

## Babcock, Robert (Bob) #1961 \*

Honoured by the North Bay Golden Age Club.

Credited for the success of the North Bay Golden Age Club

Mr. Bob Babcock, along with his wife Florence, established the North Bay Golden Age Club in 1961. In October of that year they held their first meeting at their home, 732 Algonquin Avenue, with 22 members in attendance. Bob Babcock established the Golden Age Club because he felt there was nothing being done for seniors in the range of age 50+, thus the name Golden Age.

Five weeks after Mr. & Mrs. Babcock had begun the club a new meeting place had to be found due to the tremendous growth in membership. A group of RCAF Vets (406 wing) gave the senior citizens the use of their club room one afternoon a week. The Club established its priority objective as getting a centre of its own.

Three years later the senior citizens took over the old King Edward School, on McIntyre Street East. By this time membership had grown and totalled nearly 200.

Bob Babcock also saw a need for senior citizen housing. With a lot of hard work, his new dream came true and they purchased a piece of property at 135 Worthington Street West. At this point, Ontario Housing Corporation realized the need for Senior Citizens Housing in the central core area.

Thus the Golden Age Club made a sale of the land with the agreement that a housing centre complex would be built.

The plan called for a full scale centre on the main floor with a 100 year lease renewable in 50 years. Above the centre there would be 10 floors containing 106 apartments for Senior Citizens. It took 13 years and a lot of hard work, but the proof lies in the centre. All the Senior Citizens, tenants and members of the city, can come over and enjoy the club that moved into its new home at 135 Worthington Street West in 1974. The membership, 50 years later, in 2011, stands at just over 500.

The club to this day works very hard as it did in the beginning, having events and membership, at a very nominal fee that seniors can afford. This is done also as it was in the early days with the help of many volunteers.

What a wonderful tribute to have one man's dream come true and still be going strong 50 years later.