

IN THE HOUSE

SELWYN HOUSE
100 YEARS 1908 - 2008

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE SELWYN HOUSE COMMUNITY

GEOFF MOORE '83:

Microfinancing for macro impact



Geoff Moore '83

By Richard Wills, publications editor

Where others see crisis, Geoff Moore '83 sees opportunity. At a time when economic, social and environmental problems threaten world stability, Geoff thinks a new approach to investment can help all three at once.

After graduating from Selwyn House, Champlain College, McGill, and the University of Leeds, Geoff joined Montreal brokerage firm Brockhouse Cooper. He went on to work for the Bank of Ireland and later Deutsche Bank. In November 2010 he co-founded TBC Capital Inc. ("Thinking Beyond Consensus") to focus primarily on the bridge between philanthropy and investing.

Geoff was recently interviewed by *Forbes.com* about TBC's approach to impact investing, in which investments are targeted not only for their profitability, but also for their potential to alleviate social or environmental problems.

"Governments and community organizations

cannot, on their own, fund solutions to address the biggest social and environmental challenges of our time," Geoff told *Forbes*.

"Tapping into even a small fraction of the huge amount of money invested through the capital markets can make a major difference," he told *In the House*.

"But, one of the problems in our society is that people become comfortable with paradigms. You have to go beyond that consensus. You have to ask: Is there a better way?"

Geoff recently founded EYE4IMPACT, a community investment initiative dedicated to the idea that there are ways to make money while addressing social and environmental issues.

He tells of a woman he recently met in a poverty alleviation workshop in Mexico who has developed a device she is pioneering in India, where women in rural villages often have to carry water for miles on their heads. "You fill a WaterWheel up with 25 gallons of water, but you push it like a lawn mower, and it purifies the water as it rolls. I think this is a beautiful illustration of social entrepreneurship and thinking beyond consensus."

“ You have to go beyond that consensus. You have to ask: Is there a better way? ”

Another example: "By law, foundations across Canada have to pay out 3.5 per cent in grants in order to maintain their tax-exempt status," Geoff says. "But the remaining 96.5 per cent of that money is traditionally invested in stocks and bonds. That is old-school. There are better ways to consider this. You can take at least a small fraction of that and say, 'Let's look at investing in things related to our mission.'"

"Don't forget," Geoff stresses, "this is still all about investment and business and making a profit. So you set a financial target, which is your first bottom line, but then you also have specific

Continued on page 4

CHARLES BIERBRIER '93:

Microbrewery: dream big, start small

By Richard Wills, publications editor

Creating a viable brewery is like brewing a batch of beer. You need the right tools, the right ingredients, and you need to watch over it with loving patience until the final product flows forth from your efforts. If people like your beer, the whole process will grow and flourish.

Since his school days, **Charles Bierbrier '93** has had a passion for brewing. His schoolmates used to laugh when he told them that his ambition was to have a brewery. Maybe it was the family name. "Bierbrier" means "brewer of beer".

Now he is ready to more than double the output of his six-year-old microbrewery; by spring he will have moved into a new level of production and is looking to expand his distribution to keep pace.

After graduating from Selwyn House, Charles attended Marianopolis, studied economics at McGill and then worked for RBC and Merrill Lynch for a few years before going back to get his MBA—ironically—at the John Molson School of Business.

“Something not tangible—but very powerful—drives you even more than profit motive.”

"I spent six months in the banking business before I said, 'I'm taking that leap,'" Charles recalls. "People thought I'd gone completely nuts to give up a job with a secretary, an office with a view, and offers of more money and vacations if I stayed on. I left all that to go brewing."

Charles did his research and homework and, after waiting nearly a year for his licence, he launched his brewery in October of 2005.

He moved into his small

warehouse on Guy Street with no furniture and a phone on the floor, where he padded around in rubber boots getting his equipment set up. "I was a one-man shop," he says, "I was putting in 12-hour days, making all the deliveries out of my Jeep and doing the books on the weekend."

At first he sold only kegs. "Draft beer for bars and restaurants has been the focus of my business," he says.

For his first batch of bottled beer he invited three SHS classmates to help.

Dan Freiheit, Phil Waters and Dugald Malcolm pitched in and helped bottle the first batch one bottle at a time. "For every bottle we filled, we drank three," laughs Charles.

He is now up to 10 employees, hiring extra people part-time during peak periods. And he doesn't have to pay them in beer anymore.

He is now producing a few thousand hectolitres per year, and hopes to increase that substantially by spring. Over the winter he will quadruple his space and

increase the number of brewing tanks to 10, up from four.

For now, his marketing focus is on certain areas of Montreal, but he is expanding within the city, and is eyeing markets in Alberta, Ontario and the U.S.

Bierbrier's flagship beer is their ale, but the company will soon start shipping a "super-premium" Czech Pilsner lager.

He gets his recycled glass bottles from Molson. He is not really in



Charles Bierbrier in his brewery

competition with the big breweries, Charles explains, because of scale. "My total volume is what they spill in an afternoon."

Rather than try to compete with large-scale breweries, Bierbrier has created a unique "boutique product" and has formed strategic alliances with local restaurants and pubs. "Relationships so strong I've never lost a client," Charles says proudly.

Working at this scale, Bierbrier can "out-serve the big guys." Normally, next-day delivery is "completely unheard-of in the industry," but is standard operating procedure for Bierbrier.

At a recent guest lecture at John Molson School of Business, he told an MBA class about "something not tangible—but very powerful—that drives you even more than profit motive."

"I find it very satisfying," he said. "I'm not sure I'll ever get over the thrill of seeing someone on the street with a six-pack of Bierbrier or a Bierbrier t-shirt. The payoff is that you are creating something and seeing people enjoying it right in front of your eyes." ■

DAVID PRICE '90:

Small newspapers a growth industry



David Price '90 with the first issue of the *Independent*

By Richard Wills, publications editor

Behind an unmarked door at the end of a long corridor in a modest office building in Westmount, David Price '90 is planning the expansion of a small publishing enterprise that is quickly growing beyond all expectations.

Four years ago David founded the *Westmount Independent*. Buoyed by its success, he soon moved west and founded the *Free Press* in NDG, adding Hampstead to its coverage area a year later. In October of 2011, The *Free Press* further expanded its distribution to include Côte St. Luc.

At a time when global conglomerates of daily newspapers crank out the same boilerplate from coast to coast, David's papers are like microbreweries—they put out a unique product in small batches.

In his student days, David had no ambitions to become a newspaper magnate. After graduating from Selwyn House, he attended Dawson College and King's College, earned a

BA at McGill and then a law degree and an MBA at the University of Toronto.

He then returned home to Montreal, where he spent five years in investment and merchant banking. But he grew restless and decided he wanted to run his own shop.

David's father, Michael, had founded Price Patterson in 1980, a small printing house that specialized in local histories and biographies. "By 2004 he was semi-retired in his basement, with no website and no business cards," David recalls.

David joined the business and branched out into parenting guide books, bar guides, restaurant guides and tourist guides. They also did mass mailings, job printing, typesetting and other jobs that still existed in the pre-computer days.

But David, who describes book publishing as a "hideous" business, could read the printing on the wall. "It was a very hard business, even before the advent of e-books," he says.

"Why don't we take all this content and put it into a newspaper?" he asked himself. So he founded *Vivva Montreal*, a monthly "lifestyle" tabloid. *Vivva* steadily improved, but closed after 14 months.

In 2007, the existing Westmount weekly moved its office out of Westmount, and the opportunity arose to create a local newspaper that was truly local. The newly founded *Independent* started at two issues per month, and had increased to weekly publication within a year and a half.

"We've never looked back," says David. "The appetite for local news is incredibly strong, and the reaction from the community has been

incredibly good."

"We're locally owned and located," David points out, "and the editor and reporter are former residents with strong ties to Westmount. We get many of our stories because of our Westmount links."

The *Indie* team is comprised of about 20 full- and part-time workers, including reporters, photographers, and the editor.

They have multiple ways of getting a story, David says. "I try to do no reporting and no writing, but still, when there's a breaking story I get calls saying, 'Be here in two minutes.' I can make it in 10."

It was inevitable that David would expand westward, where 100,000 people live in the boroughs of NDG, Hampstead and Cote St. Luc, compared to only 20,000 in Westmount.

"With one phone call, advertisers can now reach 120,000 people," David likes to point out. But, even as

“When there's a breaking story I get calls saying, 'Be here in two minutes.' I can make it in 10.”

they grow, local newspapers can—or should—remain close to their communities. "I hit every door in Westmount every week," David says. "That's an incredibly powerful medium for my advertisers. Bigger companies are missing an opportunity to use community newspapers to get to their customers."

"If you want to be cool, be on Facebook or Twitter, but if you really want to reach people in Westmount, NDG, Hampstead or Cote St. Luc, talk to me, because we're reaching those people with news that matters to them." ■

PHIL CUTLER 2005:

Getting a head start on a busy career

By Richard Wills, publications editor

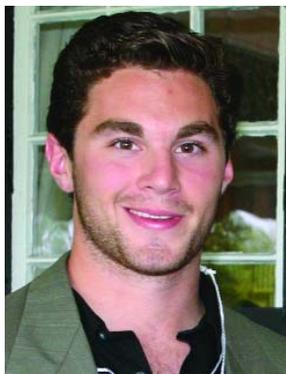
Before having graduated from university, **Phil Cutler 2005** has already run for mayor, headed up a star-studded benefit, and started his own business.

In 2009, Phil mobilized young voters and came within 49 votes of being elected mayor of Westmount. He is Director of Membership for the Westmount Municipal Association, and ran a year-long project with the *Westmount Independent* called “When the Bell Rings,” designed to get students involved in their community.

Also in 2009 he helped organize Champagne Memories, a Toronto gala to raise funds for the Canadian Alzheimer’s Society, with hockey legend Bob Gainey as co-chair and CBC’s George Stroumboulopoulos as MC.

An education major at McGill University, two years ago Phil decided to put his skills to work and launched his own tutoring business, Laurus Educational Services.

Like many Selwyn House graduates, when he needed help getting his business going he called on his fellow Old



Phil Cutler 2005

Boys. **Olivier Saleh 2005** was head tutor at Laurus before leaving to study medicine in Geneva. **Aaron Esterson 2005**, **Sebastien Beard 2007** and **Simon Leblanc 2005** have also taught for Laurus.

Phil explains what gives Laurus an edge: “There are a lot of tutors out there, but they are mostly limited to strictly academic guidance. We add a mentoring component.”

The Laurus website is full of testimonials from satisfied clients. “Laurus Educational Services provides incredible qualified individuals that come to your home and specifically cater to your child’s academic

needs,” says one Baie D’Urfe parent.

“The business has grown enormously,” Phil says. He is now running his tutoring programs in Ottawa and hopes to expand into Toronto. “If Laurus continues as it is, it can grow beyond tutoring.”

“My ambition is to stay involved in teaching,” he says, “partly because of what it teaches the teacher.” ■

Geoff MOORE

(continued from page 1)

objectives with regard to social issues, which makes it double-bottom-line. If you also want to add environmental impact, it becomes triple-bottom-line.”

In the House: JP Morgan says that this segment of the market offers the potential over the next 10 years for investments of \$400B to \$1 trillion, with profit of \$183B to \$667B.

Geoff Moore: I think they’re being conservative; much greater potential exists.

In the House: there are millions of people out there who say we should not invest in alleviating climate change. What do you do when you’re faced with that sort of denial?

Geoff Moore: We’re not looking for unanimity. There will always be deniers, there will always be people who are focused on other things. But investing is all about risk management, and we also have a fiduciary duty to our children and the planet.

In the House: It’s a simple idea, but so atypical. Rather than invest in some mega-corporation,

you’re telling people to look into financing small projects that contribute to improving the world socially and environmentally.

Geoff Moore: Top economists around the world agree that innovation and entrepreneurship through small- and medium-sized enterprises is hugely important for economic growth. This is where new jobs will come from, and the big winners will become the IBMs of the future. But you need to support entrepreneurs and innovation, and impact investing can play a major role.

There are many institutional-grade, world-class investment opportunities that are extremely competitive purely from a financial perspective. Then you also get the benefits of addressing specific social and/or environmental issues.

No matter how wealthy or how poor you are, we are all, ultimately triple-bottom-line people, affected not only by the economy, but by social issues and the environment.

Why not target things you care about while you are making money? ■