

Joyce, Gerald

Quinte Personalities

By Jack Evans
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Career has touched city life

One city resident who can relate to the buzz phrase: "been there, done that," is Gerald (Gerry) Joyce.

Still involved in the realty, insurance and development business after many years, Joyce's colourful career has touched almost every aspect of city life.

As the Second World War drew to a close, Joyce was a 15-year-old near-graduation student in his home town of Napanee. Offered a job with General Electric in Peterborough, his principal pledged that his marks would allow him full graduation. From General Electric, he joined Raybestos of Canada.

"Those were the only real jobs I ever had," Joyce quipped in reflection.

He then seized the chance to join the late Ted Saunders Belleville real estate and insurance firm. After learning the ropes, he launched his own company in 1956.

Over the years he worked with major developers like Jack Parrott and Maurice Rollins, and his firm sold most of the new houses built in that era in Belleville and area.

In trade organizations, he served as president of the former Belleville Real Estate Board and later for the new Quinte and District Real Estate Board, also two years as vice-president of the provincial real estate association. He was made a life member of the Quinte board 10 years ago.

Public office beckoned in the 1960s and 1970s. He served for some years on the former city public school board and was elected to council for two terms.

He recalls that he inaugurated a move to have council provide services for both the East and West Industrial Parks, which later led to several new industries in the ensuing years. He was chairman of the former industrial commission while on council.

Then came several years of service on the Belleville General Hospital Board and he was charter president of the hospital's foundation.

Active in various offices in the local Progressive Conservative Party for many years, he served as returning officer for four provincial elections for Quinte and served as campaign manager for both provincial and federal Conservative candidates over the years.

He's been a long-time member of The Belleville Club which he enjoys, is one of the longest-serving members of the Sales and Ad Club and is a long-time member and past president of the Quinte Home Builders Association.

In recent years, his firm merged with the McDougall Insurance company, where Gerry still maintains semi-retirement hours.



Photo by Crombie McNeil

He still shares some responsibilities in Annie MacLaughlin Design at 236 Coleman St. and is landlord, through three corporations, for 76 tenants from Madoc to Picton.

At age 70, Gerry continues to enjoy travel. In fact, he said: "I like to count only those birthdays I celebrated in Canada, so I'm only 27."

Despite travel, he insists Belleville is the finest city in the world to live and raise children.

Joyce says he and Cathy continue to enjoy a huge garden, three dogs, many birds, and riding "the best-trained Arabian gelding in Eastern Canada."

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