

A-Dunlop Family (07-02) P.1



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'Mr. Cobourg' dead at age 92

They held funeral services this afternoon for "Mr. Cobourg." J. Gordon Dunlop, OBE, was so named in recognition of his many community efforts. He died Friday, October 22, 1982 at Cobourg and District General Hospital. He was 92.

A youthful athlete of professional calibre who rowed in the Henley, and who was once asked to play professional hockey for the New York Americans, Mr. Dunlop had a long lifetime of excellent health, with only brief hospital stays in recent years. He continued to drive his own car until he was 91, and last weekend attended the funeral of a Cobourg friend. His only real mark of aging was some failing of his hearing. Early last week, he entered hospital, but continued to tell stories and jokes almost until his death.

"He never lost his sense of humor," Mrs. Dunlop said on the weekend, "He had everybody laughing until the last."

Mr. Dunlop is survived by his wife, the former Doris Ann Foote, their son, Major John Dunlop, National Defence Headquarters, Ottawa, and four grandchildren. He was predeceased by two sisters and one brother; Gladys and Howard Dunlop and Mrs. Harma Willett.

The service was taken by Rev. Melville Butters at Trinity United Church. Philip Schaus was organist.

OTTAWA BURIAL

Burial will be Tuesday at the Dunlop family plot in Beechwood Cemetery, Ottawa, with his parents and other family members.

Mr. Dunlop was a top executive with Imperial Oil Limited before retiring to Cobourg in 1950 when he was 59 years old. On arriving in Cobourg, he pitched into local activities and was in the forefront of a dozen community projects over the years.



J. GORDON DUNLOP, OBE

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When he was 81, he we

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"Get Gordon Dunlop to help," was the first good idea many a local Cobourg project had. He was an organizer without peer, a smiling fund-raiser, a happy and good humored man. His most recent community role was a critical one as president and then president emeritus of the Society for the Restoration of Victoria Hall. He and his wife moved to Ottawa from Cobourg in 1970, but he found himself bored in the big city, and they moved back to Cobourg in late summer 1972, just in time for both of them to become deeply involved as directors of the restoration society.

The late Donald Philp was the society's first president, and his health failed and Mr. Dunlop headed the project through several early years.

FROM AYRSHIRE

Gordon Dunlop's ancestors came from Ayrshire, Scotland. He could recite an unpublished rhyme which was handed down through the generations and which Rabbie Burns had told to one of the family as he ploughed a field nearby. He was related to Mrs. Frances Dunlop of Dunlop, the woman who did so much to encourage the poet, and served as a sort of mother-confessor to him in his difficult times. Gordon's great-grandfather, James, was born in Scotland in 1810 and came to Canada in 1833, settling in a Scots settlement four miles from Perth in what became Lanark county. His grandfather, John Richardson Dunlop, was born at White Lake in Lanark in 1841. His father, James Richardson Dunlop, was three when the family moved easterly to Gloucester township in Carleton county. They took up land on the east bank of the Rideau River about nine miles from what is now Parliament Hill in Ottawa, and just north of present-day Manotick and Long Island. The old homestead is still owned by a family member.

John Gordon Dunlop was born in Ottawa where his father had moved as an early employee of the new Imperial Oil Limited. His mother was Harriet H. de of Ottawa. His father used to deliver oil throughout the capital with a well known team of grey horses, and Gordon, as a boy, used to ride along with his father on a seat on top of the tank. When summer

came, young Gordon went back to his grandfather's farm and helped with the harvest.

WORK AT 13

In 1904 - when he was only thirteen, and intending to go on to school - his father said the time had come to go to work and Gordon Dunlop became an office boy for Imperial Oil in Ottawa.

The bright young lad was not an office boy for long. He stepped up quickly, and by 1920, he was the company's agent for the entire city of Ottawa.

The motor car was coming into its own after the First World War, and Gordon Dunlop's responsibilities grew rapidly. He became manager for the Ottawa district for Imperial, then in 1936 went to Toronto head office and soon was marketing manager for the Ontario region.

But before he left Ottawa, he had met Doris Ann Foote, an Edmonton native, in a badminton game at the Rideau Badminton Club. She was working for the Bank of Canada in Ottawa. In 1938, they were married in Toronto.

When war came in 1939, the Maritimes became critical for the oil business with the Canadian Navy based on Halifax. Gordon Dunlop was posted there as the company's marketing manager for the Maritimes.

AWARDED OBE

At Halifax, he plunged into community activities and wartime work. He was president of the Halifax Rotary Club, served with the Wartime Prices and Trade Board and was president of the Halifax YMCA. He also became president of the Maritime Division of the Navy League of Canada, and as such, was instrumental in providing hostels and entertainment and benefits for the thousands of Canadian and Allied sailors using the port. He was one of the founders of the "Wanderers' Club" which was close to the waterfront just below Citadel Hill.

His wartime work earned him the Order of the British Empire.

In 1948, he was transferred to Toronto by Imperial. Again, he was soon into community good works, with the Toronto Downtown Rotary Club, remaining active in the YMCA and joining the Ontario division of the Navy League.

But Mrs. Dunlop was watching

some of his friends die young from heart attacks and strokes before they reached retirement, and in December, 1950, when he was only 59, she convinced her husband to retire.

Why did they come to Cobourg?

Mrs. Dunlop answered the question.

"When Gordon decided to retire, we looked all around Toronto, places like Caledon and King. We wanted a little property and a good sized house.

"A realtor asked us if we had ever passed through Cobourg - we had, en route from Toronto to Ottawa - and he showed us a picture of Brook House.

"The next time we went through Cobourg we looked it up, and bought it immediately," Mrs. Dunlop said.

(Brook House is an original farmhouse, with additions, on five acres of land on Brook Rd. South. It was built by Caddy, the early Cobourg surveyor who planned most of the town. It is now owned by Harold Agar. The Dunlops bought it from a Mrs. Stearns of Chicago, a member of the Osler family, who lived here in the summers. In 1966, they sold it to Dr. Ian Wilson, who sold it to the Agars in 1970).

"Everyone who ever owned that old house, loved it," Mrs. Dunlop recalled.

"We lost five great trees from the front of it in Hurricane Hazel. But also, we planted 4,000 trees to the south," she said.

COMMUNITY WORK

The Dunlops were soon into everything in Cobourg.

In 1952, Gordon and two partners, Dr. A.R. Richards and Jim Stuart, bought the Abbott property, sold off the old Abbott house (now Sidbrook Hospital) and developed a subdivision of 64 lots along Abbott Blvd. from there to the lakefront. Cobourg was looking ahead to a boom with the arrival of the army depot then under construction. Reg Gardiner was developing a subdivision to the east along Coverdale Ave. and Lakeshore Rd. A few years later, Gordon and Jim Stuart were partners in buying Meadowvale subdivision further to the east which they later sold out to another developer.

Gordon Dunlop's community work in Cobourg was endless: board of governors of Sir Sandford

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leming College, Arthritis Society, Rotary Club, board member and campaign chairman for Cobourg General Hospital, Masonic Order, one of the founders of the United Way, Victoria Hall, an elder of Trinity United Church, board member of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, and a solid supporter of his wife's interests as founder of the Cobourg Opera and Drama Guild.

A major project in 1952 was a renovation of the Great Hall (then called the Victoria Opera House) in Victoria Hall, and Mrs. Dunlop played a key role in the project and in the opening performance. Gordon made his one and only stage entrance at that time, as the astrologer in "Le Coq d'Or".

"But he always helped me," Mrs. Dunlop recalled of the many musical and dramatic events she organized, "He was usually one of the stagehands."

Mrs. Dunlop was an accomplished contralto singer. During the war years, she broadcast "Songs at Eventide" on radio across Canada and to Europe. She sang for the U.S.O. in New York, and did a Town Hall show from that city. She had studied singing for eight years. When she came to Cobourg, she was instrumental in forming the Opera and Drama Guild (with Mrs. Lenah Fisher, Mrs. Dolly Rolph, Mrs. Margery Pewtress, Miss Kate Warner, Mrs. Jane Allen and Mrs. Lillian Richards Philp - known as the "Silver Seven.") She also gave two recitals in Bermuda in those early years.

Mrs. Dunlop was a leading force in developing the White Rose series, sponsored by the Opera and Drama Guild.

In the 1960s, Gordon was one of two members of a commission that went across Canada to study the YMCA and YWCA. The commission's findings led to the amalgamation to the two bodies.

He was also a longtime governor and chairman of the board of Lakefield College School.

But by 1970, Gordon Dunlop thought it was about time for him to decide to start to begin to think about growing old -- he was then 81 -- and they decided to move to Ottawa where their son was with the armed forces and they could be close to their grandchildren. But Gordon was soon bored to tears.



TYPICAL POSE - J. Gordon Dunlop, who died on Friday, is seen here in a typical pose - collecting a cheque for a good cause. This photo, taken in 1973, shows him with Ontario Premier William Davis when the province came through at a critical time to help in the early stages with the restoration of Victoria Hall.

He was so bored in Ottawa, that one day he went down to the tax office and offered his services to check tax returns. "They said they would be glad to use him, and what was his age. His chance disappeared when he answered that he was 81," his son John recalled.

"He couldn't stand being bored," his wife remembered.

And two years later they were back in Cobourg and he was into everything again. The Cobourg Star story at the time said that "Mr. Cobourg is back."

BACK TO COBOURG

It was the late Daintry Fitzhugh who lured the Dunlops back to Cobourg. He asked them to rent the Fitzhugh's East House on the lakefront. (Later it was demolished by fire). In recent years, the Dunlops have lived on King St. East, a few blocks from downtown.

Among Mr. Dunlop's many awards along with the OBE, is being named a Paul Harris Fellow in honor of the founder of Rotary International, a 50-year pin as a Mason, a 60 years of service award from the YMCA, a service award from the Navy League of Canada and the Sir Sandford Fleming College fellowship in applied education for 1978.

And one of his treasured mementoes of his youthful athletic activities - an oarsman's award from the Ottawa Rowing Club.

"He used to like to recall that he had once rowed against Jack Kelly, Princess Grace's father -- but I think Kelly won," Mrs. Dunlop smiled.

The motto from the Rotary Club is still on his desk. It reads "Service above Self," and he lived it to his dying day.

Funeral arrangements were by the MacCoubrey Funeral Home.