

United Irish Societies hand out two prestigious awards: the Liam Daly Heritage Award and the Simon McDonough Award



Don Pidgeon

Each year, the United Irish Societies present the **Liam Daly Heritage Award** to a deserving candidate. This year's recipient is Don Pidgeon who is renowned throughout the Montreal Irish community for his contribution to promoting Irish culture.

Don Pidgeon is a Griffintown boy who has been involved in the Irish community and heritage from his early youth. He comes from a family that is involved in charitable and humanitarian endeavours.

He has two sisters, Thelma and Rita, as well as a brother, William (Bill), who was honoured in 1996 with the Simon McDonough Award – an award that Don himself received in 2004.

Don has been active in the St. Ann's Young Men's Society, United Irish Societies of Montreal Inc., Irish Committee for Grosse Île, Knights of Columbus and St. Patrick's Soup Kitchen.

He successfully negotiated improvements at the Black Stone Monument on Bridge Street, has helped many students write "papers" for their education, assisted writers and has written extensively about local and North American Irish history. He is also involved in bridging the lines of communication and cooperation to the diaspora of the Irish worldwide.

In 2008 one hundred copies of Don's book, *The United Irish Societies of Montreal 1928 to 2008*, were published. The books sold for \$10.00 each and \$1000.00 was donated to the Shriners' Children's Hospital Transportation Fund.

His great love is his family, his wife Nancy, children Jennifer and Jim and granddaughter Romy. The opportunity to serve the needy is of special importance. St. Patrick's Soup Kitchen is where you'll find him most Fridays, serving coffee or meals and helping in the kitchen with a wonderful group of volunteers.

It is most fitting that Don should receive this award for after the passing of Liam Daly, he became involved in the Liam Daly Endowment Fund of the Canadian Irish Studies Foundation.



Adrian Bercovici

Adrian Bercovici, recipient of this year's **Simon McDonough Award**, is an anti-poverty advocate, with broad practical experience. He is a recognized leader in charitable campaign planning and management with proven results while working at Canadian National Railways, the Old Brewery Mission and presently with the Generations Foundation.

While at Canadian National Railways, he and his wife, Natalie, raised a family while he attended night classes at Sir George Williams High School. In 1962, he was awarded a D.A. Budge Memorial Award for scholastic achievement and he received his Bachelor of Commerce "with distinction" from Sir George Williams University.

Mr. Bercovici's career at Canadian National Railways spanned 38 years where he developed extensive experience in directing administrative and financial functions. Adrian received the Merit Award for organization and achievement and the Maurice Auzat Memorial Award for dedication and exceptional service to the Employees' and Pensioners' Community Fund.

During his tenure as Executive Director at the Old Brewery Mission, he developed a variety of programmes that provided jobs for individuals to increase their self-esteem. The Patricia Mackenzie Pavilion, a women's centre, was built and opened under his watch and Camp Chapleau earned the "Prize of Excellence" from the Quebec Camping Association.

Adrian was awarded an outstanding Canadian Citizenship Award for unselfish service to the community, the Leavitt award from the Rotary Club, and other awards from the Police Department and learning institutions. Generations Foundation was founded in 1999 because Adrian Bercovici and his supporters refused to say no to hungry children. Generations Foundation focuses on feeding needy school children, teenagers and young adults at risk to motivate and empower them. The children are sponsored to summer camp each year and continue to learn and be challenged. Adrian Bercovici and supporters are devoted in their quest to provide support and opportunities for the underprivileged in our community.

You may reach Adrian (Executive Director, Generations Foundation) at www.generationsfoundation.com or by phone (514) 933-8585.

