’s back in the department doing her MSc, and applying for PhD programs.

For Gowri and his wife, Chandra, the McGill community has become a second family, and planning a bequest for the Mathematics and Statistics department seemed like second nature. “We believe we are a part of McGill,” he says. “And McGill is part of us.”

“McGill was not a place where I worked. McGill was my life.”
Kohur GowriSankaran, Professor Emeritus
PERPETUATE YOUR ANNUAL GIFT

Starting this year, the new Dean’s Legacy Fund gives donors the opportunity to immortalize their annual support of their Faculty. With this new endowment, you can continue to support your Faculty’s most pressing needs and exciting opportunities – each and every year, in perpetuity.

Designate your bequest to the Dean’s Legacy Fund, through your estate plans, and extend your annual support to the same areas you have championed during your lifetime. Your planned gift will foster new discoveries and create exceptional student experiences for generations to come.

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For illustration purposes, endowed interest calculated at a rate of 4%.

GENEROUS BENEFACtors REMEMBERED

McGill University is profoundly grateful for the bequests, both large and small, that it has received from alumni and friends. Following is a list of bequests that the University received over the course of the last fiscal year, which ended on April 30, 2018.

Raymond Bourgie
Lynn Frances Marguerite Carter
James K. Edwards
Estate of Kurt Ekler
Estate of Marion Erdelyi
Estate of Dr. Florence Farmer
Estate of Charlotte Ferencz
Succession Mary Golubeva
Estate of Isabel Grotterod
Estate of Robert K. Harwood
Estate of Dr. Barbara Haskel
Estate of Joan K. Jackson
Estate of Muriel Jackson
Estate of Dr. Frank Kunz
Elliott Lesser, PhD
Estate of Sylviane Aimee Lunn
Estate of Mary Metcalf
Estate of Mairi Teresa
St. John Macdonald
Anita H. Morton
Estate of Frances L. O’Brien
Estate of Louis Joseph Papineau
Estate of William E. Powles, MD
Estate of Diane Alexis Raymond
Estate of Dr. John D. Ripley
Estate of Rudolph Scarabelli
Estate of James Paul Stanley
Estate of Ivan Coxon
Naismith Tennant
Estate of Anne Daudy Tkach
Estate of Peter Van der Borch, DVM
Dr. Jagannath Wani
Estate of Frederick E. Whiskin

FouR DECADES LATER: Bequest Still Helps Top Students Soar

Harold Greville Smith, a prominent industrialist, left 30 percent of his estate to The Martlet Foundation. The prestigious scholarships created in his name have helped over 240 exceptional students since 1977.

“Becoming a Greville Smith Scholar in 1978 opened a new world for me. It was very valuable to socialize with my fellow scholars: being with people operating at that standard drove me to be the best I could be. I continue to have an internal drive that propels me to excel.”

Neil Murdoch, BCom’81, Former CEO of Connor Clark & Lunn Capital Markets

“Being awarded a Greville Smith Scholarship meant McGill wouldn’t just be my dream school. It would be my school. I could attend without having to worry about my financial situation, and focus on working towards my degree and my career goals – towards being in a position where I can give back.”

Danielle Davies, Greville Smith Scholar, Chemistry major and Quidditch team member
DID YOU KNOW?

McGill University was established through a bequest – almost 200 years ago!

You can direct your planned gift to the area of McGill that is most important to you.

You can provide us with the details of your legacy wishes by completing and returning the Confidential Statement of Future Intent available online under “Confirming your intentions” at mcgill.ca/epn

You can contact us at the coordinates below – we are here to help!

McGILL 1821 & MACDONALD LEGACY SOCIETIES

McGill University owes its very existence to the foresight of a generous planned gift. The University was founded in 1821 with a bequest from the estate of Scottish-born Montreal merchant James McGill.

Today, the McGill 1821 Society and the Macdonald Legacy Society recognize and honour all alumni and friends who have chosen to remember the University in their estate plans, or through another type of planned gift.

Visit our website for a video with more memories of McGill in the 60s.