



ANNIVERSARY: Bartlet and Richardes law firm partner Stephen Jovanovic stands in his Windsor office

Star photo: Tyler Brownbridge

City law firm marks 120 years of service

By **DAVE HALL**
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Established more than a decade before the Ford Motor Company, its oldest client, Windsor law firm Bartlet and Richardes is celebrating 120 years of defending and advocating for clients.

Lawyers for the firm, which opened in 1887, incorporated Ford in 1904 and it still represents the automaker in industrial safety and labour issues.

"We'd like to think that our longevity can be attributed to our good stable of clients, the work we have done for them and the fact that over time, we have established a reputation of integrity and credibility with both our clients and our opponents," said managing partner Stephen Jovanovic.

"And there is no price you can put on the integrity of your lawyers," he added. "I think we've established ourselves as people whose word you could rely on. You may not like what we have to say but you can rely on it."

Not only have the majority of the

firm's partners been on board for more than 20 years, Bartlet and Richardes can also boast of having four former partners named to the bench — John Aylesworth, George Urquhart, Arthur Jessop and Richard Gates.

"Outside of the largest law firms in Toronto, I can't imagine any other firm having four partners named judges," said Jovanovic, who joined Bartlet and Richardes in 1977 after articling there.

Low profile

While it wasn't a conscious decision, the firm has largely maintained a low profile, befitting its specialization in corporate, commercial, labour, family and municipal law, he said.

"What we do doesn't always attract the publicity, but that's largely how our clients like it.

"We handle what I would call quasi-criminal matters, such as occupational and safety act changes, but the high-profile criminal matters we leave to the many excellent criminal lawyers in this city," Jovanovic said.

"As for publicity, I believe that the re-

ward for doing good work is getting more work."

In addition to Ford, the firm has also acted on behalf of Hiram Walker and St. Clair College.

The firm started out as Bartlet and Bartlet on Dec. 1, 1887, established by Noble and Alex Bartlet, and has undergone a number of name changes over the years before finally becoming Bartlet and Richardes in the early 1970s.

Jim Bartlet, the final family connection to the firm's name, died in 2005.

There are currently 14 lawyers, one office manager and 17 support staff at the firm.

"We have a very collegial group of lawyers who work well together. There are no rivalries and they provide advice to each other without question," Jovanovic said.

Several, including Jovanovic, Gerald Trottier, Joan Marentette, Larry McRae and Gates have volunteered on various community boards.

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