

**Francis John Blatherwick**  
CM, CStJ, OBC, CD, BSc, MD, DPH, FRCP(C), LLD (Hon)

Dr. John Blatherwick was the Medical Health Officer in Vancouver from 1984 to 2007 as well as the Chief Medical Health Officer of the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority. He began his career in public health with the Vancouver Health Department in 1971, leaving a residency in Internal Medicine at Vancouver General Hospital to set up the Pine Street Youth Clinic. He left Vancouver in 1974 to take his Diploma in Public Health at the University of Toronto and completed his Fellowship in Public Health at UBC (1976). John then served nine years as the Medical Health Officer in the Simon Fraser Health Unit (Coquitlam / New Westminster). He considers his non-smoking in the workplace, his work in getting services for persons living with AIDS, his work in getting services to persons addicted to drugs (needle exchange, medical clinic and supervised injection site) and his work in the SARS scare some of his most important work.

John served in the Canadian Forces for 39 years retiring in 2000. He began his military career at age 16 with the Governor General's Foot Guards in Ottawa. He then joined the URTP (University Reserve Officer Training Program) with 107 RCAF University Squadron at the University of Alberta in 1963. While in medical school, he served as the Medical Officer for 418 (RCAF) Squadron. While interning in Calgary, he agreed to 'help out' with the local Medical Company and ended up being the Officer Commanding of the RCAMC unit while in Calgary. He again agreed to help out his senior resident at the Vancouver General Hospital for the summer in 1971 and stayed for 29 years. John retired with the rank of Commander and was the Senior Naval Reserve Medical Advisor on retirement. He was Canada's representative to the NATO Reserve Medical Officers' Congress from 1989 to 1995 and received the sixth gold medal from this organization. In 2006, he was named Honorary Colonel, 12 (Vancouver) Field Ambulance. This term ends in February 2012 and ends over 50 years in uniform.

Dr. Blatherwick has three sons and a daughter, and has been actively involved in minor sports as a coach, manager and as a hockey referee for many years. He continues to play hockey with his sons with a group that has been together for e0 years. His wife Carol was a physician in Surrey and is considered "the real doctor" in the family.

Dr. Blatherwick has published 22 books, mainly about airplanes and about civilian and military medals. The latest edition of '*Canadian Orders Decorations and Medals*' (6<sup>th</sup>) will come out in 2010 and is a Canadian Best Seller having sold over 10,000 copies to date. Hugh Halliday and John produced a CD called *Courage and Service* which has all the citations to the RCN, Canadian Army and RCAF for WWI, interwar years, WWII, Korea and post-war years. The Canadian Forces bought copies for each of the Canadian Forces museums.

John was made a Commander of the Order of St. John while serving as the Provincial Commissioner for St. John Ambulance in 1989. In 1994, he was awarded the Order of Canada for his work in public health. In 2002, John was named a 'Canadian Health Hero' by the Pan American Health Organization. In 2005, the British Columbia Medical

Association awarded him the BCMA Silver Medal, their highest award, for his contribution to medicine in B.C. (the only Medical Health Officer to receive this award). In 2007, he was given the George Elliott Award by UBC for lifetime achievement in public health, the Cam Coady Foundation Medal of Excellence for leadership and service to British Columbia in the field of public health, and was made a member of the Order of British Columbia. He retired in September 2007. In November 2008, he received the degree, Doctor of Laws, honoris causa, from UBC and in July 2009 was made a Clinical Professor Emeritus at UBC.

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