

In service of his country

Tom Molloy's devotion to his Saskatoon community can be measured in many ways. He's been involved with organizations like Pride Canada, Wanuskewin Heritage Park, Meewasin Foundation, Saskatoon Foundation, Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon, Jeux du Canada Games, Kidney Research of Saskatchewan, Friends of Saskatchewan Children and their affiliation to the Ronald McDonald House.

Because of his dedication, organizational and fund-raising ability, Molloy has

been recognized with a Distinguished Community Service award from the city in 1973, the Rotary Golden Wheel award for excellence in commerce and industry in 1991-92, The B'nai B'rith's We're Proud of You award in 1993 and named an officer of the Order of Canada as recently as July, 1996. As well, his stature in the law community earned him a Queen's Council designation by the government of Canada in 1983.

A continuing role as a chief negotiator for the federal government in Indian land claims draws Molloy away from some of his community involvement but has given him an interesting new perspective about his nation.

Molloy was first appointed as a negotiator in March, 1982, joining a process which had already been initiated between the government and the Inuit. Under his guidance, a settlement resulted in the Inuit achieving ownership of 350,000 square kilometres of land in Nunavut, the eastern and central areas of the North West Territories. An agreement in principle was reached in 1991, ratification came in 1993 and it became the largest land settlement ever realized in North America.

Molloy took his assignment seriously.



NED POVERS



"When I was first appointed, I took a 10-day trip with an Inuit family of three adults and three children, lived in the tents, joined them in hunting caribou and seal and in fishing, and went right up to Hudson Bay by

"Of the 27 communities in the eastern Arctic, I was in 23 of them for more than a day, some of them innumerable times.

"In any negotiations, you have to develop a rapport and a trust. The emotions ran high from time to time. I wanted to see the actual lands and the attachment of the people to them. We negotiated many specific parcels, many different from the others. The hunters knew their lands like I would know the downtown of Saskatoon.

"As well as recognizing the traditions, there was the environment, the decisions on mineral rights, the social issues like the drug and alcohol problems. Their advisors always made them aware of the financial issues," said Molloy.

With one negotiation process in place, the demand on Molloy's services increased.

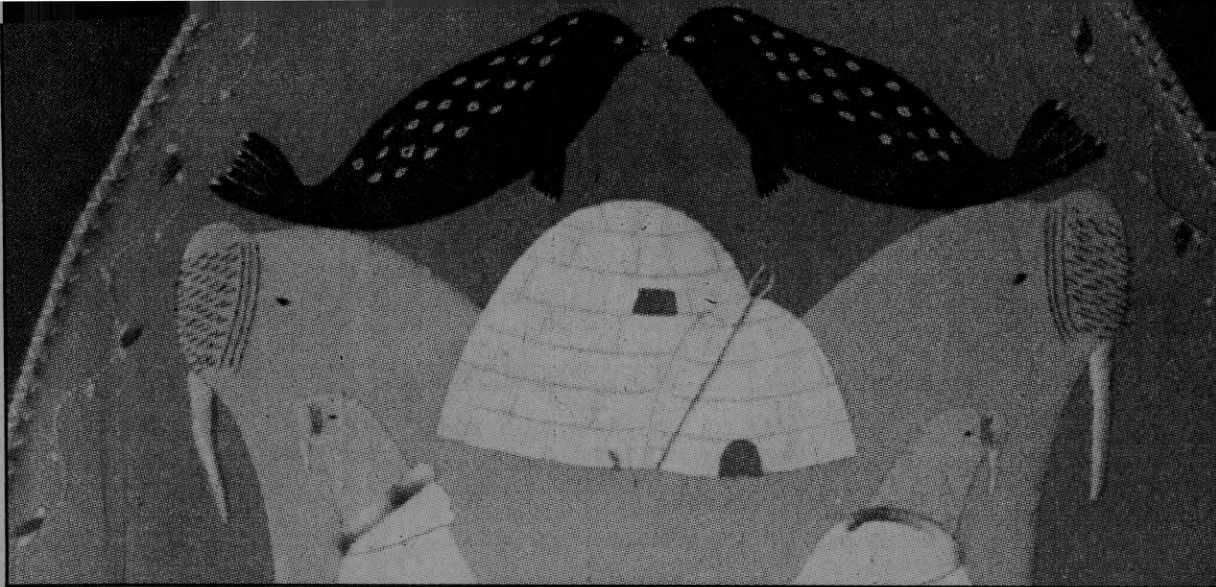
By the fall of 1993, Molloy became the chief negotiator for the government of Canada in pursuing the first treaty of any significance in British Columbia's history. He inherited a file which had been on-going for 20 years but worked out an agreement in principle by July, 1996, with the Nishga'a for 1,930 square kilometres of land in the Terrace-Prince Rupert area.

He is also in negotiations with the Inuit of Northern Quebec, focusing on land in Labrador as well as some off-shore islands in Hudson Bay, James Bay and Ungava Bay.

Molloy finds it all "fascinating and appealing. There is the variety in the work. There is the chance to understand the Native culture and see how the aboriginals use land and their resources. And I've had an opportunity to see a part of Canada that many others ordinarily wouldn't see."

Molloy grew up in Saskatoon, attended elementary school at St. Paul's and St. Joseph's and then returned to St. Paul's when it became a high school. The irony is that St. Paul's School was located at Fourth Avenue and 22nd Street, right across the office he now occupies at Saskatoon Square.

His father, George, worked for Canada Packers and then spent 18 years as secretary-treasurer of the Saskatoon Separate School system. He was committed to the Knights of Columbus and United Way among



-SP Photo

Tom Molloy with a fond reminder of his work in the North

many others. His mother, Irene, was active in the Catholic Women's League at provincial and national levels. An uncle, Clarence Downey, was Saskatoon's first noted speed skating coach,

"As children, my brother George, sisters Sharon and Mary and I learned to become involved. One of my important influences was Father Stortz at St. Paul's. He organized house leagues, playgrounds hockey, football, curling, bowling even though the school didn't have money for athletics. We learned to raise our own money through him. Father Stortz taught me some practical values."

Molloy attended St. Thomas More College, then shifted to the College of Law where he graduated in 1964. He was on the Student's Council at the University of Saskatchewan and was active as a young Liberal.

"I met Mike Pearson while I was a student. It may have crossed my mind during university days that I might become a politician but, later, I accepted and enjoyed the organizational side," said Molloy, who was campaign chairman for Liberal MP Otto Lang for two campaigns and later a federal Liberal provincial chair. He met other Liberal prime ministers like Pierre Trudeau, John Turner and Jean Chretien. He is currently president of Georgette Sheridan's Saskatoon-Humboldt constituency.

Molloy once thought of pursuing criminal law but gravitated to commercial law and labor relations. He was a partner of MacDermid and

Lamarsh from July, 1964, until late 1989, when he became counsel to MacPherson Leslie and Tyerman law firm.

When he graduated from university, Molloy became involved with Sister O'Brien's Catholic Family Services, a project called Youth Opportunities Unlimited and was associated with the Local Housing Authority, with his interest first sparked by a conversation with Mayor S.L. Buckwold.

In his role as a volunteer, Molloy admits he was lucky to work on "some projects which were products of great vision and many which appealed to the public's imagination. As a fund-raiser, I always believed you should get the job done quickly and keep the public's interest high. The community has always been very generous."

He said his work with Wanuskewin was "an appealing opportunity to work with the Plains Indian Culture. It was amazing the way the vision of a few people was so enthusiastically accepted before the project ever started." He said there was no problem enlisting financial support across Canada. The presence of Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip at the park opening in freezing conditions was a moment to remember.

He said his association with Meewasin came "when Fred Heal, an old university friend, came back to Saskatoon and we became reacquainted. I'd always heard people talking on airplanes about the beauty of the river in Saskatoon. Although the service clubs had taken a lead in addressing some of the concerns of the riverbank, it was important for

Meewasin to step in and tie it all together."

With Friends of Saskatchewan, Molloy was recruited by Bill Mitchell and Tony Dagnone.

"It was established to own and operate a Ronald McDonald House to serve as a home away from home for parents and families of children who were receiving medical treatment. It was something we needed. And when I was visiting other cities, I went to see how the McDonald Houses operated and was really impressed. We had so many unique and creative ideas and it really became fun for the fund-raisers."

The Order of Canada ceremonies in Ottawa in November represented most recent highlight.

"I was quite impressed with the ceremonies, which was formal, yet set in a nice atmosphere, and it was interesting to be inducted into the order with people like Stompin' Tom Connors and Mr. Dressup."

The inevitable challenge has always been time management. He and his wife, Alice, were married for 25 years and they have four daughters, Corinne, Jennifer, Alison and Kathryn.

"My family was very understanding. Alice was with me on many of the community projects and our daughters have really been active as volunteers."

His wife was first diagnosed with cancer 13 years ago, the cancer went into remission but came back again six years ago. Molloy recalls "she was always so optimistic about life, never focused on herself or her health but enjoyed her family and friends to the end." His wife died in February, 1996.