

Life stories

A celebration of lives well lived and people well loved
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Bob Gregory loved fishing, being 'tour guide'

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Bob Gregory was his daughter's Toronto tour guide.

As an electrician, he worked on some of the skyscrapers that now define the city's landscape. He also helped construct the Toronto subway system and several buildings across the city.

So, whenever he went downtown in his later years, Bob offered free 'tours' to whichever family member sat alongside in the vehicle.

"It was almost a joke but you could never take a ride around Toronto without hearing a history lesson," daughter Sheila Gregory said. "The '50s and '60s were a huge period of growth in Toronto ... he worked in a lot of the office towers. He used to say he wasn't 'book smart'. But he had an aptitude for manual labour."

Bob was known as a master builder and craftsman who was generous with his time and frequently helped neighbours. He loved woodworking, carving, painting, gardening, cooking, the outdoors and travel.

He grew up during the Great Depression and learned to make possessions last. It's why he could be found repairing a plastic recycling bin with nails and a spare piece of plywood, rather than replacing it.

People of his generation always kept busy, Sheila said.

"He was raised to make things for himself; they did not waste anything ... everything had its use. They would plant vegetables in the

garden every May 24 because they needed food. They were always doing things; that's where he got his fun-loving spirit and work ethic from. He could do anything with his hands. He was very honest and always wanting to contribute something."

However, family was always his first passion.

"The best thing about his life, for him, was the contact he had with his family," Sheila said, noting Bob frequented family cottages in Bobcaygeon and Lake Kasshabog.

"There was a lot of good family history going to cottages and learning to swim, boat and fish."

During the Second World War, Bob joined the Canadian Army but never served overseas.

In 2004, he moved to Newmarket with Sheila and began volunteering at Community and Home Assistance to Seniors (CHATS) and playing cards at the Seniors' Meeting Place.

"He was very fun loving," she said. "You could see from (early) pictures he was doing things like begin dressed in costumes or sticking his tongue out. There was always a gag or some fun going on."

Bob died at Southlake Village in Newmarket on March 10, 2011.

He was 84.



Bob Gregory loved to be personal tour guide to family when they visited Toronto, where he helped build many skyscrapers.

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"Adored by children, universally respected and an inspiration to her peers, Mrs. McCluskey was a tireless volunteer, quick to deflect the praise heaped on her."

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