
Bruce Jack Bell, O.L.S.
June 14, 1933 - January 4, 2004
By Ken and Pat Bell

Bruce was born in Swift Current Saskatchewan, and as a young man worked at various jobs in the west, most notably on the infamous oilrigs. The hardships of this labour became legendary in the Bell household whenever he attempted to extol the virtues of honest work upon his sons Ken and Pat.



He immigrated to Ontario in the 1950's and began his career in surveying with the DHO in what is now Thunder Bay. He articulated to Harold Howden in 1956 and received his commission in 1960.

While in Thunder Bay, he met Gloria Britt and they were married there in 1960. In 1963 he was transferred south, and moved to Richmond Hill, but shortly thereafter felt the lure of the north and in 1964 opened a practice in Dryden. In 1968 Bruce rejoined the DHO, working out of the Downsview office, and relocated to Burlington.

In 1973 he was again transferred, this time to London where he remained with the now MTO until his retirement in 1990. Gloria passed away shortly thereafter, and Bruce remained in London until his passing earlier this year. "Logical and pragmatic" would best define the underlying strategies Bruce utilized in his role as a surveyor. He challenged his subordinates to not only identify problems, but to also provide solutions, the pros and cons of which he would then discuss. "What do you think I should do" was not an acceptable question to ask. Within the profession, those who he mentored and gave freely of his time will remember him most.

Bruce had a great, if not biting, sense of humour that he used to affect both in his personal and professional lives. He was an avid traveller, who toured through most of Europe, parts of Asia, North Africa and the South Pacific, often using unique modes of transportation such as cargo ships, mail boats, camels and elephants to get around. Summers would regularly find him on the golf course, winters on the cross-country ski trails and year round as a volunteer driver for the cancer clinic in London.

Over the years he remained in contact with many of his "Highway" peers, and a February sojourn to Toronto became an annual event. The days would be spent at the Auto Show and in some of the city's renowned cultural establishments. Evenings would be reserved for reminiscing, often over a fine single malt.

Bruce is survived by his sons Ken and Pat, Ken's wife Cheryl, dear and very special friend Mona Durfy, daughter-in-law Lynda Bell, grandchildren Christa and husband Greg Veitch, Jeremy German, Courtney, Amanda and Mathew Bell and great-grandson Benjamin Veitch.
