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# SASK BUSINESS

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## Business of the Year

### THE HILL COMPANIES

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Paul J. Hill  
Chairman, President and CEO,  
The Hill Companies



# B U S I N E S S   O F   T H E   Y E A R

## The Hill Companies Executive Team

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1 <b>James Camplin</b> , General Counsel                     | 6 <b>Mo Bundon</b> , Senior Vice President and COO                        |
| 2 <b>Steve N. Enns</b> , Vice President, Property Management | 7 <b>Blair Forster</b> , Vice President, Development                      |
| 3 <b>Laurie Powers</b> , Vice President, Private Investments | 8 <b>Tina Svedahl</b> , Vice President, Investments                       |
| 4 <b>Rosanne Hill Blaisdell</b> , Vice President, Leasing    | 9 <b>Hiedi Pearson</b> , Manager of Human Resources and Employee Services |
| 5 <b>Paul J. Hill</b> , Chairman, President, and CEO         | 10 <b>Terry Downie</b> , Vice President, Finance                          |





# THE HILL COMPANIES

**Few companies have enjoyed such long-lived success or had as lasting an impact on their community as the Regina-based Hill Companies, now well into its fourth generation, an even rarer occurrence in the world of business.**

The Hill family's footprint spans the entire continent but nowhere is it more in evidence than in its hometown, where the third of its signature towers is under construction and the business school bearing the name of the firm's current patriarch continues to expand.

*by Paul Martin*



**Paul J. Hill**  
Chairman, President and CEO,  
The Hill Companies

This story, however, begins more than a century ago when a teacher working at a small country school east of Regina felt he could capitalize on the growth streak that had captured this piece of the Northwest Territories that was luring new residents from Eastern Europe and would soon come to be known as Saskatchewan.

Walter Hill decided his best chance to depart education and establish himself in the world of commerce was to relocate to the territorial capital of Regina where he formed an alliance with the McCallum brothers to enter the insurance and real estate games.

McCallum Hill Limited was one of many firms aspiring to reach the same goal in this upstart community but it was a unique achievement a few years into its life that set it apart. Shortly after Saskatchewan was created in 1905, it managed to convince the new premier, Walter Scott, that it had a winning site to house the new Legislative Buildings. A host of properties were in the running at the time, mostly in the area that is now downtown Regina, but Scott, who believed Saskatchewan one day would be home to 10 million people, wanted more elbow room for the government he envisioned the heartland of Canada would ultimately require, so he took up the McCallum Hill offer of its development site on the south side of Wascana Lake for a price of just under \$97,000.

The company's remaining development property, the Lakeview subdivisions on the opposite side of Albert Street, immediately rose in value and saw the construction of the city's biggest homes (right across from the Legislature) as residences of the McCallum family members as well as the original Hill home.

It was an auspicious beginning that enabled the company to set itself apart from others as it claimed the primary position in Regina's real estate market. It was such a boost that the partners

soon began conceiving western Canada's first skyscraper. Completed prior to the commencement of World War One, the tower was a marvel of modern design, inspired by architectural lines from Chicago, boasting its own water system, an electrical power supply and an elevator. Located at 12th and Scarth Street (current site of the first of the new Hill Towers at the foot of Frederick W. Hill Mall), the building's early days were more often difficult than profitable as the company coped with the economic impact of the Great War followed by an upturn that gave way to the Great Depression which preceded the Second War and then the political upheaval of the CCF assuming power in the province.

Nonetheless, the firm's name and reputation had been established as Regina's most important business, the one responsible for creating much of the community. On the residential front, first it was old Lakeview, then Lakeview and the property housing the Legislature, and then the city's tallest commercial structure downtown.

After three decades, though, the partnership between the McCallums and Walter Hill had run its course. One of the brothers had died of cancer in 1935 while the remaining brother succumbed to injuries sustained in a traffic accident a few years later, so Walter assumed control of the entire company and ran it successfully until the mid-1940s when the next major development occurred: the arrival of the second generation.

Walter Hill was the firm's founder, but his son Fred Hill would become its builder, expanding its

geographic footprint while diversifying its asset base, a path that would be extended when his son, Paul, became the third generation to assume the helm nearly five decades later.

Fred Hill remains a Mount Rushmore-like figure in Saskatchewan business despite his passing a few years ago. He operated Saskatchewan's most significant business in a turbulent political environment characterized by two forces – the right and the left in political terms – that fought for dominance in the province. In short, Fred Hill and T.C. Douglas, the province's longest-standing premier, went head-to-head repeatedly in a heavy-weight match that lasted decades.

It should not be lost on the province that in the end, it is the Hills that today continue to extend their presence in the province with yet another major downtown office tower as the NDP, the legacy of Douglas' political force, reads the tea leaves in hopes of understanding its latest drubbing at the hands of the electorate.

Fred Hill, by all accounts a wizard at structuring financial deals, had many significant influences in his life, but none had the impact of his Roman Catholic upbringing. His father Walter was Protestant but supported Fred's mother's desire to raise her children in her Catholic faith. It was this religious setting that brought him in contact with one of his mentors, Father Athol Murray, a priest who had moved to Saskatchewan from Ontario and was a frequent guest at the Hill family's home for Sunday suppers. Père, as Father Murray became known, founded a now-famous school at Wilcox and the Hill family remains one of its primary patrons.

After high school, Fred attended the University of Saskatchewan where it soon became clear he had a mind of his own when facing those in authority. As head of the Arts and Science Students Society in the 1930s, he found himself regularly locking horns with Butch Thompson, the autocratic president of the University. Nonetheless he graduated with distinction. Many years later, Fred Hill recalled running into Thompson who expressed surprise that Fred had amounted to anything. Again, it seemed those in authority had underestimated the capabilities of the family.

About this time Fred decided to enlist in the Canadian war effort but was rejected for health reasons so he headed south. He had ultimately completed his undergrad degree at the U of S and decided to pursue an MBA at Harvard, joining two other Saskatchewanians in Boston who went on to become significant business figures: Ross Pinder of Saskatoon and Ross Sneath of Regina.

When Fred eventually returned to his home province, he would name the new companies he created after Harvard.

Prior to completing his post-graduate degree though, he decided to once again attempt to enlist once the Americans had entered World War II, choosing to enter the US Army Air Corps, perhaps in tribute to his brother who had been an early barnstorming pilot that died in a plane crash. This time he was accepted and, on the day before receiving his wings, the Americans realized he was actually a foreign national. Fred's commanding officer consequently ended up in the office of the legendary General Hap Arnold, the head of the American Air Force, who gave Fred permission to receive his commission. Next, he was off to New York to pick up a brand-new heavy bomber, fly it to Brazil, then Africa and then Italy, where he would join the war effort.

Fred piloted 32 missions despite the normal tour being complete after 25. Not all the flights, however, were without difficulty. During a daylight run near Vienna, his plane was severely shot up, killing a crew member and damaging one of the engines. He didn't have time to feather the prop of the crippled motor, which continued to windmill all the way back to base in Italy. He landed in one piece, but not before the engine burst into flame on touchdown from the heat caused by the friction of the propeller's rotations.

His extended tour ended when he was diagnosed with severe battle fatigue and he went back to the States for convalescence and discharge. Although he was granted the option of US citizenship for his contribution to the American war effort, he chose instead to heed his father's request to return to Saskatchewan to run the family business.

The agreement came with a caveat, however. Suspicious of Douglas' CCF government or, as he called them, "the Socialists," he said he would come back for three years to see if business could be conducted under this new regime. A tumultuous three years it turned out to be.

Shortly after his return, Hill assumed the presidency of a Hill-controlled public insurance firm called Saskatchewan Guaranty and Fidelity. The company had a diverse shareholder base, principally Saskatchewan farmers and local business figures who had put up the money to finance the business back in 1909. It also had a private insurance charter, a fact that proved to be a critical element in the brewing battle.

Mysteriously, the company's stock began to rise in price. Fred knew of no business reason for the stock to rise, at least until he ran into Clarence Fines, Saskatchewan's finance minister of the day, and was informed that it was the Government of Saskatchewan that was attempting to accumulate

the stock. Before long, the government had run the price beyond reason and Fred advised the shareholders to accept the offer, giving the government control of the insurer.

It turns out the Douglas administration wanted the company – and was prepared to pay any price for it – to get a private charter as it had been turned down by the Alberta registrar when Douglas tried to extend SGI’s operations beyond Saskatchewan’s borders. In the end, Alberta not only turned down Douglas’ request to register the newly-acquired private license into Alberta, it advised every other province to follow suit. As it turned out, Douglas had paid top dollar for an empty shell because the firm’s clients and staff walked across the street to rejoin Fred when, in large part with the funds he received from the government acquisition of his shares, he formed Western Surety, this time with a federal charter that was beyond Saskatchewan’s reach. Western Surety, headquartered in Regina, continues to operate in the bonding sector to this day.

About the same time, Fred partnered with his old classmates – the Rosses – to form a drilling company to capitalize on the oil activity in southern Saskatchewan and Alberta. The firm’s rigs were busy for a while but then they ran into trouble, losing a drill bit in a deep hole. Unable to fish it out, they were stalled and cash began to run out for the highly-leveraged enterprise. The Hill luck continued, however.

Imperial Oil wanted to explore in the Virden area in Manitoba but could find no drilling company willing to abandon the Alberta frenzy. Until they met Fred Hill, that is.

Desperate for cash, Fred Hill and Pinder negotiated a deal with Imperial that got the company back on its feet, strong enough to be sold off PDQ. But they weren’t done with the oil business just yet.

Tommy Douglas, looking to extend an olive branch to the local business community, offered Hill, Pinder and Sneath an exploration concession in southeast Saskatchewan. The trio formed a new company and soon made the first light oil discovery in the region near Steelman. That company was subsequently taken over and it would be decades before the Hill family would return to the petroleum business, once again the wake of a major political development.

The fight with the Douglas administration, however, seemed to be enough to convince Fred that he should remain in Saskatchewan, particularly since medical problems had taken his father out of the day-to-day business operations.

Although Fred’s Harvard training had given him a broad understanding of business, he remained true to the family’s roots in real estate and insurance, riding the wave of post-war growth by establishing



The McCallum Hill Building was Regina’s first skyscraper and the tallest building in Saskatchewan in 1912.

new residential subdivisions in Regina, including Hillsdale and Normanview. He also started looking farther afield with an eye to Alberta where the company eventually built two office towers in downtown Calgary (the Norcen and Alberta Stock Exchange buildings), thousands of apartments throughout the province and a handful of retail malls. He also oversaw a major development on the Victoria waterfront as Harvard Developments moved from a provincial to a western Canadian player.

Then one day while in Toronto raising money for Notre Dame College at Wilcox, he called on Michael Sifton, the head of the media family which owned Regina’s largest radio and TV stations as well as the daily newspaper. Sifton was getting heat for concentration of ownership at the time and Fred, almost jokingly closed their meeting by saying, “Why don’t you sell me one of those outlets?” Sifton replied: “Make me an offer.” So Fred did. With that, he bought the CTV affiliate in the Queen City and entered the broadcast business. Soon after, Fred



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purchased CKRM Radio and later would go on to aggressively pursue expansion of its broadcast holdings. Today, Harvard Broadcasting operates radio stations in seven Saskatchewan and Alberta cities after securing more new radio licenses than any other broadcaster in Canada in the past decade.

During these years, Fred also asked his son Paul to return to Regina and join the family business. Paul was working in the investment industry back then. After completing an MBA at the University of Western Ontario, he joined a firm that would one day become part of the BMO Nesbitt operations. He knew that returning to the family business would be difficult if he hadn't demonstrated his personal ability in the outside world. He had indeed made a name for himself in the investment world despite his young age and so felt ready to return to Regina.

**If** Fred was the financial deal-maker, Paul is the strategic thinker. He added a new dimension to what was already a well-established and defined enterprise. In particular, he saw big things for downtown Regina, envisioning a generational transformation based on one key facet: build a strong core and work out from there.

Paul encouraged and cajoled the political leadership at all three levels to buy into his vision. He crafted a working agreement among the political establishment to push government offices downtown to serve as a foundation for office buildings that would be financially sound and able to survive the inevitable downturns experienced by the private sector.

The late Allan Blakeney, Saskatchewan premier for most of the 1970s, recalled in an interview when he was under pressure to develop a 'government strip' along south Albert Street rather than focus on downtown. He bought into Paul's view of the world and opted for the downtown concept while authorizing construction of only the TC Douglas Building in the south end. Blakeney solidified his support for the downtown core when he authorized the development of the Cornwall Centre with two Crown Corporation head offices as its anchors. The government even served as project developer.

Paul Hill saw a day when a string of successful Class A buildings would stand in downtown Regina, all connected with above-ground pedways to serve pedestrians in the winter. The first he was able to put together was the Bank of Montreal Building. Anchoring the north end of the Hill Mall, it is across the street from the Cornwall Centre.

Next came the first Hill tower. The original skyscraper was imploded in a spectacular Sunday morning display to make room for the new build-



ing with its distinctive 'V' to mark Victoria Park located across the street. Later came the second Hill Tower, the Crown Life Building and the FCC Building – Agriculture Place where a second tower is currently under consideration, all major towers anchoring a strong downtown core as envisioned by Paul Hill thirty years ago. And yes, they are connected by climate controlled pedways.

For any business with the reach of the Hill Companies, politics can never be very far away. It was another political development – this time in Ottawa – that brought the company back into the energy business. When Pierre Trudeau introduced the National Energy Program, many American companies abandoned the country as major projects had to be Canadian-controlled. That little bit of trivia caught the eye of Neal Blue, an extraordinary entrepreneur from the San Diego area who figured a wide array of assets would be available at firesale prices, so he called the only Canadian businessperson he knew – Fred Hill – to explore a partnership which would meet the Canadian ownership requirements but give him an entree into the Alberta oil patch.

The call resulted in a complex set of negotiations, but eventually they hammered out a deal to create Harvard Energy with the Hill family in the dominant role. The company continues to operate the company today but its formation was a signal to the family that they needed to expand their

The third Hill Tower is currently under construction in Regina (opposite). Hill Centre Tower III will eventually become home to the Mosaic potash company's head offices.

footprint to reduce political risk in their businesses. So they headed south.

It began with a contact in California, a former Los Angeles banker who was working in Saskatchewan who helped them make some contacts and before long, the family established warehousing developments in California. It was now bi-national.

That led to a string of American investments, including a Louisiana petroleum company and a Michigan propane storage operation. But it was the real estate crash of the late 1980s that brought about even more changes. The downturn first started in the US but spread to Canada within a few months. The collapse south of the border was the signal that caused Paul Hill to refinance his Canadian real estate holdings. Coupled with the cash from the sale of the Regina TV station and a Calgary pipeline testing and engineering operation, the family was positioned to weather the storm that took down virtually every major real estate player on the continent. Others such as the Reichmans didn't survive. The Hills did, while every one of their partners either went broke or through restructuring.

It also provided a windfall buying opportunity. The family took advantage of the depressed prices and began buying, adding everything from industrial land in San Antonio to residential development lands in the American southwest.

The bi-national presence is also evident in the firm's manufacturing division. The company acquired the assets of a company in Swift Current that had been created to develop a new recycled tray for meat in grocery stores. The Hills were able to pick up the pieces when the idea failed, changing the plant's product line to turn out egg cartons and apple flats made from recycled newspapers. UFR – Urban Forest Recyclers – added capacity with a US-based plant and is now the dominant player in its market segment.

The family's asset base on both sides of the border has continued to grow, particularly in the real estate field, but it was the acquisition of a national insurance company that brought added profile to the family firm.

Paul Hill, with his background in the investment field, knew that Crown Life was in trouble. The venerable Toronto-based insurer needed capital and Hill saw an opportunity. He raised the idea with Grant Devine who was trailing in the polls and needed a positive announcement. Hammering out the deal was a long, slow process but eventually it was put together with the Government of Saskatchewan and Extencicare playing key roles. Paul Hill became chairman and Harvard won the right to construct a new office tower to house the thousand or so Crown Life employees in Regina, adding further to the vibrancy of the city's downtown core.

Eventually Paul sold the family's interest in the insurer which ultimately was taken over by Canada Life, but his vision and tenacity resulted in a Regina residential construction boom that added nearly 10 per cent to the city's GDP.

In the past, Fred Hill relied on external consultants to execute his strategies while Paul has chosen to build a strong internal executive team to operate the firm's diverse business interests. Headed by Chief Operating Officer Mo Bunden and the likes of Blair Forster who has overseen much of the company's real estate development activity, the team's depth has enabled Paul Hill to devote his attention to opportunity identification around the world.

More recently, the Hills have been pursuing real estate projects outside Regina, focusing considerable effort in Alberta on developments such as Eau Claire in downtown Calgary along with multi-family residential developments from Calgary to Fort McMurray. It is also active in retail development with a string of malls in Alberta. All told, the company currently has nearly four dozen residential developments at various stages of development in Alberta.

And many years after Fred Hill went to the University of Saskatchewan, the family finally made its first commercial foray into the Saskatoon market as a partner in the Preston Crossing development. Eventually, the Hill Group added to its equity stake in the project, extending its activity in Saskatoon further as the development enters its fourth phase.

At the same time however, it has not overlooked opportunities in the city that gave it its start. The firm's most recent Regina development is called Grasslands. At one million square feet, it is the largest project in the company's Saskatchewan history, complementing its continued presence in Regina's northwest where WestHill and Fairways West are located. A project comparable to the southwest Regina Grasslands development – the province's first destination urban centre – is also underway in Edmonton.

**T**he latest family member to join the firm is Rosanne Hill Blaisdell, Paul's eldest child. Like her dad, she went off to make a name for herself in the commercial world before returning to Regina. After securing a degree in journalism in the American northwest, she moved to Winnipeg where she completed an MBA and, again like dad, joined the investment world.

A fast riser, she eventually returned to Saskatchewan and has risen to vice-president in the real estate arm. She subsequently relocated to Calgary, but is a regular on the WestJet flights to Regina, where she remains a highly visible figure in the provincial business community. ■

# A HISTORY OF GENEROSITY

Written by Paul Martin

Photos supplied by The Hill Companies

Each of us finds inspiration from our own unique sources. Paul Hill was moved by the inspiration of all inspirations: Mother Teresa.

As part of a CEO group visiting India two decades ago, Hill had the opportunity to hear the revered nun speak. The petite, wrinkled icon shuffled into the room, stepped onto a wooden box and began to talk. Instantly, he recalls, her presence filled the room, defying her physical stature. She told the group members to return to their homes, identify the most pressing need in their community and then to apply their considerable talents – not just their financial wealth – to addressing that problem.

Her presentation reaffirmed his and his family's belief in the importance of supporting education as a means to afford the up and coming generation the opportunity to achieve excellence.

The Hills had long been among the most significant supporters of Athol Murray College of Notre Dame in Wilcox, a relationship dating back to Père Murray's arrival in Saskatchewan and Fred Hill's active support of the school. Paul Hill took his commitment to education to a higher degree.

## POST-SECONDARY

First he pledged \$10 million to the business school at the University of Regina, now known as the Paul J. Hill School of Business, to help transform the college from an administration program to a business school. The difference may be subtle, but Paul has drawn on his and his father's post-graduate studies to help the Regina campus build an internationally-recognized college.

Fred Hill attended Harvard's business school. Paul Hill went to the University of Western Ontario, now the Richard Ivey School of Business. Both used the case study model and it is now in place at the U of R. In doing so, he has helped forge new ties between the school bearing his name and his alma mater.

"We have in Saskatchewan probably the smartest kids in

Canada and the hardest-working. All the Alberta companies want to hire a Saskatchewan person because they know the odds are very high they'll be the hardest-working or smartest in their organization," says Paul Hill of his decision to devote his focus to the Regina business school. "Now we have an administration school that has morphed into a business school."

Demand for space in the faculty has been growing, placing added pressure on the administration to expand its capacity and depth. Paul's contribution has played to the depth side of that equation, leading to a partnership with the Ivey School in London, Ontario. Known as the top-rated business school in the country, Ivey uses the Harvard case model. Ivey, says Paul, produces the second-most cases of any university in the world. Now Regina's Paul J. Hill School will join the group with a focus on developing western Canadian cases.

The partnership with Ivey also provides for student exchanges between the two campuses, a Ph.D. development program in Regina and a case method training program.

"The [western Canadian, written in Regina] cases will be disseminated around the world," Paul says of the initiative.

"We want to be the top business school in country, based in Saskatchewan," he says, adding that his contribution is also funding a scholarship to study business ethics.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL

Funding a university came from Paul's own college experience. His next major education initiative is focused on something he didn't experience – poverty.

1. The new Legislative Building on the south bank of Wascana Lake dominates the prairie landscape. 1912

2. Mme. Aline Chretien, wife of the former Prime Minister, joins Fred, Carol and Paul Hill at the Vatican Art Gala in Toronto.

3. Four Generations of Hills: L-R: Fredrick Hill holding Rosanne Hill Blaisdell, Paul Hill (standing) and Walter Hill. 1965

4. Second Lieutenant Fred W. Hill. 1943

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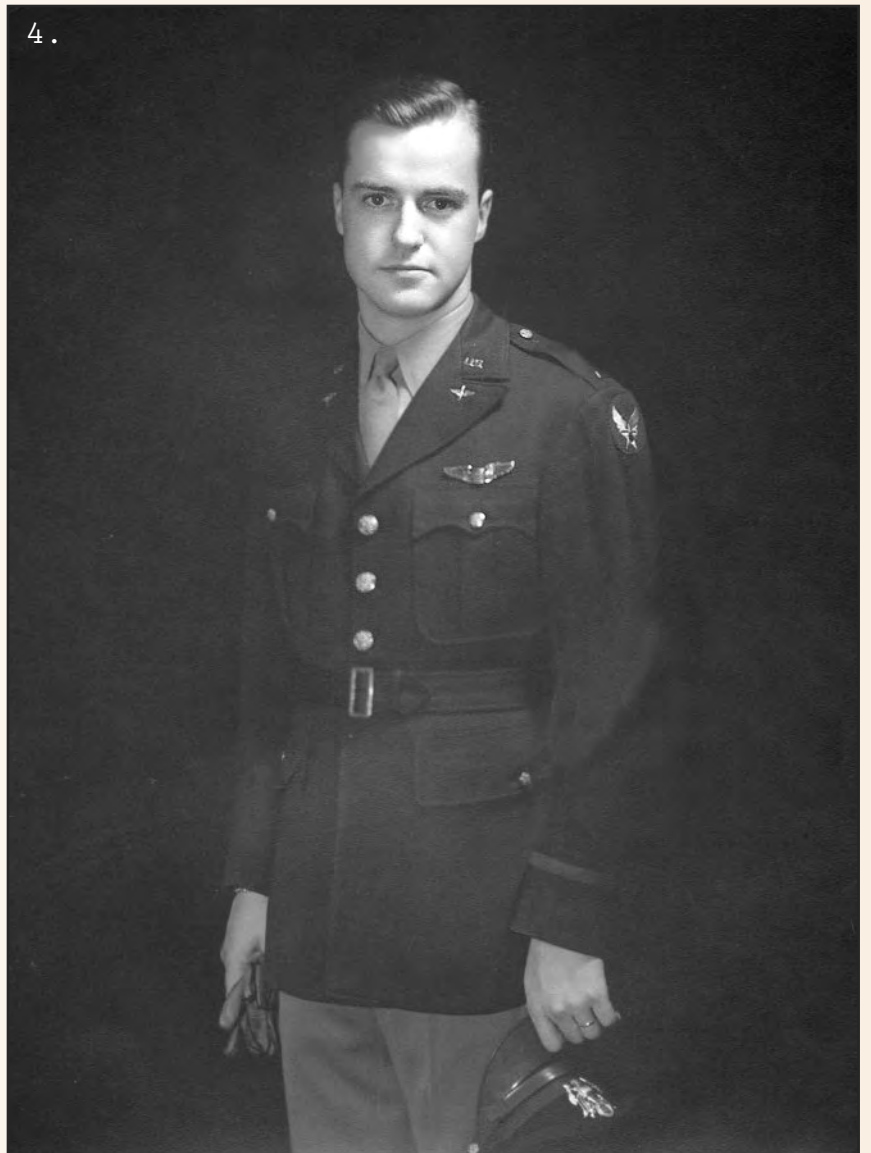
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1. Albert Street as seen from the Legislative Building. *Circa 1910*
  2. Fred Hill and Ross Sneath. *1980*
  3. Fred Hill meets His Holiness Pope John Paul II.
  4. Carol Hill won the support of the Vatican to bring the famed Vatican Angels art collection to Canada. *1999*
  - 5-6. Regina's first skyscraper implodes as it makes way for history and the McCallum Hill Centre. *October 31, 1982*
  7. Canadian Devonian Petroleum Limited Share Certificate. *1951*
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Taking Mother Teresa's words to heart, he and his principal advisor – his wife Carol – set out to assess where their efforts could have the greatest impact. They zeroed in on inner city children and their difficulty in successfully completing high school.

The couple identified a highly successful program in the United States called Nativity Miguel and, after three years of studies and exploration, the One Life Makes A Difference foundation was established to bring its formula to a new school in Regina's inner city.

Nativity Miguel operates about 50 facilities, located in economically deprived inner city environments throughout America. The issues in those cities are all too familiar – dropout rates of 80 or 90 per cent, low self-esteem and so on.

The concept behind the Nativity Miguel schools involves identifying a small number of children – usually 15 to 20 per year – in grades six through eight who demonstrate strong potential and bringing them into a special learning environment. The program includes guidance and mentorship through public school, post-secondary training and into the job market. Attendees generally have an 80 per cent pass rate and most go on to university.

Called Mother Teresa Middle School, the Regina facility opened with 17 students this past September. By the end of November, attendance was running at 98 per cent, Hill proudly reports.

"These kids are fired up," he asserts, noting that the school day for these youngsters starts at 7:30 in the morning and runs until five. There are also weekend programs in the year-round school year.

"We found there are only a few (inner city) kids capable of reaching the Notre Dame experience," he offers in explaining the reasoning behind focusing on the elementary school level. "The Mother Teresa Middle School is there to increase the number of students who could go to Notre Dame or Luther or other schools in the city."

"We have a great deal of confidence that this will have the level of success of the Nativity Miguel system in the US. We are very excited about it. We're very committed to it," Hill offers, adding that the family has begun exploring the potential of developing similar schools in Saskatoon and Winnipeg where the owner of the Jets NHL team has expressed a desire to get involved.

"This is the first one in Canada, but we hope it will be picked up in other centres," he concludes.

The Hill Companies' unfailing support of education has an underlying mission of not only helping young people improve their own circumstances, but also to create tomorrow's leaders. Whether they are graduates of the Paul J. Hill School of Business or Athol Murray College of Notre Dame where the family sponsors an inspirational leaders speaking series, stu-

dents are exposed to a unique set of experiences as a result of the Hill Companies financial support. The Notre Dame speaker series, for example, allows students to hear prominent figures from around the world share stories of their personal lives, achievements, mistakes and moments of learning. The most recent presenter was Canadian Ambassador Gary Doer.

## CATHOLIC CHARITIES

Although the Hill Companies support a wide range of local fundraising efforts, everything from hospital campaigns to funding for a children's ambulance, it is the family's strong Catholic beliefs that garner a large portion of their philanthropic attention.

The family's work was recognized with an award from the National Philanthropic Association this fall, an accolade accepted by Carol.

"It's not all about the money," she offers. "It's about the heart that's behind it."

Raised on a southern Saskatchewan farm, she says they didn't have money in those days, but they could still give. She carries that philosophy with her today. Even though the family enjoys the financial wherewithal to make monetary contributions, the time and effort given to charitable causes or the less fortunate is also critical.

One reason for the national award was her singlehanded efforts to have Canada included on travelling shows of precious Vatican art pieces. Initially, Canada was not on the itinerary but her persistence led to an opportunity to meet the Cardinal responsible for the exhibitions when it was on display in the US. She argued that Canadians deserved a chance to see the art and on a subsequent visit to Rome, she received an invitation from the Cardinal to a private meeting where she was told: "my dear, you must have been saying your prayers. Only prayers could melt my heart. It's going to Canada."

The next step was creation of the Patrons of the Arts of the Vatican Museum with Carol Hill as its founding chair. The first exhibit – a Raphael tapestry – went on display in Toronto at an event headlined by the Prime Minister.

The Hill family ties, however, reach beyond art. First Fred and now Paul and Carol are members of the Papal Foundation, a pool of money raised by a few dozen patrons earmarked for the Pope's personal initiatives, activities that would fall outside the traditional Vatican budget. Members participate in a Papal audience annually to discuss the projects undertaken with the foundation's funds.

More recently, Paul was named a Knight of St. Sylvester by Pope Benedict, an honorific bestowed on lay people for their involvement in the Church so, like the famed Beattie, he is more appropriately known today as Sir Paul. ■

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