

Press Release

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2009 Telecom Laureate Awards Gala Celebrates Ottawa's Satellite Success

Ottawa - November 5, 2009 – Five new laureates were inducted into Canada's Telecommunications Hall of Fame at the Telecom Laureate Awards Gala held November 4, 2009, at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Gatineau. From the gala's major satellite sponsor, Ciel Satellite Group, to the induction of Dr. Colin Franklin as a Telecom Laureate in the Servants of the Public category, it was evident that Ottawa has long played an important role in the development of Canadian satellite technology.

Joining Dr. Colin Franklin in the Class of 2009 Telecom Laureates were: **André Chagnon** (Business Visionary & Builder of Vidéotron) in the Icons of Business category; **the Honourable Francis Fox** (Canada's Minister of Wireless Communications) in the Servants of the Public category; the late **Donald A. Chisholm** (Father of the Digital World) in the Inventors and Innovators category; and **Israel (Sruki) Switzer** (Cable Technology Pioneer and Advocate) in the Advocates and Academics category.

In addition, the Hall of Fame's coveted **Special Recognition Award** for 2009 was a true Canadian "sea-to-shining-sea" honour shared by two tiny coastal communities separated by more than 5,000 kilometres. The 2009 award co-winners were **Heart's Content, Newfoundland** and **Bamfield, British Columbia** – the original landing sites, respectively, of Canada's first Atlantic and Pacific trans-oceanic submarine telegraph cables.

Dr. Colin Franklin was a pioneer in and a champion of satellite technology. At the Defence Research Telecommunications Establishment (DRTE), precursor to the Communications Research Centre Canada (CRC), Franklin served as chief electrical engineer on Canada's first satellite, Alouette 1. He was chief engineer on the ISIS satellites, project manager for the Hermes satellite, the forerunner to direct-to-home TV satellites, and he also contributed significantly to Radarsat I and Radarsat II.

Alouette 1, Canada's first satellite, was launched in 1962, making Canada the third nation in the world, after the Soviet Union and the United States, to design, build and control a satellite. It was named one of the ten most outstanding achievements of Canadian engineering in the past 100 years by the Centennial Engineering Board of Canada in 1987.

“The sheer technical complexity convinced many that it was far too difficult to do at that time, but the young Canadian engineering team was highly skilled in the emerging area of solid state electronics,” said Franklin. “There was also excellent support received from the budding Canadian space industry, and a close working relationship with our U.S. colleagues.”

Franklin spearheaded subsequent space technology projects: he championed cooperation between Canada and the European Space Agency; played a pivotal role in the creation of the Canadian Space Agency; and advanced Canada’s participation in the International Space Station.

Franklin received the Order of Canada in 1990. He is a fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. In 2002 he received the John H. Chapman Award for Excellence from the Canadian Space Agency, and in 2008 he received the IEEE Canada McNaughton Gold Medal for outstanding contributions as a pioneer of the Canadian space program.

Presenting Franklin with his award was Dr. Veena Rawat, President of the CRC. “It’s an inspiration to reflect on the innovation achieved by Colin and his colleagues at the Shirleys Bay Campus, home of the CRC,” said Dr. Rawat. “Colin’s contributions to space-related research and manufacturing have been a significant influence in establishing Canada as a world leader in these fields.”

Another major participant in the Telecom Laureate Awards gala was sponsor, Ciel Satellite Group. Brian Neill, Chairman of Ciel Satellite Group was on hand to open the awards gala reception. Ciel changed the satellite landscape in Canada in 2004 when Industry Canada selected it to launch a direct-to-home (DTH) broadcast satellite at the 129 degrees West orbital location. The new satellite operator is a testament to the ongoing pioneering spirit in the satellite industry in Ottawa and in Canada.

“Ciel Satellite Group is proud to be a part of the Canadian communications industry,” said Brian Neill. “In our converging world of communications, satellite is important equally to broadcasting as it is to telecom and we are pleased to be behind Canadian technology for Canadians.”

The Telecom Laureate Awards gala took place before 415 executives of Canada’s telecom finest, from manufacturer RIM, to operators Bell, Telus, Rogers and MTS Allstream, new operators WIND and Public Mobile; over 15 CEOs of telecom related companies and government agencies, as well as MPs, Senators and government executives.

2009 is not the first year that Canada’s Telecommunications Hall of Fame has honoured the strength of Canada’s satellite industry within the telecommunications family. In 2008, the Hall of Fame inducted David Golden, the first Chairman of Telesat, and the year before, Robert W. (Bob) Jones for his contribution to radiocommunications. Also in 2007, it presented CRC with a Special Recognition Award.

Additional biographical information on the Class of 2009 Telecom Laureates is available through the Hall of Fame media contacts or on the Hall of Fame's website at the following direct link: <http://www.telecomhall.ca/index.php?page=360>