



REMEMBERING
Gordon Donaldson

March 31, 1935 - November 28, 2024



If you asked Gordon Donaldson about his life, he'd likely laugh and say he was just a lucky Scotsman who made good in Canada - though "luck" had little to do with his remarkable journey. Barely into his 20's, he left his working-class background in Glasgow to venture to the "new country" where he built a successful credit monitoring business, Gordon was proof that grit, wit and an unshakeable work ethic could transform a humble beginning into an extraordinary life.

He had a passion for several sports, and stories that would make you either chuckle or shake your head. His romance with his hometown Glasgow Rangers ended dramatically after a high school tryout where he scored a goal - and yet wasn't invited to join the team. In later life, he shifted his allegiance to Manchester United, which for a man of upstanding characteristics, was an interesting choice given the team's lack of propriety. In Canada, he embraced hockey with the passion of his compatriots, quickly becoming a devoted fan of the Montreal Canadiens as a shout out to the community where he first established Canadian roots. And, as any good Canadian would have done, he bought the family's first colour TV in time for the 1972 Summit Series, and was later able to share that story with Phil Esposito.

But if we're talking sports, we have to talk golf. He was a passionate player and was always happy when he was on the course. He was one of the architects of the CanAm Cup in Indio, creating a tournament that was part friendly competition, part diplomatic negotiation between his Canadian and American friends. His favourite course was Pebble Beach, where he took to the links with his brother-in-law Wally Shandrowsky and never forgot precisely how long that unachievable 18 th hole was.

Yet, success in business and passion for golf paled next to Gord's undying love for Lillian. His wife of 63 years, he met her at a dance in Edmonton in 1958 and married in 1959. For Gordon, every moment with Lillian was cherished. He often said that proposing to her was the smartest decision of his life, believing that any success he achieved was rooted in their partnership. On his last day, when asked if there was anything he would like, he said 10 more years with Lillian. She predeceased him by two years and while he did his best to forge a new life without her, his heart never mended after her passing.

He had two children - Barbara and Kenneth. His connection with Barbara meant he would traverse the country to visit her, conquering his disdain of flying and deep suspicion of Toronto in the process. His three granddaughters received his attention with the precise measurement of a man who appreciated family, but never descended into sentimentality.

Though denied his wished-for additional decade together, Gordon and Lillian will have their final reunion in death. Their ashes, blended as intimately as their lives had been, will be released in Indio, California - the place where they were most happily surrounded by friends, fun and sun for more than 30 winters.

As per his wishes, there will be no service.

