

ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS AND GEOSCIENTISTS  
OF THE  
PROVINCE OF MANITOBA

# Leadership Award

Presented to

**THE HONOURABLE DUFFERIN (DUFF) ROBLIN**

P.C., C.C., O.M., LL.D

*Duff Roblin was born in Winnipeg in 1917, the grandson of Manitoba premier Sir Rodmond Palen Roblin. He was educated at the universities of Manitoba and Chicago. He served overseas with the Royal Canadian Air Force during the Second World War, retiring in 1946 as Wing Commander. He was first elected as a Member of the Manitoba Legislature in 1949 and became leader of the provincial Conservatives in 1954. Four years later, Mr. Roblin led his party to success in the first of four Manitoba elections. Achievements of the Roblin Government include the Manitoba Development Fund; creation of the Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg; an up-to-date system of highways and roads; the Social Allowances Program; educational reforms and expenditures, including advances in post-secondary education; a visible tourist industry; and of course, the Red River Floodway. It is commonly understood that the reforms introduced by Mr. Roblin's governments were the most extensive and far-reaching in Manitoba's history.*

*After resigning as an MLA in 1967, Mr. Roblin was a leadership candidate for the federal Conservative Party. He was appointed a Companion of the Order of Canada, and in 1978, was appointed to the Senate by Pierre Trudeau, where he served as Senate Leader in Brian Mulroney's cabinet. He was among the first recipients of Manitoba's highest honour, the Order of Manitoba.*

*Mr. Roblin's most famous accomplishment is the Greater Winnipeg Floodway - popularly known as "Duff's Ditch". In the aftermath of a large flood in 1950 that swamped 10,500 homes and cost over \$120 million in repairs, many studies were launched to determine how the city could best ensure it would not again suffer major damage from flooding. The \$60 million cost of the 30-mile floodway delayed a decision on proceeding with construction until the river again threatened the city in 1956. Mr. Roblin saw that devastating floods are inevitable in Southeastern Manitoba and the only time to prevent a devastating flood in Winnipeg is before it happens. Work began on the floodway in 1962 and was completed in 1968. At the time, the Red River Floodway was an engineering marvel - the second largest earth-moving project in the Americas after the Panama Canal. The Floodway very quickly paid for itself - turning aside floodwaters on 15 occasions, including the major flood of 1997, when it was almost breached with flows beyond its design capacity. Now, thirty-five years after the completion of "Duff's Ditch", politicians, engineers and constructors are working once more to extend Duff Roblin's vision and improve protection against even larger floods.*

*In recognition of his outstanding leadership in improving the quality of life for many Manitobans, the Association is pleased to present the Leadership Award to the Honourable Duff Roblin.*

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