

Citation of Merit 2019

Western Branch of the CPS

On June 1st the 2019 Citation of Merit was awarded to the Founders of the Western Branch of the CPS and the Institute (WPSI). A noteworthy development for psychoanalysis in Canada is the impressive strength and energy with which it has grown in that part of the country in recent decades – one that must be recognized and celebrated. The award is therefore to current and late members in recognition of their accomplishment in establishing what has become a very vibrant and strong component of our professional organization in Canada.

The history of the Western Branch goes back in time longer than we may realize. Many of the founders are no longer with us. In fact it was difficult to ascertain who were the first members. But here is what we were able to establish:

The Branch first was founded in 1978 by a small group of members who were located mainly in Edmonton. The center of its activity became Vancouver in the mid 1990's. Among the Western Branch's early members were the following colleagues:

Hassan Azim, Julius Guild, Perry Segal, Ron Aldous and Sol Levitt, all of whom were then in Alberta; there were also members in other Western provinces including Elmor Smit, who was then in Victoria.

Hassan Azim, who was the first Western Branch president, received the award on behalf of the Founders of the branch society. Elie Debanne received the award on behalf of the Institute.

The Western Psychoanalytic Society Institute was initially established in Vancouver in 2003. To quote Elie Debanne, "nothing would have happened if not for Elmor's persistence". Elmor Smit was for a time the only analyst in B.C. and he was the main force behind the establishment of psychoanalysis in the city. He and four other training

analysts formed the initial nucleus of the Vancouver Institute. The four were: Sid Perzow and Elie Debanne, both of whom had arrived from Montreal, and Maxine Anderson with Austin Case, who joined the Vancouver Institute from Seattle.

In granting this recognition to the Founders of the Western Branch of the CPS and to the Founders of the Western Psychoanalytic Society Institute it was decided to name ten founding members; inevitably it was somewhat arbitrary. To further recognize the developments of the Western Branch and its Institute in recent decades, at least ten other members would also need be named here – if again somewhat arbitrarily; they would include: Rose Vasta, Coleen Gold, Endre Koritar, Catherine Young, Elizabeth Wallace (training analysts), James Fabian, Karin Holland-Biggs, Judith Setton-Markus, Paul Steinberg, Darren Thompson.