

Thomas L. COWICK

Tom was born in 1921 in Bells Corners where the Queensway-Carleton Hospital now stands. The family moved to Britannia Heights where he attended Grant Consolidated School. "With three brothers and four sisters, there was no money for further schooling so at the age of 13 I joined the working class."



At nineteen, Tom "joined up". "One cold winter day, out of work, which meant no pay, a friend and I went into Ottawa to join the Army. At the end of the day he was in the Army. I was turned down; however all was not lost as the Air Force accepted me." His reporting date was February 5, 1941.

"For those who did not qualify for aircrew, there were various ground crew trades and for non-tradesmen, a classification of 'General Duty', better known as G.D.s. My first assignment as a G.D. was sweeping a hanger floor, my second was filling fire extinguishers which led to setting up a fire department and I soon became a fire fighter and I continued in that trade throughout my Air Force career."

Tom's wartime service was spent on the east coast of Canada and in (the Dominion of) Newfoundland. According to Tom, his service "would be considered very uneventful except for the odd building fire and aircraft crash". Although there was a war on, he notes that "It took a while to get used to making sure your rifle was on the fire truck when you reported to a fire call." Of course, service was not without its humorous moments. Tom recalls a day when "the man on duty watch answered the phone and advised the crew that there was a fire in the Fire Hall... then realizing what he had said, responded by saying 'it must be the Mess Hall'. After considerable checking, we found out there was a small fire behind the Drill Hall."

In 1945, Tom was posted to Montreal where he met Helen who was also in the RCAF (Royal Canadian Air Force) and who was to become his wife. After they were married, Helen was released from the service but Tom stayed on until 1961. They moved to Richmond in 1958 He then took up employment with the Department of Transport until his retirement in 1977.

Tom was a pioneer in Silver Stick Hockey which began in Richmond in 1958 and was hosted here until 1963 and it is now a widespread, international minor hockey organization. Tom was a captain and training officer in the Richmond Volunteer Fire Department and also took part in the annual Richmond Fair Parade with his one of a kind Peanuts characters float which he set up on a converted VW van!. He was also very involved with the Richmond Legion where he put his wood working skills to good use.

Tom passed away on October 29, 2007 and is survived by his wife Helen, his son Bill, daughter Janice and her husband Derek, and two grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

