

Looking back on 50 years

PAST LAUREATE IRENE D'ENTREMONT RECALLS THE EARLY DAYS OF THE HALL OF FAME AND JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT

BY KEN PARTRIDGE

Attendees of the 2018 Junior Achievement of Nova Scotia Business Hall of Fame Gala will experience an entire evening of celebration in the heart of Halifax's downtown, surrounded by hundreds of the city's top business people as they honour the latest inductees. It's a far cry from the 30-minute luncheon at Saint Mary's University that launched the whole thing.

Irene d'Entremont was there for that first event in 1993 and inducted a year later. She has seen how far the Hall has come over the past 25 years and the impact it has had on the business community and on Junior Achievement.

"When the Hall of Fame was first thought of," she says, "it was to recognize people who were doing great things for the province. That original thought is exactly what the Hall has become. All the different laureates we have are a great testament to what the Hall has evolved into."

Born and raised in Pubnico, d'Entremont is an excellent example of the laureates to whom she refers. She made her mark in the Yarmouth area and has run a variety of businesses across several sectors, including sales and service, R&D, and manufacturing. She is currently president of ITG Information Management Inc., consulting in business management. Her résumé includes MIT Electronics Inc., Women's Up-To-Date Shop Inc., Wesmar Electronics Canada Limited, Tourism Nova Scotia, Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, the Aerospace and Defence Industries Association of Nova Scotia, and the Yarmouth Airport board of directors.

She gives a lot of credit for getting the concept of the Hall of Fame rolling to Harvey Webber, a Cape Breton businessman who was among the first four people inducted into the Hall. Webber was a tireless fighter for all things local, being one of the founding forces behind Atlantic Canada Plus, this region's first major attempt at getting residents to choose locally-made products.

"Harvey was key to the whole thing," d'Entremont says. "He was a driving force, along with the Chamber of Commerce."

Junior Achievement came on board in those early days, seeing the natural alignment with its programs and the goals of the Hall. "Junior Achievement is the epitome of what

youth need to hear and learn about business. I definitely identify JA with what the Hall of Fame is supposed to inspire," d'Entremont says.

The Hall now honours almost 90 business leaders and has become the single most important fundraising event for Junior Achievement of Nova Scotia. Over that same time, the Nova Scotia charter has become recognized as one of the most active and innovative JA's in the country. d'Entremont says the Hall of Fame event has become more sophisticated every year.

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