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**By John Lyons**

**Winnipeg-born superspy *Sir William Stephenson C.C.*  
gets tribute at the CIA home in Langley, Virginia, U.S.A.**



**The maquette of Sir William Stephenson C.C.  
displayed in a place of honour within CIA Headquarters, Langley, VA, USA**



**The maquette of Sir William unveiled in CIA Headquarters by Colonel Gary Solar and Executive Director David Carey.**

**A statue of a Winnipeg-born superspy will soon be on display at the home of the world's most famous spy agency, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency.**

**Winnipeg members of the Intrepid Society were at CIA headquarters near Washington, D.C. this week to present a statue of their hero, Sir William Stephenson, to CIA executive director David Carey.**

**The Intrepid Society is a fan club for the late Stephenson, who was a top British spy in the Second World War and was involved in the formation of a forerunner to the CIA.**

**"If it hadn't been for his activities prior to and including World War II, there might not be a CIA," CIA spokeswoman Anya Guilsher said yesterday.**

**"He realized early on that Americans needed a strong intelligence organization, and lobbied President Roosevelt to appoint a U.S. co-ordinator to oversee intelligence."**

**The statue, which stands under one metre tall and about half the size of one in Winnipeg, will soon be on display in one of the entrances to the agency's headquarters in Langley, Va., Guilsher said.**

**Dr. Colin Briggs, a University of Manitoba pharmacy professor and member of the Intrepid Society, was one of four Winnipeggers to present the maquette, a miniature statue used by a sculptor.**

**"They seemed to make us very welcome, and appreciated the maquette," Briggs said.**

**The bronze maquette was cast by Leo Mol. It is in the image of the Stephenson statue Princess Anne unveiled last summer at York Avenue and Memorial Boulevard.**

**Stephenson has long been known as A Man Called Intrepid, the title of a 1977 biography.**

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### **Biographical Notes on Sir William Stephenson**

**delivered on the occasion of the presentation of a statuette to the CIA by the Intrepid Society**

**Colin J. Briggs  
2 May 2000**

**On behalf of my Canadian colleagues and particularly the members of the Intrepid Society, I would like to thank the Central Intelligence Agency for inviting us to your headquarters to make the presentation of a bronze statuette of Sir William Stephenson. The work is by Leo Mol, a prominent sculptor who now lives in Winnipeg, Manitoba. I appreciate this opportunity to say a few words about Sir William who was much involved in the formation of the OSS, forerunner of the Central Intelligence Agency. Many of you know about the Office of Strategic Services and its establishment by Bill Donovan. Its evolution into what is now the CIA is well documented. Consequently, I will focus on William Stephenson's background, life and career.**

**William Samuel Stephenson is probably best known as "Intrepid", the man appointed by Winston Churchill to coordinate counter-espionage in the Western hemisphere at the start of World War II. He was born just before the end of the nineteenth century in Winnipeg, Manitoba, on the Canadian prairies, and was adopted at an early age. At the turn of the century, Winnipeg was growing rapidly. As a progressive city which was the centre for trade to the west and north, it was known as Chicago North.**

**As a teenager, Stephenson excelled in mathematics and projects requiring manual dexterity. He was fascinated by radio and built his own receiver and transmitter. He was particularly enthusiastic about Morse code and the Morse**

telegraph. William also was a keen, competent athlete who won awards for boxing.

In 1914, William Stephenson enlisted as a private in the 101<sup>st</sup> Regiment, Royal Canadian Engineers, probably when under age. He was sent to France and earned a commission in the field at the age of 19. After being gassed, he learned to fly while recuperating in England, and transferred to the Royal Flying Corps. Stephenson was posted back to France, achieving an outstanding record as an ace with many victories over enemy pilots. After being shot down accidentally by a French plane, he was taken prisoner, only to escape and return to his squadron in October, 1918. His exploits earned him the Military Cross, Distinguished Flying Cross, the Legion of Honour and the Croix de Guerre with Palms.

After the war, Stephenson studied radio communication in England. He returned to Winnipeg for a couple of years, during which time he taught at the University of Manitoba. William went back to Britain to pursue his objective of a career in communications. He invented a process which enabled photographs to be transmitted electronically, and in 1922 the Daily Mail published the world's first wire photo. Stephenson then purchased the General Radio Company and proceeded to manufacture popular, low cost radios. Patents and commercial success made him a millionaire before he was thirty.

As William Stephenson's wealth grew, he diversified into film, television and the aircraft industry. Later in the 1930's he was trading on a global basis in a range of industrial activities including coal mining, oil refining, steel fabrication and other important primary industries. It was important for him to keep an eye on world events. As early as 1933 he expressed his growing concerns about Germany. For the next few years Stephenson supplied Winston Churchill with information on Nazi war preparations, obtained through his international corporate network. Churchill used this material to ask questions in the House of Commons.

When Churchill became Prime Minister in 1940, one of his first moves was to appoint William Stephenson as head of British Security Coordination (BSC) in New York, liaising directly with President Roosevelt. During this period, Stephenson was instrumental in promoting and helping to establish a new American intelligence service (OSS) under General Bill Donovan. This later developed into the CIA. Stephenson had first met Donovan in 1916 when providing information on German front line combat forces along with other details of the battle zones during the First World War. People in this room know much more about the Donovan/ Stephenson professional relationships, but their

friendship was very strong, and contributed to the success of both the OSS and BSC.

Stephenson played an important role in counter-espionage, especially in the training of Allied agents, in breaking codes, in monitoring messages and in initiating subterfuge against Axis countries. He received recognition from many countries for his contributions to the Allied cause. He was knighted by King George VI and was awarded the Presidential Medal by President Truman.

In 1946 Stephenson moved to Jamaica and semi-retirement. He co-founded the British-American-Canadian Corporation, a trading company heavily involved in rehabilitation and redevelopment in countries which had suffered during the war. He continued his successful international business career and later, after a long and extraordinarily full life as a war hero, businessman, entrepreneur and intelligence coordinator, Sir William retired to Bermuda where he died in 1989.

The long-time links with “Wild Bill” Donovan and the influence of Sir William Stephenson during the establishment of the OSS are the reasons why we are here today. We are pleased to be able to present this maquette to the CIA on behalf of the Intrepid Society.



**David W. Carey, Executive Director, CIA,  
recognizing Sir William's contributions and achievements.**



**In attendance - (l to r) Dr. Colin Briggs, Captain Mike Rozak, John Makie, David W. Carey, Colonel Gary Solar.**



**Executive Director David Carey thanking Colonel Gary Solar for the Intrepid Society's gift of the maquette of Sir William.**