

## Beryl Plumptre 1908 - 2008

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Beryl Alyce Plumptre (née Rouche) was a distinguished economist who fought hard to contain inflation and advocated for Canadian consumers during the 1970s.

Born in 1908 in Melbourne, Australia, she attended the Presbyterian Ladies College as a high school student and obtained a Commerce degree from Melbourne University in 1931. After graduation, she worked at the Bank of New South Wales for two years, then left to pursue graduate studies at Cambridge University after being awarded a scholarship. There, she was a student of John Maynard Keynes and studied economics alongside her future husband, Wynne. The pair married in Australia in 1938, and shortly after, they moved to Canada for him to pursue a position at the University of Toronto. Wynne had a fruitful career that brought their family around the Western world.

In the early years of their marriage, Plumptre was a housewife, supporting her husband and raising their children. She also worked briefly with the Prices and Trade Board and as an economic consultant to the Canadian Tariff Board, and volunteered for a number of organizations. However, it is her volunteer work as President of the Consumers Association of Canada from 1961 to 1966 that propelled her career as an economist. During her tenure, she motivated Pierre Trudeau to establish the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, making Canada one of the first countries to do so. Recognizing her potential, Trudeau appointed her Chair of the Food Prices Review Board in 1973. There, she tackled the skyrocketing inflation which was tremendously impacting Canadian households. In part because of her work, the Canadian inflation rate was stabilized. After the dismantling of the Board, she was appointed Vice-Chair of the Anti-Inflation Board until her retirement. She left her post to care



for her husband, who passed away in 1977. Throughout her career, she made a point of not only reporting to the Government but, most importantly, to the Canadian public.

Following her husband's death, Plumptre was elected Reeve of Rockcliffe Park from 1978 to 1985 and served as a member of the Regional Council of Ottawa-Carleton. She was also involved in several corporate boards, including Dominion Stores and Canada Life, and as chair of various non-profit organizations, including the Vanier Institute of the Family and the Kidney Foundation of Canada.

The Canadian economy greatly benefited from Plumptre's work. She died in April 2008 at the age of 99.