Acton's Citizen of the Year dead at 82

Longtime newspaperman and current Acton Citizen of the Year Hartley Coles died Saturday after a long battle with cancer. He was 82.

Coles spent close to 70 years in the newspaper business and last June was presented with the highly revered Golden Quill Award by the Ontario Community Newspaper Association.

When Coles was honoured as the 2009 Acton Citizen of the Year last April, he described himself as a true 'Halton Hills boy' as he was born in Acton, then later moved to Georgetown, where he attended public school before returning to Acton, where he completed his high school education.

HARTLEY COLES

In 1943 the Dills family offered him a job at *The Acton Free Press*.

While working in the press room, not only did he play local sports, he also enjoyed attending those events, and wrote sports stories for the newspaper. That experience would pave the way for him to cross the line from production to editorial, when he was named as editor of The Acton Free Press in 1967.

In 1973, when The Georgetown Herald was purchased by Thomson Newspapers, the Dills family decided there needed to be a locally-owned newspaper in Georgetown, and Coles was named editor of *The Georgetown Independent*, overseeing both papers for some time.

He remained at The Independent and Free Press until his retirement in 1991.

In 1998, Coles was approached to start up The New Tanner in Acton, worked as its editor since that time— only recently retiring.

In spite of the fact his job has been demanding at times, Coles still found time to be a good citizen, volunteering with various groups.

Coles is survived by his wife Irma (neé Kentner) of more than 58 years, daughter Marianne Creary and her husband Bob Johnston of Georgetown and son Tim Coles and his wife Cathy of Acton. He was the grandfather of four and great-grandfather of one.

Coles's family will receive friends at the MacKinnon Family Funeral Home, "Shoemaker Chapel", 55 Mill Street East, Acton today (Tuesday), 2-4 p.m. and 7-9 p.m. Prayer vigil at 9 p.m.

Funeral service will be held at St. Joseph Catholic Church, 64 Church S. E., Acton on Wednesday at 11 a.m., followed by interment at Fairview Cemetery.

Remembrances to the Acton Branch of the Canadian Cancer Society would be appreciated by the family. Online condolences and donations may be made at www.mackinnonfamilyfuneralhome.com.

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