



**International Fiscal Association (Canadian Branch)  
Association fiscale internationale (Section canadienne)  
President's Greeting  
Winter 2013**



Greetings!!

What a whirlwind it has been for me since my last message in June!! Stephanie graduated from university and Kristine from high school. Lori and I became “empty-nesters”, sort of – do kids ever really leave home? And I “retired” from PwC to take on a senior finance role, including head of tax, at Rogers Communications.

As usual, it has also been a whirlwind on the IFA front since the summer.

**Copenhagen IFA Congress**

In August, the Danish Branch put on a great Congress in this charming city that many of us visited for the first time. The weather was outstanding and the scientific program very stimulating.

There was another strong Canadian contingent in attendance, including a number who were members of various panels - Elizabeth Johnston, Brian Mustard, Michael Kandeve, Steve Suarez, and Scott Wilkie. Much was discussed and debated in the sessions and in informal conversations on recent international tax developments, in particular, the OECD's *Base Erosion and Profit Shifting* (BEPS) initiative. Not surprisingly, there seemed to be no clear consensus on what the outcome of this initiative will be other than it has a huge potential to alter the way people – taxpayers, advisors, academics and government officials – think about and plan for international tax transactions.

The Congress also saw the appointment of a new IFA President with Porus Kaka of India succeeding Manuel Tron of Mexico. All IFA members are grateful for Manuel's leadership, particularly in expanding IFA presence in South America. We all look forward to working with Porus, the first IFA President from India.

**Central IFA Recognizes Canadian Members**

The Copenhagen Congress is also remembered for the recognition it gave to two outstanding Canadian international tax practitioners.

Robert Couzin, a longstanding member and former President of the Canadian Branch, retired from the Permanent Scientific Committee (PSC) after six very active years as its Chair. For those who are not familiar with the PSC, it is the IFA committee responsible for deciding the seminar topics and speakers at each Congress and other IFA initiatives. To acknowledge his many contributions to IFA internationally and his service as Chair of the PSC, Robert was recognized at the General Assembly as an Honorary Member of Central IFA to go along with the same title he received from the Canadian Branch in 2012.

Scott Wilkie, also a former President of the Canadian Branch, was elected to the PSC where he is sure to play a very prominent role over the next few years. Scott continues the long tradition of having a prominent member of the Canadian Branch serve as a member of the PSC.

In another recent IFA announcement, Brian Mustard, a current Executive member of IFA Canada, was chosen to be on the editorial board of the new Central IFA Newsletter.

Congratulations gentlemen!! It is contributions like yours that have made the Canadian Branch one of the most prominent and influential branches within the IFA network.

### **2013 Travelling Lectureship**

Hopefully all IFA members are familiar with the Branch's annual Traveling Lectureship. It was conceived a number of years ago by former President Brian Schneiderman. It features an esteemed member of the Canadian or global tax community speaking across the country to our members on a tax topic of interest in a forum that gives the audience an opportunity to think and reflect more deeply on the topic than they would otherwise do in other seminars or conferences.

The 2013 Lectureship was held in September and October in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and, for the first time, in Halifax – making the Lectureship perhaps the first of its kind to be truly “coast to coast”.

This year's presenter was Stephen Richardson and the title of his presentation was “On Overview of Tax Policy for Tax Practitioners”. I can think of no better Canadian tax practitioner than Steve, another longstanding member of the Branch and a former Associate Deputy Minister of Finance, to take on such a subject that is difficult and so unfamiliar to most. Steve made the topic more accessible by providing the audience with a point of reference and direction to help us understand a little better why Canadian tax law is what it is.

Many thanks to Steve for the enormous time, travel and overall effort he put into making this year's Traveling Lectureship a success.

Keep watching the website for news of our 2014 Traveling Lectureship.

### **Other Recent and Future Events**

Just recently, Michael Kandev and his YIN committee put on another successful webinar for young tax practitioners. The topic was “Base Erosion and Profit Shifting - The OECD Action Plan and Concrete Actions”. The speakers were Nicolas Bilodeau and Scott Wilkie.

Planning for the May 22-23, 2014 joint seminar with the U.S. Branch continues. Keep on the look-out for details on our website at [www.ifacanada.org](http://www.ifacanada.org).

### **In Memory...**

This past October, Canada lost one of its most outstanding and best known tax practitioners, Robert D. Brown.

Bob was a mentor and role model for many of us at Price Waterhouse (later PwC) serving as our head of tax and then our CEO before “retiring” and going on to become Chair of the CICA, Chair of the C.D. Howe Institute and the Clifford Clark Visiting Economist to the Department of Finance. For a number of years, Bob worked tirelessly and was passionately committed to shaping tax and government spending policy in Canada. He also served as Chair of the Canadian Tax Foundation and on various Parliamentary and government committees while writing and speaking prolifically.

His counsel and warm “Greetings” will be missed by all of us who knew him.

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Our bi-annual Council meeting during the upcoming Canadian Tax Foundation Annual Conference (November 24<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> in Toronto) will mark the end of my term as President of IFA Canada.

I was very fortunate to lead an organization that is strong financially but, more importantly, is rich with a sense of history and purpose with members who are committed and willing to serve. I am grateful for the tremendous support and patience that Council and, in particular, the Executive have given me over the past two years. You made my job very easy.

I am honoured to have had the opportunity to serve as President of IFA Canada and will be proud to share the title of “Past President” with so many great IFA members.

I look forward to working with our new President, Stephen Bowman, and the rest of Council and the new Executive in the future.

Cheers!!

Nick Pantaleo, FCPA, FCA  
President

November, 2013

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