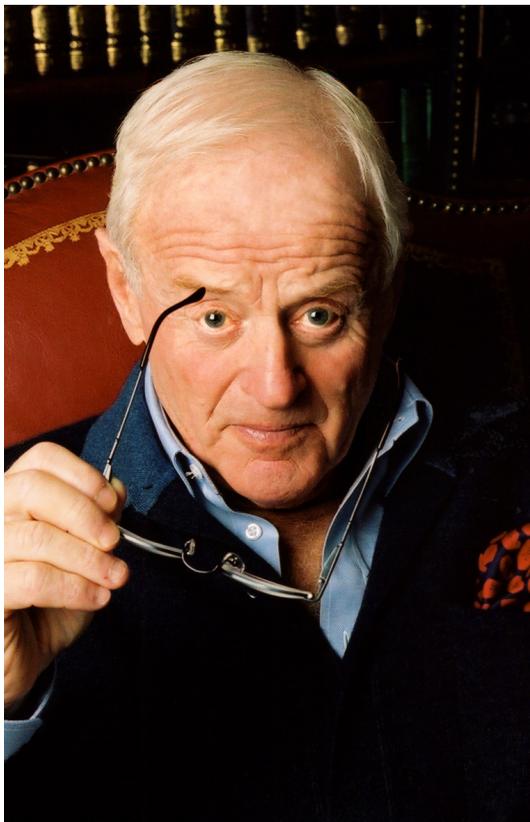


In his OWN words

On September 19, 2017, just short of his 90th birthday, Peter Munk made history when he and his wife, Melanie, added to their transformational giving with a new \$100-million gift to the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre. It was the largest gift to a single Canadian hospital in the nation's history – a gift that will forever change the future of cardiovascular care in this country and around the world

Mr. Munk addressed the crowd at Toronto General Hospital to a standing ovation that day with his usual passion, sense of purpose and complete command of the audience. He talked about arriving in Canada as a refugee after the Second World War, the warm welcome he and his family received in this country, and why giving back was for him an attempt to repay his enormous debt to the nation. Here are some condensed and edited excerpts from his speech, giving us insight into why he chose to give, and give so much:



“You know, in life, few people are given real privileges. The ability to give, the ability to donate is truly a rare privilege.

When you thank me for what I've done for Toronto, when you thank me for what I can do for this community, it doesn't begin to express my immense gratitude for what this country has done for me and my family.

My first job was in southern Ontario on a tobacco farm, then as an engineer for Toronto Hydro – and at every job I worked with labourers who invited me to their homes... and would say, 'Make yourself at home, go to the fridge, eat what you wish.' Go to the fridge?! This after coming from a country where you had to save up a month to get a meal! Where people were dying on the streets for food! This was paradise delivered. From then on, in every step in my career – which has been long, boring and full of failures and successes – I felt that enormous desire to become more Canadian, to do more for Canada. The further I went, the more passionate I became.

If you are in the position to give away money, you've got the opportunity to give for education and for arts and for religion and for a million causes, from foreign aid to having more beautiful libraries, and they are all important. But does anything compare to human need? To the human quest for health?

If you want to pick one centre of excellence that can make Toronto and therefore Canada stand out in the world and prove we are number one, there is nothing better than [this] hospital. It's down the street from where I was educated, my grandfather was looked after and passed away here, and the Toronto General Hospital's origins make it an outstanding institution.... The satisfaction you get from being able to contribute to the excellence of health care is immense.

Let me tell you, this was a hell of a trip. When you are reaching 90, you can be allowed the luxury of leaning back a bit and starting to dream. My dream was always about trying to repay Canada.

The world needs more Canada, not less. And if my contribution to the Cardiac Centre, together with all of your contributions, helps achieve that by creating one more building block, one more testament to the world that Canada is indeed a country to follow, I've achieved my dream. And for that, I thank all of you, every one of you in this room. I don't care whether you clean the floor, or whether you're chairman of the bank or whether you run the biggest law firm. We are all together in this because it's the future of our country that will determine the future of your children's children. So thank you.”