

## **PILLAR SOCIETY – Our History**

- Officially formed in 1994.
- Purpose of the Pillar Society is to keep the membership informed about developments in, and supporting the Canadian intelligence sector, and to foster friendship and promote the welfare of its members.
- Membership limited to former employees of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), former members of the RCMP Security Service (or its predecessor branches in the RCMP), who left their employment in good standing.
- Other individuals may be granted Honourary Membership by the National Board of Directors.
- A National Board of Directors oversees Pillar Society which has three chapters across Canada: Ottawa-Gatineau, Toronto and British Columbia.
- A newsletter, Pillar TALK, is published three times a year.
- There is a closed website available to all current members.
- The Society is primarily a fraternal organization. On occasion matters of interest arising from political and other developments in the security intelligence field in Canada and/or internationally, do promote debate and discussion resulting in Pillar Society taken publicly an advocacy position.
- Pillar Society is not formally connected to nor is it an extension of CSIS.
- A liaison relationship does exist between Pillar and the Service.

How did Pillar Society get its name?

- The word PILLAR was used a level of encryption by the RCMP Security Service in telegraphic messages with its foreign posts.
- Also, there was in informal newsletter “Pillar to Post” used by the HQ Foreign Services Branch when disseminating interesting news items.
- The word PILLAR has a metaphorical reference to a pillar of a free society which was seen as the role of security and the Security Service.
- A dictionary reference to the word PILLAR is strong supporter and one of the 3 objectives of the Pillar Society is to “keep informed about and support the Canadian Security Intelligence sector”.
- It was these thoughts and against this background that the name Pillar Society was proposed and adopted.

*Adapted from the History tab on the Pillar Society’s website.*