



Evelyn Opal Society



The Story of *Evelyn Opal*

In 1936, a young and spirited Evelyn Opal sat in her doctor's office in Montreal. Just diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS), she was told to, "go home and hope for the best." Fortunately for all Canadians, Evelyn firmly refused. She insisted that something more could be done. She rallied support from her family and a small group of dedicated volunteers, and together they founded the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada.

For more than 40 years, and often over the phone while ill with MS, she worked to find a cause and a cure for MS. She provided comfort to others with MS across Canada. She helped raise millions of dollars. Evelyn Opal represents the powerful legacy that one person can leave. And it is her story that inspired us to name our legacy giving program The Evelyn Opal Society.

The Evelyn Opal Society recognizes caring and thoughtful Canadians who have made a commitment to leave a legacy to the MS Society. Leaving a legacy is an intensely personal choice, and we are here to help you and share

information on what options are available to you and your family. Here you can read the stories of other members of the Evelyn Opal Society from across Canada who tell you in their own words about leaving a legacy and what it means to them.

And when you would like some guidance or have a question, we would be delighted to help you.



Our work in action and our vision for the *future*

The MS Society is tremendously proud of our achievements – breakthroughs in research, excellence in services for people with MS and their families, and dynamic public education programs. Each and every one of our accomplishments tells a story. A story of an energetic researcher who realizes that their life's work is validated by what is under their microscope. A story of a comforted family who can access counselling, social programs and mobility aids because services are finally available in their community.

You know from the story of Evelyn Opal that living with MS in Canada has changed dramatically over our history. One thing that has remained constant, confident and unwavering though, is our support for people with MS and their families. The Evelyn Opal Society allows you to ensure that 10, 20 and even 50 years from now, we will be there to provide support, hope and caring for Canadians and their families living with MS even after a cure has been found.

Acts of *hope*

I decided to turn my fear into an act of hope. I made a bequest to make an active contribution towards the future of people who have MS.

Elise Clément

It's important that my children know the value of giving back, of making a difference in our community. I wanted to create a legacy for future generations to show my kids there are many ways of contributing to something you believe in.

Jan Petrar

I always feel you should leave the world a better place than the way you found it, and one way to do that is to contribute something back to society.

Joe Nastink

I would like to see a cure some day. I didn't think of our assets as worthwhile to donate to a charity, however upon taking an inventory with our financial planner, we had more than we realized. The dollars are probably not as important as knowing that I am contributing to finding a cure and enhancing the quality of life for those who have MS today. This is what feels good.

Carol Fredrick



1948

MS Society founded

1972

First MS clinic opens; today there are 28 in operation across Canada

1973

MS Scientific Research Foundation established

1981

First MRI pictures of a brain affected by MS are produced, revolutionizing MS diagnosis

1995

First treatments discovered for relapsing-remitting MS; today there are five treatments approved

Acts of *hope*

I just purchased a new house and we had to go through my finances, my will and my life insurance plan. I thought 'BINGO! Let's do it now!' I had been thinking about it for a long time but it seemed that I never got around to doing it. In retrospect it only took a few minutes.

Suzanne Deschamps

I named the MS Society as the beneficiary of my life insurance. It's really quite simple. I pay the premium, the MS Society gets the policy.

Dr. Edwin Pineau

I'm getting benefit from research now, and hopefully our estate can help people down the road.

Marion Vanderwood

It was easy and I recommend this to anyone who has MS in their family or circle of friends. I just called both my insurance representative and the MS Society, filled out some paperwork and now I get a tax receipt every year. We must continue until a cure is found. By donating a policy, I hope to someday make MS disappear.

Jake Doherty



1996

Canadian researchers find a genetic link to MS

1999

First Paediatric MS clinic opens

2000

Launch of first ever Canadian bone marrow transplantation study, designed to stop MS progression; study continues today

2000

Advocacy efforts successful with provinces launching first-ever drug programs to assist with the high cost of MS drug therapies

2001

Launch of multi-centre collaborative study of remyelination to determine if body's own cells can repair damage caused by MS

Your *legacy*

*Y*ou've read about the legacy of Evelyn Opal, you've read the stories of other caring Canadians who have made the choice to remember the MS Society through a legacy gift. We urge you to think about your legacy. What do you want for the future?

You can leave a personal legacy that echoes your values and what matters to you. And most of our supporters find that they can give a significant gift without impacting their daily finances.

You can make your legacy an undesignated gift for the MS Society to use based on our most pressing priorities at that time. You can also give based on what matters most to you. For example, you can designate your legacy to ensure we continue funding the most promising and innovative medical research. Or you can designate your gift to a service program designed to help people in your community with the daily challenges that MS presents. With each choice, your legacy represents an enduring commitment to people living with MS and their families.

You have many choices for how to make a legacy gift. Many Canadians choose to leave a gift in their will. You can also explore options including residual interest, gift annuity, charitable remainder trust and life insurance. We will be delighted to work with you to arrange a gift that best suits you and your intentions. Please contact us – no matter where you live in Canada, we can help.

We appreciate your interest in the Evelyn Opal Society. We hope Evelyn's story inspires you to create your own legacy and support a future free of MS.



2004

First ever multi-centre study of clinically isolated syndrome in children, Canada-wide

2009

Critical discovery of a genetic and environmental link in MS, confirming vitamin D deficiency as a factor in MS

2009

endMS regional Research & Training Centres established across Canada, encompassing 180 researchers, 400 trainees, and over 50 academic and health institutions



Evelyn Opal Society

Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, National Office
175 Bloor Street East, Suite 700, North Tower, Toronto, Ontario M4W 3R8
Phone: 416-922-6065 Toll Free: 1-800-268-7582 Fax: 416-922-7538
Email: mslegacy@mssociety.ca Website: www.mslegacy.ca