



**Donald W. Baird, 1926 – 2008, OLS
723**

Submitted by his family

Donald Baird was born in Toronto in 1926. The son of Jean Leuty and Major Wilmot J. Baird (P.Eng, OLS), Don grew up with his sister Aileen in Toronto. After two years at the University of Toronto and many summers working for Baird and Mucklestone Surveyors, Don went on to article under Harold Howden at the Department of Highways and was commissioned as an Ontario Land Surveyor (#723) in 1949.

In 1950, Don's sister Aileen introduced him to a fellow TGH nursing student Joan Bradley, from Leamington Ontario. Don and Joan were married in 1953. Don's 30-year career with the Right of Ways Division of the Department of Highways took him and Joan and their growing family from Toronto to Kingston to North Bay to London, Ontario. Their last move settled them in St. Catharines where Don was Land Registrar for Niagara North.

Upon retirement, Don worked as a consultant, specializing in historical property reports for both the Federal and Provincial Governments.

Don and Joan's love of the North Bay area resulted in them buying a cottage on Callander Bay where they vacationed many summers, frequently welcoming friends to join them for a few days cottaging at the end of a bumpy farm lane with only propane for power, the nearest neighbour a mile away, and enjoying breathtaking sunsets.

Don's community spirit travelled with him with every DHO transfer. He was an active member of the Kiwanis Club in Kingston and North Bay, and the Rotary Club in London and St. Catharines, where he was a proud recipient of the Paul Harris Award. His involvement with the Rotary Youth Exchange program extended to billeting a number of exchange students over the years. He belonged to the Lamplighters Investment Club, and was a lifetime member of the Probus Club of St. Catharines. He volunteered with the St. Catharines Library Board, the YMCA, as a driver with the Red Cross, and on many committees of his church.

Don and Joan were both avid curlers and skiers. In fact, Don taught downhill skiing at the North Bay Ski Club, and skiing was a family affair for the Bairds – joining with other families for ski trips throughout Ontario and Quebec. For 25 years, Don and Joan belonged to the Hollyburn Hiking Club, hiking and skiing with a group of very dear friends. When Don turned 75, he determined there were two things he'd be safer *not* doing any more: skiing and climbing ladders. In spite

of that declaration, he couldn't resist another day or two of spring skiing the following year.

There are interesting people in this world, and there are people who are simply interested in everything. Don was both. He had many hobbies, many interests. He turned his love of Canadian History, reading and books into rare book collecting and eventually into a business (buying and selling rare Canadian Antiquarian books over the Internet). His love of boats went beyond boating, to include boat building – a canoe, a sailboat and a power boat. He loved dogs, peanut butter, chocolate sundaes, puttering around the cottage. He liked to work with his hands, building additions, decks, wood-working, and took up wood carving in retirement. Culture was a big part of Don's life; he and Joan were regulars at the local symphony, theatre, and art galleries. He loved music, his eclectic taste ranging from the Four Tenors, the Canadian Brass, to Stompin Tom Connors.

Don had a quiet presence, his patience was legendary, his kindness felt by all.

His circle was far and wide – as husband, father, grandfather, uncle, brother, brother-in-law, friend – and those of us in it, know that we are the better for having been enveloped in his embrace.

Don died suddenly on March 18 2008 in St. Catharines ON, leaving behind Joan, his wife of 55 years, daughters Jane and Patricia, sons Cameron and David, 6 grandsons and his sister Aileen.