

ROBERT (BOB) LEANDER SHOEMAKER
1923-2008
OLS#716

By Nancy Shoemaker



Bob was a partner in Black, Shoemaker Robinson & Donaldson Limited, a local land surveying and land use planning company in the City of Guelph for over 50 years. He retired in 2003 at the age of 80. He is remembered by his peers, friends and family for his positive attitude, practical approach to problem solving, meticulous work ethic and endless sense of humour.

Born in Scotland Ontario, he spent his early years in the Elmira area and his high school years in Chesley. After the war, Bob decided on a career in land surveying and completed his articles with E.P. Bowman. He was commissioned as an Ontario Land Surveyor in 1950 at which time the partnership of Bowman, Black and Shoemaker was established in the City of Guelph. In later years the partnership changed to Black, Shoemaker and Robinson and finally to Black, Shoemaker, Robinson & Donaldson Limited. Bob was a fortunate man as he loved his work, cherished his business partners and treated his clients and associates as friends. Although land surveying was the focus of the business, Bob was soon spending a significant amount of his time on planning matters ranging from consents and plans of subdivisions to zone changes and Official Plan amendments. His daughter Nancy joined his business in 1989 to expand the planning focus of the company.

Bob married his high school sweetheart Ruth in 1948 and in 1950 welcomed a son (Bob) into the family, followed by a daughter (Nancy) in 1952. He had high expectations for himself and because he cared, he had high expectations of his family. While an encouraging, loving and forgiving father, he was also a strict parent, a man of few words and a perfectionist. As grandchildren and great grandchildren came along, he delighted in the regeneration of the family.

To his friends, he was a kind and generous man. He enjoyed their company and shared many evenings of dining and entertainment. They can attest to his endless capacity for humour and practical jokes.

Bob's hobbies included golf and curling, wood working and clock making. His passion was travelling and Christmas. With his planning focus, endless hours were spent in preparation for Christmas and the city block was glowing when the outdoor light display was plugged-in on December 1st. In the early years, vacations consisted of car travels throughout Canada and United States – never missing an opportunity to view alternative subdivision designs. Later the focus became international and Bob would spend endless hours planning his journeys, followed by an equal number of hours compiling photographs, composing stories, as well as map drawing and illustrations for his travel journals. Summers were generally spent at the cottage in Southampton.

Throughout his working years, Bob was a member of the Guelph Chamber of Commerce, Guelph Planning Committee, Guelph Curling Club, Norfolk Street United Church, Wellington Men's Club and Probus.

Bob passed away peacefully on April 14th, 2008 in his home surrounded by family. His precious and happy spirit will be forever missed.