



IM | DON EARL COLLISON

Montreal 1946 – Kingston, December 30, 2021

It was with great sadness that the Wolfe Lake community learned of Don Earl Collison's passing just a few days ago. Don Collison was one of the founding fathers of the Wolfe Lake Association Westport, back in 1988. His voice in the community is gone, but will never be forgotten.

Don served as president of our volunteer-run organization from 1988 until 1992. Near the end of Don's professional career as a Toronto-based lawyer, he and his partner Barb Villeneuve moved to Eastern Ontario, where they started a store in Smith Falls and bought a cottage on Wolfe Lake.

Don was a man who loved Wolfe Lake and its community and was committed to making a difference. He jumped at the chance to become involved in his lake community and, together with a few other cottagers, set up the Wolfe Lake Association Westport, primarily in response to a controversial development issue. Bedford Township had approved a significant 13-lot subdivision on Wolfe Lake's Lee Bay, and a landowner had appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB). Especially concerning to Don was the pair of Bald Eagles actively nesting on Fox Point in Lee Bay. Don recognized that the realization of a sprawling development on Lee Bay would threaten the reproductive success of the Bald Eagles, at that time protected under endangered species status. Today, the Bald Eagle still flies over the lake as well as on the Wolfe Lake Association's logo, symbolizing our commitment to protecting the lake and its priceless ecosystem. For this alone, we owe Don a great debt of gratitude.

After the Association's first exciting years, Don remained an active board member for some time. He was a jack-of-all-trades for the Association, reporting on water quality, collecting data on loons, chairing AGMs, writing numerous articles for the Association's newsletters and even distributing them in those early years. Don was a visionary, well ahead of his time, in his awareness of the need to protect our fragile environment and nature, the land and our bodies of water from overdevelopment and neglect. He was well aware that by protecting his beloved Wolfe Lake he was protecting the Rideau Canal since Wolfe Lake is the headwaters of this UNESCO World Heritage Site. Without Don's efforts, neither Wolfe Lake nor the Wolfe Lake Association Westport would be what they are today.

NOTE: The Wolfe Lake Westport Association was informed of Don's passing on February 19, 2022. The following obituary appeared in the Globe and Mail from Feb. 19 to Feb. 23, 2022:



Born in Montreal in 1946, and survived by his sister Jean in Australia, his niece Valerie in England, and many friends. He was educated at Bishop's and Queen's. NGO lawyer for a few years, then along with his life partner, Barb Villeneuve, who predeceased him, left Toronto to become co-founder of Modern Times Natural Foods in Smith's Falls, Ontario. They had a cottage on Wolfe Lake in Frontenac County and were very happy there. Don was the founding president of the Wolfe Lake Cottagers Association. Eventually, the city beckoned again. He became an immigration lawyer for the Federal Government where he finished his career serving with distinction on the Immigration Review Board of Canada. Then he had a stroke, was diagnosed with cancer, and retired. He had beaten his cancer for 10 years. He died in Kingston on December 30, 2021. He was a contributor to worthy causes, a gentleman, birder, naturalist, gardener and conservationist. A thinker, art lover and collector of beautiful things; cat lover, car lover and Formula One aficionado. He will be missed by everyone who knew him.