

Draft - from "*A History of the Mayors of Toronto*" by Mark Maloney

Mayor Phil Givens

1963-1966

The fifty fourth Mayor of Toronto

Lawyer; Alderman & Controller - City of Toronto; Councillor - Metropolitan Toronto; Business executive; Philanthropist; Member of Parliament; Member of the Ontario Legislative Assembly; Chair of the Police Commission of Metropolitan Toronto; Judge, Provincial Court of Ontario
Born April 24 1922, in Toronto - Died November 30 1995, in Toronto

Philip Gerald Givens was born in Toronto in 1922, the son of Hyman Gewertz (it would later become Givens) and Mary Grafstein. His parents had married just before his father migrated in 1912 from Belce Poland to Canada. Givens' father was seeking to earn enough money so he could bring his wife to Canada, but it was that would take almost 10 years.

A tailor by profession, Hyman Givens first settled in the Euclid and Dundas neighbourhood, finding a job for \$3 a week in a pants factory. He would later work with the Spadina Avenue firm of Shiffer-Hillman, before finally retiring in 1955.

In 1921, Hyman and Mary Givens were finally reunited in Toronto, and a year later on April 24 1922 young Philip was born. His parents could never have imagined that some 40 years later their son would become the mayor of the second largest city in Canada.

Growing up on Augusta and later Euclid Avenues, Givens was educated at Charles G. Fraser Public School and at Parkdale and Harbord Collegiates, and earned a B.A. in Political Science and Economics from the University of Toronto. He then attended Osgoode Hall Law School, where he was also a gold medalist debater. As a law student Givens also worked for the eminent Toronto attorney, David Peters, an ardent Zionist who would become a mentor.

Proud of his rich Jewish heritage Phil Givens was also a graduate of the Talmud Torah Eitz Chaim on D'Arcy Street and was active in the Zionist movement. He would later serve as president of the Toronto Zionist Council, and on the board of several Jewish community organizations.

Years later Givens would recall that he was always interested in politics, even as a young boy. "Some people admire football players," he said, "But my heroes were public people of the day. I loved oratory and my father used to take me to the public meetings at the Standard Theatre on Spadina. I used to go hear Joe Salsberg and Sam Carr – both great speakers."

Yet Givens also experienced anti-Semitism first hand as a young boy. In a 1984 interview with Toronto Jewish historian Bill Gladstone, he recalled that in the 1930s it was "particularly vicious ... it was a time when you'd be chased through the streets of Toronto with epithets

hurled at you,” he said. “They had the quota system for professionals in the universities in those days. For doctors – for everything. There were also very few Jewish lawyers in non-Jewish firms.” Givens also recalled applying for jobs during the war and “the minute you said Jewish or Hebrew, you could see you were through.”

Givens worked each summer at the Steel Company of Canada shoveling coal into hot furnaces, and later worked at Canada Packers cleaning out barrels of lard, to earn the money for university tuition. He married Minnie (Min) Rubin in June 1947, and would graduate in 1949, at the age of 27 and begin practicing law. It was also the year in which he began his early political career.

As an early means of electioneering Givens would attend meetings of several non-partisan, ethnically mixed and left-wing Jewish fraternal organizations, known as *landsmanshaften* societies, many in the Cecil-Beverley neighbourhoods. At the turn of the 20th century, they had been established to assist East European Jews to integrate into the city’s Jewish community. As mutual aid societies they helped lessen the alienation, fear, and rootlessness experienced by new immigrants in a strange country, as well as helping with the problems of work and economic adjustment.

Though Givens first sought public office in 1949, and then again in 1950, he failed to be elected as a school trustee in Ward 5. Later, in 1951 – and in the same election that swept the colourful Allan Lamport into the mayoralty – Givens finally entered city politics after being elected an alderman in Ward 5 (Trinity-Bellwoods and Little Italy), capturing the top spot with over 7,240 votes in what was then a two council member ward.

By late 1953, running for a seat on the 1954 council, Givens would find himself up against ex-controller Stewart Smith, a Communist candidate running under the Labor Progressive banner. Givens won and would, in fact, re-elected to council another eight times before becoming mayor. When Communist-led demonstrators invaded the council chambers to advocate for better housing Givens distanced himself from their actions.

When the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto came into existence, Givens also served on Metro Council from 1953 to 1966. In 1957 and 1958 Givens was also an unsuccessful Liberal candidate in the federal riding of Spadina, coming in in second place to Progressive Conservative MP Charles Rea.

In 1959 Givens was described in one account as an “always-a-bridesmaid-never-a-bride” kind of city councillor, one who “has remained as the representative for Ward Five these past six years while others of lesser talents raced past him up the ladder ...” also noting that he had proposed the licensing of building contractors as a means of preventing them from misrepresenting their clients.

In mid-1960 the city’s changing landscape was vividly described by *The Toronto Star* which predicted that “trans-ocean air fares on jet liners will drop substantially”; that a new television franchise would be awarded for Toronto; and that dresses would be “super bell shaped” by yearend. It also predicted that the new blockbuster movie *Ben Hur* would walk away with most

Academy Awards; that large tail fins on new cars would be on their way out; and that two-hour television spectacles would soon be in vogue.

Meanwhile, Givens was described as “roly-poly ... an enchanting debater born near the curbs of Queen and Euclid ... for all his moxie, he is one of the few councillors who really enjoys the demands of decision-making.”

In December 1960 he ran successfully to be a member of the 1961 and 1962 Board of Control. In a race for one of the four seats, Givens took the final spot, with 67,811 votes city-wide, behind popular Controllers Don Summerville, William Allen, and Bill Dennison. He was the first Jewish person to hold that post since Joseph Singer some 30 years before. At a celebratory cocktail reception held at his parent's home just a few weeks later Givens was joined by noted Toronto philanthropist Arthur Gelber, Italian-Canadian community leader Johnny Lombardi, and Don Summerville, the city's next mayor.

Indeed, the world of 1960 was a rapidly changing place. In July, *The Star* covered a major story about what they described as “the most feared men in South Africa.” They were members of the Race Classification Board, the officials who must decide and ultimately rule on the colour of a person's skin in what was described as “the most unpleasant job in South Africa.” The board's principal duty was to “search for tell-tale traces of colour.”

In 1961 Controller Givens joined 12 council colleagues to vote in favour of “wide open Sunday entertainment,” also revealing in personal terms that one of the greatest changes that had occurred in his own life was a deluge of invitations from all across the city, leading him to classify friends into “A.C.” or “B.C.” or, as he explained, “After Controller or Before Controller.”

With members of the Board of Control each receiving a car and driver, Givens noted it was difficult to get used to having a chauffeur.” The car's a real status symbol” he said, also pointing out that “there are some people who resent me my car ... it's sort of envy, I suppose.” Givens also bemoaned that “you're always on parade,” noting that his status as a controller had elevated him to a new level: “I mean you're a prospective mayor and nine out of 10 people will tell you ‘Boy, you're doing all right, you just wait another four of five years and Boy you'll be in the mayor's chair.’ They're pushing you; you get pushed every day in the week.”

In what was a distinctly populist vein, Givens joined Mayor Nathan Phillips and Controller William Dennison to oppose a swanky new 125-seat restaurant on the top floor of the east tower of the new City Hall under construction. City staff noted that the proposed restaurant would (at that time) enjoy a “commanding view of the harbour.”

In 1962 Givens was appointed a Queen's Counsel, and in December of that year sought re-election to the Board for the 1963 & 1964 term of council. He topped the polls, with 87,051 votes, ahead of former mayor Allan Lamport's 85,391, and Bill Dennison's 77,325. Givens was a strong supporter of the amalgamation of municipalities within Metro, saying he backed the “orderly transition from the present system to amalgamation by the imperceptible unification of services over the next four or five years.”

As the senior controller, he was appointed Vice-Chairman of the Board of Control and President of City Council, as well as city's budget chief. He was also close, in both personal and political terms, to the new Mayor Don Summerville, saying "Don and I are kindred souls. We both came up from the sidewalks. He's always helped me in council. We've never exchanged a harsh word."

With Summerville's sudden and unexpected death due to a massive heart attack Givens was, on November 25 1963, unanimously appointed by the twenty one members of City Council to be the city's fifty fourth mayor. Ironically, the staid old Protestant, British, Orange, and Conservative Toronto were also witnessing a second Jewish mayor taking over.

Yet it was not the way that Givens had ever envisaged or wanted. The relationship between him and Summerville had been warm and personal. Givens affectionately called him Donnie and envied the easy familiarity and political roots his good friend had cultivated over a highly successful political career.

Tragically, one of his first acts as mayor in November 1963 was to ask citizens to fill city churches and synagogues to mourn slain U.S. President John Kennedy. He would generate controversy in speech soon after, when he said the news media and radio and television press were "encouraging dangerous kooks" such as the sniper who had assassinated Kennedy the week before. They were, Givens believed, endangering the lives of public figures by giving publicity to "sub-marginal kooky characters who attack them."

Givens had married the former Minnie (Min) Ruben in June 1947 and together they had children Eleanor and Michael, who were 11 and 4 years of age respectively, when their father became mayor in 1963. An art graduate and then a successful commercial graphic artist, Min also played a pivotal role in her husband's political campaigns as the designer and writer of every piece of his election materials over the years.

The Toronto Star described Givens as a "a stout, effervescent, outgoing man with an instinct for sizing up the flim-flam and the phonies who often surround the people in public office ... he gets huge enjoyment from the perquisites of the middle-class ..." It noted that he "lives comfortably in a house of modest size on a woodsy cul-de-sac just inside North York, likes Chinese food at Lichee Gardens, and is appalled at how few books his fellow politicians read."

The paper also noted that Toronto's new mayor was "an award winning debater at law school, an education he paid for by bull labor at the Swansea works of the Steel Company of Canada. He is a modest investor in real estate, but qualifies for office in the city of Toronto only by the law office he rents downtown, and his wife Min still makes some of her own things. He is a lover of anecdote, but not of gossip, and has an uncanny ability to analyze his own political position and his own abilities as a speech-maker with the objectivity of a third person looking in."

Givens was also described as "the best phrase-maker in civic politics" and that he had frequently been at odds with former mayor Allan Lamport on issues such as a hotel tax; keeping residents living on Toronto Island; or tearing down the Armouries. As *The Star* pointed out "Givens is a

liberal Liberal and Lamport is not” but that he got along well with Lamport who had now returned to council.

After having assumed the office under the most tragic of circumstances Givens pledged to continue the works program begun by the late Mayor Donald Summerville; he also spoke of the need for “slum clearance” and the re-development of the south side of Queen Street. The new mayor pointed out that the total budget of Metro Toronto stood at \$352 million, while the Province of Alberta’s budget was just \$281 million, and called for a two-party system of municipal governance, with a cabinet “that owes its allegiance to the mayor.” He proposed a sales tax on hotel rooms, one that would be imposed simultaneously with the City of Montreal so that neither city would lose convention business to the other.

Mid-1964 also saw the first public mention of a major new lakefront attraction in Toronto to celebrate Canada’s centennial year. The announcement came from Ontario Tourism Minister Jimmy Auld after a meeting with Toronto’s Board of Control, for the development would become known as Ontario Place.

In November of that year the final connecting link between the Don Valley Parkway in the east and the Gardiner Expressway in the west was completed and was officially opened to traffic, following a ribbon-cutting by Premier John Robarts. It was hailed as the solution to Metro’s northeast traffic problems.

In December 1964 Givens ran in his first full mayoral election, for the 1965-1966 term of council, and he turned back a strong challenge from popular former mayor Allan Lamport. In a foreshadowing of the future diversity of Toronto’s, Givens hailed what he called “Toronto’s mingling of countless races and creeds, people with intelligence, imagination, ingenuity, and the urge to work, create and succeed.”

Givens’ 1964 campaign was based on six key planks:

- “Easing the tax burden on homeowners;
- Smooth flowing traffic, including efficient low cost transit and convenient parking to boost downtown business;
- Decent housing, and well serviced, in a city of beauty;
- Maximizing educational and employment opportunities for all;
- New sports and recreational facilities;
- Facilities for culture and for social services.”

In what he termed “Planned Progress” Givens offered what he called the “sound, imaginative administration of an intelligent, workable program.” It was based, he said “on the principle that the electorate of Toronto is interested in an intelligently conceived practical plan of action that their next mayor can reasonably expect to effect in the next two years.”

Described as a “42-year old lawyer son of poor Polish immigrants” the incumbent Givens captured 82,696 votes, some 30,000 more than Lamport’s 52,175, to head what was then a \$118 million City corporation (the equivalent of \$914 million in 2015.) Givens had pledged to make Toronto an “art city” and one of his immediate priorities was completion of the new St.

Lawrence Centre for the Arts, a \$5.6 million home for theatre, opera, ballet, and musical concerts.

In January 1965 Givens delivered his first inaugural address to council as mayor, noting it was with a multitude of feelings and emotions, and calling it “a most balanced and competent City Council.” The council he said was composed of a range of talent, including men and women of experience “and a liberal infusion of new blood, new ideas, and fresh points of view.”

Givens called for a “vigorous and sensible direction” and appealed for teamwork and cooperation, stating that Toronto would not tolerate a council that pulled in 23 different directions. He noted the electorate had become pragmatic and only had respect for “honest achievement.”

Ever the consensus builder, Givens noted that one could take the various campaign planks from the recent election and find a number of areas of agreement, which could be knit into what he called “one broad highway of progress ... dedicated to the development of Toronto as one of the great cities of the world; dedicated to meeting the *real* needs of the people.”

The new mayor said top priority had to be given to the redevelopment of downtown, which he said held “the key to Toronto’s growth, and the emancipation of the taxpayer from what could become a tax bondage.” 1965, he said, would usher in a record year of development, and the tax rate must be brought under control. New assessment from growth downtown was the best source of tax dollars to take the pressure off of homeowners he stated.

Givens called for the appointment of a development coordinator to act an “expediter” of new construction and also act as head of a steering committee of all city departments involved in new projects. He urged the immediate expropriation and re-development of the south side of Queen Street across from the new City Hall; publicly called for a vast re-make of the south end of Yonge Street; and urged council to create more off-street parking.

With his outgoing personality and exceptional public speaking skills, Givens soon became a symbol of the new Toronto, a “go-go Mayor,” as one newspaper referred to him as he promoted change and development in the mid-1960s.

As mayor he oversaw the first announcements and discussion of a major new large-scale project in the Queen and Bay Street area and that would become known as the Eaton Centre. In a burst of civic pride he hailed the proposed new development as one of the finest in the world, exceeding Rockefeller Center in both size and scope.

Givens’ image was one of a modern mayor leading the city into a new urban frontier, and was further enhanced by controversies over the purchase of furniture for the new City Hall, and the acquisition of Henry Moore’s abstract sculpture *The Archer*.

For its part the city was also changing. By 1967 drugs, “free love,” an influx of young teenage “hippies” from all parts of the country, and the licensing of coffee houses in Yorkville were big issues during Givens’ mayoral term.

As *The Toronto Star* would later describe, hundreds routinely “listened all afternoon to speakers and rock bands, smoked marijuana, dropped acid, smelled the incense, grooved on the colourful

banners ... knots of young people from all over Canada, dressed in fantastic garb and long hair sat around Queen’s Park just grooving ... there was much sleeping around among friends and acquaintances in the communal houses and crash pads.”

Yorkville was where everything was happening and Toronto’s local media found a perfect drama in young hippies protesting against automobile traffic there. As *The Star* would note, “Mayor Phil Givens had proposed closing Yorkville to traffic ... but the spectacle of hippie spokesman David Depoe squared off against his City Hall antagonist Allan Lamport, plus the photos and TV and film images of cops grabbing hippie protesters by the hair and throwing them in police wagons, captivated the media ... It didn’t hurt that drugs and sex were constantly in the foreground.”

All three Toronto newspapers gave daily coverage to the scene, “which in turn drew more kids.” As Stuart Henderson noted in *Making the Scene*, a history of the Yorkville neighbourhood ‘If you’re in Moose Jaw and you’re 17 and bored, why not spend your summer vacation going to Yorkville, getting stoned and getting laid?’”

A host of other local matters were dealt with by council in 1964 and 1965 including the repeal of restrictions on sunbathing in public places; a proposed discontinuing of chauffeur-driven limousines for members of the Board of Control; an amalgamation of city works yards; a major land use re-zoning to allow for large apartment blocks in the Yonge-Maitland-Wood Street area; allowing for underground pedestrian malls in the downtown area; and a minimum age for youths attending penny arcades.

Council also discussed funding for urban renewal; termite infestations; the establishment of new provincial schools of technology; a heavy truck prohibition downtown; water pollution from detergents; the disposal of the Toronto’s old City Hall; protests against the purchase of a sculpture by Henry Moore for Nathan Phillips Square, the humane killing of seals; the use of seat belts in city-owned vehicles; the incineration of bulk refuse; providing news kiosks at new subway stations; the state of the Gibraltar Point lighthouse property; the cost of funerals for the homeless; and a prohibition on the sale of ice cream products from vehicles.

Other council issues during the Givens mayoralty included air rights over subways; a possible flower garden to replace the rink at Nathan Phillips Square; preparation of the opening ceremonies for the new City Hall; the holding of bicycle races on Sundays; a removal of railway tracks in Queen’s Quay; citizen representation regarding nuisances in Yorkville; a study of Great Lakes water levels; zoning for the Wellesley hospital; providing daytime shelter for homeless men; the control of industrial wastes into the water stream; applying the same welfare benefits to females over 60 as to men; a lease for Union Station; the licensing of discotheques; and the sale of surplus lands for the Don Valley Parkway.

Yet for Givens a central highlight of his mayoral term was September 1965 official opening of Toronto’s new \$31 million City Hall (the equivalent of \$236 million in 2015), in conjunction

with the first major open public square downtown. In a major celebration attended by the Prime Minister and the Premier of Ontario, Governor-General Georges Vanier stated that to crowd of some 50,000 that the soul and spirit of a city were reflected through its architecture: “A nobility of design and a loftiness of conception ... will in turn inspire its citizens to broader outlooks and bolder purposes.”

Yet ironically it was a new piece of public art in Nathan Phillips Square that would contribute to his defeat as mayor just a year later. The architect of the new City Hall, Viljo Revell had asked noted British sculptor Henry Moore to design and create a statue to complement the flowing lines of the new building. Although \$100,000 had been allocated for a piece of artwork for Nathan Phillips Square, Moore’s abstract modern design had prompted some controversy and it was initially not approved by City Council.

Under fire, Givens, by now a staunch defender, successfully undertook a private city-wide campaign to raise the \$100,000 (the equivalent of \$725,000 in 2015 dollars) needed to purchase *The Archer* by way of private donations.

In what was a daring move that many said helped to put Toronto on the leading edge of culture it was finally installed in Nathan Phillips Square in October 1966. Yet many believe it cost Givens his job as mayor, as citizens were not yet ready for such artistic flare in the heart of staid old Hogtown. “He raised the funds himself,” former Metro chairman Paul Godfrey would later note. “It didn't cost the taxpayers a penny.” It would also lead to Toronto becoming host of the world's largest public collection of Moore's work, most of the pieces donated personally by the artist himself between 1971 and 1974.

As events unfolded Givens was defeated by William Dennison in the late 1966 Toronto mayoral election for the 1967-1969 term of council. In what was a lively three-way race, Dennison captured 58,984 votes, to 54,525 for Givens, and 40,946 for Controller William Archer. With Givens a Liberal, and Archer a well-known Conservative, Dennison was able to consolidate support from labour, trade unions, socialists, grass-roots community activists, and the left-of centre New Democratic Party. Provincial electoral laws had been changed so that municipal elections across Ontario would be held every three years, rather than every two, as had been the case before.

Ironically it was Dennison, despite his strong socialist roots and deep ties to labour, who emerged as the more conservative of the three major candidates. The cautious and pro-development Dennison’s campaign slogan was “*Respect for the Taxpayer’s Dollar*,” while challenger Bill Archer emerged as a centrist candidate, and Givens was positioned on the left. As *Toronto Star* columnist Ron Haggart noted “the voters who made William Dennison mayor were the Ukrainians and Italians of the west-end and the skilled and semi-skilled workers of British stock in the east end ... ‘Swingers’ voted for Phil Givens – his voters could be found routing the two other squares in the lush apartments and the skyscrapers, downtown.”

A private citizen again for the first time since 1951, Givens was awarded the Canadian Centennial Medal in 1967, and in 1968 was the recipient of the Jewish National Fund’s Negev Award. In the June 1968 federal general election, Givens re-entered politics, running successfully for the Liberal Party under Pierre Trudeau in the federal riding of York West and

becoming a backbench MP in the House of Commons. Givens succeeded Robert Winters, the high profile Minister of Trade and Commerce in the Cabinet of Lester Pearson who had contested the 1968 Liberal leadership convention, coming in second to Trudeau.

Givens received 20,416 votes (45 per cent) as York West's new Liberal MP, to 16,204 (36 per cent) for the NDP's Val Scott, and just 8,344 (18 per cent) for Progressive Conservative Wes Boddington. The leader of the Communist Party of Canada, William Kashtan, received a mere 155 votes (0.34 per cent.)

In 1969 Givens served as a Parliamentary Observer with the Canadian Delegation to the United Nations, and also became a member of the Canada-U.S.A. Inter-Parliamentary Group. He was also appointed as a Canadian delegate to a major conference in January 1971 hosted by the Atlantic Council on "Goals and Strategies for Environmental Quality Improvement in the Seventies."

As an MP Givens was a strong voice in championing urban issues, urging the Trudeau Liberals to pay more attention to major cities and boldly declaring that Ottawa was not devoting sufficient attention to urban issues because of the "clouded condition of the constitution" and the whole issue of national unity. "The whole tempo of progress (in tackling urban problems) is slow because of these other national problems," he said. "My most vital interest has been, and continues to be, in urban affairs, housing and problems of the environment."

In a major speech he had given to the Toronto Home Builders Association in 1970 Givens had urged the Canadian government to find a role in urban affairs before time ran out, and Canada was swamped by the same big-city problems besetting cities in the United States. In particular he called for the establishment of a national council on urban affairs comprised of representatives of major cities, academia, and urban and foreign experts.

"Maybe if I can just talk long enough, and hard enough and emotionally enough, I can get some support," he stated, but at times he was criticizing the Prime Minister more than most members of the Opposition. By mid-1970 the friction grew and he began to openly talk about leaving the federal Liberal scene because there was no future in being a backbencher, saying it was like being "an udder on a bull" and that elected MPs "must vote like a wooden soldier."

Despite his disillusionment with Ottawa, Givens remained a natural promoter when it came to advancing his political prospects. A later Toronto mayor recounts that one occasion Givens hosted Trudeau on a boat cruise of Lake Ontario, whereupon another boat pulled up alongside displaying a large sign saying "Givens for Cabinet."

In the end, not happy living in the capital and disappointed that he had never been appointed to the federal cabinet, Givens announced in May of 1971 that he would resign his federal seat to run for the Ontario Legislature and become Liberal MPP for York-Forest Hill. In the October 1971 provincial general election he captured 13,870 votes, to 12,570 for former Metro School Board chair Barry Lowes of the Tories, and 6,963 for NDP candidate Fiona Nelson. Givens had

been personally recruited by Ontario Liberal Robert Nixon who had pledged that should the Liberals form a government he would occupy a new and important Cabinet post.

As an Opposition MPP, and true to form, Givens was engaged on the issues and spoke to a wide range of urban-related matters in the Legislature: discrimination and human rights; low-cost housing and its rehabilitation; a possible new monorail system for Toronto; municipal land banking; urban planning; social services; pedestrian malls; vandalism; the motor vehicle industry in Greater Toronto; and regional planning and urban development.

He also tackled a greenbelt for Toronto; major sewage issues; urban poverty and unemployment; unsafe working conditions; GO Transit service; growth and the creation of new regional municipalities; the creation of Ontario Place; property taxation and tax relief; the Ontario Housing Corporation; Metro Council; federal-provincial cooperation; and the need for new expressways (a very popular position in North York in the mid-1960s); as well as the need for new subway construction.

With redistribution in 1975, Givens ran in the nearby riding of Armourdale, against then popular North York Mayor Mel Lastman, who publicly declared that “if I lose, it’s the end of my political career.” (Though he was indeed beaten in that race, Lastman’s municipal record of service would continue on, unbroken for another 28 years.) Givens served in the provincial Legislature until September 1977, when Conservative Premier William Davis appointed the former gold medalist in debating from Osgoode Hall Law School as chair of the Metropolitan Toronto Board of Police Commissioners and as a provincial court judge, at a salary of \$46,000 (or the equivalent of \$176,000 in 2015).

As a member of the Commission for more than 10 years Givens paid serious attention to the issues of victims’ rights, and keeping the streets of Toronto safe. He also advocated an automatic death penalty for anyone convicted of killing a police officer, emphatically stating in 1984 that “we have to protect ourselves from the crackpots, nuts and loonies out there ... The police officer who goes out on the streets to fight crime should have the right to feel that a person who kills him will suffer the same fate.” When asked if police should be given heavy billy clubs, Givens stated “I’m willing to give police Sherman tanks if it will help.”

In August 1983 he was re-appointed by the Tory provincial government, and in 1985 was assigned as a trial judge in the Civil Division, retiring from the Police Commission and the judiciary in 1989. Some had criticized his time on the Police Board, calling him insensitive to minorities in Metro, yet it was during his tenure that the Toronto Police relaxed its height and weight restrictions, giving a whole host of new minority candidates an opportunity to apply to join the Force.

In 1985 over 400 of Toronto’s leading citizens paid \$100 each (or the equivalent of \$200 in 2015) for a tribute dinner to Judge Givens. Held at Beth Tzedec Synagogue on Bathurst Street it raised \$30,000 for a Hebrew cultural organization that was the educational arm of the Canadian Zionist Federation. In 1988 he joined the board of the 36,000 member Canadian Association of Retired Persons (CARP), saying “I feel the government needs to know what the paramount concerns of today’s mature Canadians are.”

The following year he appeared before a legislative standing committee, arguing that proposed changes to the provincial Trespass to Property Act would make it more difficult to remove dangerous or rowdy teenagers from local malls. Givens publicly said that for seniors who were old, feeble and vulnerable a trip to the neighbourhood mall might be a dangerous adventure.

“They are scared silly they’ll be mugged, assaulted, or swarmed by young rowdies who barge in, jostle, disturb, annoy, pester, and use abusive language,” he said.

Givens died of a heart attack on November 30 1995 while at Sunnybrook Health Science Centre and was survived by his wife Min, daughter Eleanor, 41, and son Michael, 34. As former Metro Chairman Paul Godfrey stated “He gave his life to his country, whether federally, municipally, or provincially. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to Phil Givens.”

A man of culture as well as a strong law-and-order advocate, Givens had played a vital role throughout his life as mayor, Police Board chair, Liberal MP, MPP and later judge. Godfrey recalled that Givens took particular pride in rising from very modest roots to becoming mayor of one of North America’s premier cities, thus proving “that you need not be a man of wealth to become mayor of this great city.”

Upon his death, the long-serving Mayor of North York (and a future Mayor of Toronto) Mel Lastman also remembered Givens fondly, even though Givens had beaten him in a 1975 provincial election. It was, in fact, the only time Lastman had been beaten in any election, and ironically the two families would remain linked: Lastman’s son (Blayne Lastman) and Givens’ son (Michael Givens) were married to two sisters.

Former Mayor Allan Lamport observed that Givens was a thoroughly honourable man and a politician with no hidden or dark side. “He was the easiest guy I ever knew to get along with. He was generally even all the time and he didn’t have any flare-ups like some of us ... He didn’t have two sides to him. He was level all of the time. I liked him very much.” At the time of his death Givens was a member of the Canadian National Exhibition (CNE) even going to meetings using not one but two canes, a tribute to his indomitable spirit.

In his eulogy at Beth Tzedec Synagogue on Bathurst Street in Toronto, Rabbi Benjamin Friedberg remembered Givens as having an irrepressible personality and rich sense of humour. There were two national flags draped over Phil Givens’ casket. Both were a symbol of his “two loves” – Canada and also Israel. The Canadian red and white maple leaf had been approved while he was mayor, and the blue and white Star of David was dear to his heart. Several years before Givens had written to both the House of Commons in Ottawa, and the Knesset in Israel, asking for a flag that had flown over each legislature.

“He served both with exemplary duty and exemplary skill ...” said Friedberg to the 500 mourners attending Givens’ funeral, paying tribute to a man who had left an unforgettable mark on the City of Toronto. It was, said Friedberg, “a loss to the country, the city, the Jewish community and to Israel ... Some of the splendor in the city and community has gone with him.”

Friedberg recalled how Givens was considered to be the “boy wonder of the Jewish Community” as he grew up on Augusta Ave. in Toronto. He was remembered as having excelled in sports, playing football at Harbord Collegiate and had won a debating gold medal at Osgoode Hall Law School. He had also drawn on strong oratory skills to raise money for the Jewish community. “He reached for the heavens, but had his feet planted firmly on the ground” he said.

It was noted that in public life Givens was known as a tremendous supporter of the arts. When City Council refused to back him in his mission to bring Henry Moore's sculpture *The Archer* to Nathan Phillips Square, he was not deterred. Mourners were reminded that he had personally raised \$100,000 on his own to acquire it for the City, helping to put Toronto on the map as a “giant of culture and civilized behavior,” Friedberg recalled.

Givens was also remembered as a great defender of the Metro Police. When the future of the police band was threatened because of a budget crunch, he once again came to the rescue with his fundraising skills. In a fitting tribute, the Metro Police Honor Guard paid homage to Givens yesterday, saluting as his casket emerged from the synagogue. Dignitaries who attended the funeral included NDP Leader Bob Rae, Toronto Mayor Barbara Hall, former Metro Chairman Paul Godfrey and former Toronto mayors David Crombie and Art Eggleton.

In both his private and personal life, Givens was remembered as being equally vital and engaged. He had served on the board of directors of the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews; Toronto Symphony; Canadian National Exhibition; Toronto Hydro; and Consumers' Gas Company; as well as serving as Vice-President and General Counsel of Atlantic Packaging.

He was a member of the Mount Sinai Masonic Lodge (AF & AM), and for several years served as a political commentator on CHUM Radio, discussing the topical events of the day. A passionate sailor, he was also a member of both the Royal Canadian and the Island Yacht Clubs in Toronto.

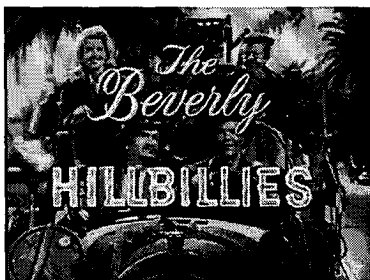
As a proud and ardent Zionist, Givens was a prominent leader of several Jewish communal organizations. He was founder and first president of the Upper Canada Lodge of B'nai Brith, and sat on the executive of several Jewish organizations. He was chairman of the United Israel Appeal's Israel Emergency Fund in 1967, and also the United Jewish Appeal's Special Fund in 1968. From 1973 to 1985 he was the national president of the Canadian Zionist Federation and in the 1990s was the national chairman of the Canadian Jewish Congress' Committee for Yiddish.

A friend of more than 50 years, Max Shecter, recalled his friend's positive outlook on life. “He had an aura of serendipity about him because he was doing the things he wanted to do. He gained pleasure from it and also gave pleasure.”

What Toronto homes were watching during the mayoralty of Phil Givens

The Beverly Hillbillies

From 1962 to 1971 Torontonians were watching a new American comedy on CBS, starring a popular foursome: Buddy Ebsen, Irene Ryan, Donna Douglas and Max Baer Jr. The series was about a poor backwoods family suddenly discovering oil on their land, and soon transplanted to the luxury of Beverly Hills California. The “fish out of water” themed television show spawned country-cousins Petticoat Junction and Green Acres in 1965. While panned by television critics at the time, it became a huge ratings success. During a nine-year run on CBS, it twice ranked as the number one series of the year. With episodes still on television in the 21st century it remains one of the most-watched television shows of all time.



Batman

From January 1966 to March 1968 the original Batman series was a veritable pop sensation. Airing on ABC television, it starred Adam West and Burt Ward as Batman and Robin, as crimefighting heroes defending “Gotham City.” Despite its brief run – there were just 120 episodes shot – the weekly formula had them arrive in the Batcave in full costume, jumping into the atomic-powered Batmobile, with the two racing off into the city at high speed to fight crime and evil doers.

Get Smart

Created by Mel Brooks, the popular spy satire starred Don Adams as Agent 86 who, and his sidekick Barbara Feldon as Agent 99, worked for CONTROL, a secret American government counter-espionage agency. It was a wacky and offbeat combination of James Bond and Inspector Clouseau, with Torontonians tuning in from September 1965 to early 1969.

I Dream of Jeannie

From September 1965 to May 1970 this 1960s sitcom featured a perky young Barbara Eden as a 2,000-year-old genie who was accidentally discovered by a U.S. astronaut, played by Larry Hagman. She eventually falls in love with her new “master” in what was one of the first colour TV series in the United States.

The Man from U.N.C.L.E.

Another hit series about secret agents, it first aired on NBC in September 1964, and followed the exploits of two spies: Robert Vaughn and David McCallum, who were working for the fictitious secret law-enforcement agency U.N.C.L.E. (for the United Network Command for Law and Enforcement.)

Star Trek

Created by Gene Roddenberry proposed the original TV series. The first regular episode was aired on NBC Television in September 1966. Initially enjoying high ratings, NBC continued the show for a second season, but cancelled it in its third. Led by Starfleet Commander James T. Kirk (familiar to Torontonians as Canadian actor William Shatner) members of the Star Trek crew dealt with a range of very earthly-related issues such as war, peace and conflict; imperialism; racial and class issues; respect and human rights; feminism; and new advances in technology. With their hand-held mobile “communicators” they gave Torontonians a glimpse of the future some 30 years before the advent of cellphones on the streets of Toronto.

Bewitched

In this series, Samantha, a young-looking witch (played by Elizabeth Montgomery) marries ad executive Darrin Stephens and becomes a typical suburban homemaker. Darrin often becomes the victim of a spell, the effects of which wreak havoc with mortals such as his boss, clients, parents, or neighbors.

The Andy Griffith Show

First televised on CBS in October 1960 the series portrays him as the widowed sheriff of Mayberry, a town in North Carolina. His work is further complicated by an inept yet well meaning deputy, Barney Fife (Don Knotts), and also features the kindly spinster “Aunt Bee” and a precocious young son, Opie, played by Ron Howard.

Bonanza

First televised in Sept 1959 on NBC Television, Bonanza ran until 1973, making it the second longest running western series on television. It centred around the Cartwright family, ranchers on the Ponderosa, a half million acre ranch near bordering Lake Tahoe. It was of particular interest to Canadians because of its Canadian star, Lorne Greene, as the thrice-widowed patriarch Ben Cartwright, with his sons, Adam, Hoss, and Little Joe.

1964 Toronto Municipal Election

Results for Mayor (in December 1964, for 1965 & 1966):

Phil Givens	82,696
Allan Lamport	52,175
Ross Dowson	2,959
Charles Mahoney	1,906

City elections were held on December 7 1964. Incumbent Mayor Phil Givens defeated Allan Lamport, a high profile former mayor and TTC chair, Givens had unexpectedly become mayor in November 1963 after the very sudden death of popular Mayor Don Summerville, who had

suffered a massive heart attack while playing hockey. Both Givens and Lamport had served for several years on City Council and were members of the Liberal Party, but Lamport ran on a more conservative style of platform.

Controllers elected city-wide (in December 1964, for 1965 & 1966):

William Dennison	68,892
Herb Orliffe	66,533
William Archer	65,693
Margaret Campbell	60,900

The 1964 Board of Control had one vacant seat due to the decision of Allan Lamport to run for mayor against Phil Givens. A former council member (and future mayoral candidate) Margaret Campbell beat two other sitting members of council, George Ben and Richard Horkins, to win the powerful and coveted Board of Control position.

Alice Summerville, widow of the popular late-mayor, Don Summerville, reclaimed her husband's former aldermanic seat on City Council, narrowly beating incumbent Alex Hodgins. And in Toronto's north end, in what would seem un-imaginable decades later, an energetic young David Crombie narrowly lost his first bid for council by some 400 votes, in the affluent Ward 9. Yet just eight years later, Crombie would go on to become one of the most popular mayors in Toronto's history.

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