

At Queen's Park, by Sylvia Jones MPP ? Elizabeth Dowdeswell sworn in as new Lieutenant Governor of Ontario

We marked an important day in Ontario Sept. 23 with the swearing in of the province's new Lieutenant Governor, Elizabeth Dowdeswell.

The Lieutenant Governor is an important vice-regal position in Ontario's government and has been held for the past seven years by Lt.-Gov. David Onley. The swearing in of a new Lieutenant Governor is steeped in numerous traditions dating back many years, including the appointee arriving in a horse-drawn carriage, and being greeted by a 100-person honour guard from the 4th Canadian Division and a 15-gun salute.

Lt.-Gov. Dowdeswell was born in Northern Ireland and immigrated to rural Saskatchewan as a child with her family. At 69-years old, she has accomplished much, starting as a home economics teacher and moving up to deputy minister of culture and youth. In addition, she served as undersecretary general of the United Nations, and was president and CEO of the Council of Canadian Academies when her appointment was announced.

Typically, when a new Lieutenant Governor is sworn in, they lay out a particular issue or group of issues they intend to make their priorities during their tenure. Lt.-Gov. Dowdeswell, however, has broken with this tradition and will instead consult with Ontarians which issues they believe she should champion. This is an interesting and positive development in the evolution of the Lieutenant Governor position.

?The aim will be to provide a forum for reflection in the Lieutenant-Governor's office, a safe space and a crucible for ideas,?

Lt.-Gov. Dowdeswell stated. ?And in time priority themes will emerge.?

I believe Lt.-Gov. Dowdeswell to be a great selection as Ontario's new Lieutenant Governor, and am sure she will serve with distinction. I wish her well in her new important role.

