

Robert Allan Shackleton

AUGUST 2, 2013

At Purdy Pavilion, UBC, on August 2, 2013, aged 90. Born at home to his parents Hilda and Percy on West 14th Avenue in Vancouver only blocks from the current family home - a home he loved and lived in for more than forty-five years - Robert was a husband, father, grandfather, competitor, patriarch, businessman-entrepreneur, craftsman, raconteur, stand-up comic, song-and-dance man and the life of just about any party.



Robert attended Lord Tennyson Elementary School and Kitsilano High before his family moved to Bellevue Avenue in West Vancouver where he completed his final years of high school at West Van High and first met his wife to be. A natural athlete and uninhibited showman, he was active in sports as well as performance arts throughout his school years.

Intent on becoming a Spitfire pilot, he enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1942 at the age of 19 after completing his senior matriculation. Trained on Avro Anson and AT-6 Harvard aircraft he was commissioned a Pilot Officer on August 25th, 1944 and was dispatched to Halifax for deployment in the European theatre. With the fortunes war shifting in the Allies favor however, Robert was decommissioned into the reserves in December 1944.

After the war he studied architecture briefly at UBC through which he fostered a lifelong interest in home design and acquired fastidious drafting skills. Combined with an apprenticeship under Mr. Bermann, a close family friend who was a journeyman carpenter and master builder, Bob learned construction and home-building skills that he subsequently imparted to family and friends - he loved to build things.

Leona Alice Margaret Spencer caught Robert's eye in 1946 and though she initially took evasive action by securing a job in Ottawa that winter, Robert followed and succeeded in gaining her hand. They were married on June 27th, 1949 at St. Francis-In-the-Wood, Caulfeild Cove. Married life began very modestly with Robert having to report to work the following day and lodgings consisting of a rented basement room.

In the early 50's with the help of Leona's father, Robert and Leona purchased their first home in North Vancouver and started a family. Robert's building skills were put to good use there in both making the original modest dwelling more livable as well as in the design and construction of a new home on one of the three lots. The family moved to Vancouver in 1967 into the Tudor-style home that Robert loved and that hosted the many significant family events and gatherings that he so enjoyed. In 1968, a summer vacation to the then fledgling Whistler ski resort led to the purchase of lot near Alta Lake. Robert designed and together with family and friends built a year-round vacation home on the property that is enjoyed to this day.

Employed in the reinforcing steel business for the bulk of his working career, he ultimately establishing his own firm. Possessed of a terrific sense of humor and timing, he loved a good party and was often the go-to master of ceremonies for many company and family social events.

Retirement allowed time to pursue his hobbies, particularly woodworking and gardening but especially a passion for golf - the later serving as a medium to rekindle a bond with this brother Donald who predeceased him. He was always ready for a game of croquet or a hand of crib and loved a little single malt.

Robert is survived by his loving wife of 64 years Leona, their daughter Deborah, son Christopher with wife Paula and grandchildren Emaleah, Benjamin, and Daniel. Close were Brian Graham and his family, Bob's sister-in-law Florence Allardice and all the nieces, nephews, cousins and seven godchildren.

The family wishes to extend a heartfelt thank you to all of the staff at Purdy Pavilion who provided Robert with such exemplary professional and compassionate care during his time there.

Funeral services Thursday August 15th, 11:00am at St. Mary's Anglican Church, 2490 West 37th Avenue, Vancouver, BC.

You are invited to leave a personal message of condolence for the family.

Messages of Condolence

Leona, Chris, & Paula:

So sorry to read about the passing of Bob. He was a wonderful man. I remember the many stories and wisdom he passed on to me when I painted your house many summers ago. I'm sure he touched the lives of many others in a similar way.

With my deepest sympathy,

Brian Arndt

— **Brian Arndt**

Chris, Deb and Leona.. I have such fond memories of Bob.. always a smile and a twinkle in his eye. A life well lived. My thoughts are with you, sending my deepest condolences, much love Patsy

— **patsy**

Leona, Chris and Deb:

The obituary captured the essence of your wonderful Bob. He was that and so much more.

He was loved.

— **Mona Carlile**

i was fortunate enough to get to know Bob & Leona while delivering their mail, during that time many kindnesses were shown and the strength of their character demonstrated regularly. they were always quick with a smile, an appreciative audience for a joke, and on especially hot days they offered concern and a cold drink. to see them walking hand in hand through their neighbourhood talking to people as they passed by and enjoying each other's company was to get a glimpse of an enduring love story and a life enjoyed to the fullest. the poet Thomas Campbell wrote "To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die" and that was Bob, he'll be missed.

— **Mike Laing**



<https://www.myalternatives.ca/obituaries/shackleton-robert-allan>

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