

On the cover

## Flowers By Malcoms: Trav

Jack Malcom was born with a green thumb, blue-green eyes and a heart of gold.

Colorful and caring is how friends and acquaintances refer to the man who owns Flowers By Malcoms on Northeast Second in downtown Gresham for nearly 40 years.

"Jack is a walking saint. I've seen him give flowers to a hospital patient and say he had them left over at the shop, when in fact, he designed the arrangement especially for them. He's a very loving and charitable man," says Jim Mears, director of Mt. Hood Community College's Floral Technology and Design program, where Malcom started a scholarship fund.

Malcom calls his giving "advertising," a trick of the trade he learned from his parents who often gave flowers to area churches. He was raised in the flower business his parents established in Troutdale in 1929. And, in his late 20s he accepted an invited to learn about the florist business from experts like Tommy Luke and two other Portland florists who were anxious for the Malcom family to open a quality shop in Gresham.

"Traveling is what I like best about the business today. We have conventions all over the world," says Malcom, who recently returned from Spain and is anxiously looking forward to more traveling this summer.

His love for travel was planted when he was in his early 20s. His college education was interrupted by World War II, and he was called to travel the oceans of the world with the U.S. Navy.

"I graduated from the University of Oregon in 1947 with a degree in political science. I was thinking of going into foreign service, when I was offered a job with American Presidential steamship lines," says Malcom, who graduated from Gresham High School in 1942.

He ran the ship's business office until his parents asked their only son to consider coming into the business.

"My father was ill, and my mother asked me if I was interested in Tommy Luke's offer to train me. My boss gave me a leave of absence to assess the situation. I took a vacation to Europe and witnessed the coronation of the Queen before I came home, and I never went back," Malcom says.

"Once I made my decision to do it, I never considered changing my mind," he says, quickly admitting his readiness to travel still.

"Our conventions are a working vacation when we get together and talk with people in the same business and the same situations," Malcom says.

In addition, he relishes the chance to see how other shops are set up and enjoys attending seminars on design and business practices and exchanging ideas.

"New merchandise is being created all the time, and having an attractive store is important," says Malcom, 67.

He teaches the business end of running a floral shop each spring term at Mt. Hood Community College, where he also takes an active interest in the Jack Malcom Scholarship.

"For 14 years, Jack has co-taught a class in flower shop management with me. He brings a guest from the community like a mortician, banker or accountant to our students have an opportunity to see the issues they will be dealing with when they own their own shops," Mears says.

Malcom enjoys the chance "to keep up with youth, and exchange ideas with them."

He is a man of Irish descent whose blue-tiel eyes seem to change from green to blue depending on the colors that surround him. His customers, many of them friends, most always find him wearing a Greek fisherman's hat — another testimony to his affection to travel. He has a collection of about 30 from all over the world in a variety of colors.

He employs eight people, including his sister, but that number doubles during peak seasons like Christmas, summer weddings, Valentine's Day, Secretary's Week Mother's Day and Easter.

"Everybody enjoys getting flowers. We run the gauntlet of sentiment whether someone has a new baby, someone is sick, someone is in the doghouse or as a simple gift. When someone comes through that door, we never know what they have in mind," Malcom says.

He established his business in 1977 with his parents on the foundation that by having the merchandise his customers want and giving good service, customers would return Gresham was a town of 3,500 people.

"We were really a mom-and-op operation. Dad delivered the

## el favorite part of his job

flowers. Mom ran the counter, waiting on customers and handled public relations. They knew everybody in town, and were active in the community. And I did design in the back. For five years, I turned everything back into the business," he says.

"We ran lots of charges in the old days, so we had quite a bit of money tied up in accounts receivable. But I was new in the business, so I had to pay my bills on time," Malcom says.

It helped to have the family name on the business. It also helped that he grew up in the business.

"My parents raised cut flowers and sold them wholesale. While I was growing up, I did some weeding and hauled the flowers to and from the delivery truck," recalls Malcom, who was born and raised in Gresham.

He has watched Gresham grow into a sizeable city. And he has seen changes in the use of flowers.

"The younger generation like to

give flowers in a gesture of friendship more than waiting for an occasion — like the Europeans. Funerals are still an important part of the business, but not as major as it was in the old days. And today's arrangements are more natural in appearance. People ask for garden flowers more, because more people live in condos and apartments," Malcom says.

He still raises flowers and designs arrangements. His favorite flower is lilac because of its fragrance and many colors.

OUTLOOK 5/21/2011

# Longtime florist's gifts seed groups in East County



contributed photo

**JOHN "JACK" MALCOM:** His estate has given more than \$1 million to nine local organizations.

## 'Jack' Malcom's estate gives more than \$1 million

**By Mara Stine**  
staff writer

Although he built a career providing a luxury to local residents, longtime florist John "Jack" Malcom was anything but extravagant. He favored fisherman caps, coupon-eligible lunch specials and a humble lifestyle. That frugality resulted in an estate

valued at more than \$1 million when he died at the age of 85 nearly two years ago. Now, with the estate officially settled, Bob Dye, estate executor of the Malcom Living Trust, is writing out checks to nine local organizations near and dear to Malcom's big heart.

Gifts of \$200,000 will benefit the Mount Hood Medical Center Foundation and four local churches: Gresham United Methodist Church, St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, St. Luke the Physician Episcopal Church and Smith Memorial Presbyterian Church.

The Gresham Barlow Education

Foundation and the Oregon Maritime Museum in Portland will each receive \$75,000. Another \$27,000 is earmarked for the Gresham Historical Society, with \$20,000 going to the Community Music Center in Portland.

Before he died on June 1, 2009, Malcom contributed to trusts for Mt. Hood Community College and the hospital, Dye said.

"Jack was part of everything good in our town," said Doug Walker, owner of Walker Travel, during a gathering of beneficiaries on Thursday, May 19. "As beneficiaries of Jack's generosity, your job is to make Mal-

com's flowers bloom."

For 47 years, Jack's flowers and bouquets accompanied significant events in the community: events such as a new baby, a death, a wedding, a reunion or a prom.

Born in Gresham on March 2, 1924, Jack was literally born into the business. His parents, Roy and Lytha Malcom, grew gladiolas in Troutdale, and as a child, he accompanied his father on deliveries to florists.

He graduated from Gresham High School in 1942 and served in the Navy during World War II. Meanwhile, Mal-

## Gifts: The dollars will blossom for years to come

CONTINUED FROM Page 1A

com gladiolas christened Liberty ships leaving shipyards.

After being honorably discharged in 1946, Jack graduated from the University of Oregon and went to work for American President Lines in New York City. He later worked in the steamship company's San Francisco and New York offices.

By then, his parents had moved their crops to Gresham after fluoride emissions from the Reynolds Metals plant poisoned the bulbs in Troutdale. But Jack's father's health began to fail, and he could no longer farm the flower fields.

So Jack returned to Gresham and in November 1953 — with his parents and sister Mary Allen — opened Flowers by Malcom in downtown Gresham. He sold his shop in 2000.

Like many who grew up during the Great Depression, Jack knew how to pinch a penny.

"He was tight about some

things," Dye said. "It used to make me just crazy."

For example, they'd go out to lunch and Jack would insist on eating at Sizzler, "and that was because he had a bunch of coupons, and he got the senior special," Dye said. "I don't think he ever bought anything that wasn't on sale."

Although frugal with cash, Jack was generous with his time and energy.

"Jack was involved in a little bit of everything out here," Dye said. He had an active role in the business and art community, serving on many boards in East Multnomah County and in the floral industry. He belonged to the Gresham and Troutdale historical societies, and taught florist classes at Mt. Hood Community College.

"We're very, very happy," said Dorothy Douglas, president of the Gresham Historical Society. "Being as poor as church mice, we do not have a lot of money, and the building is in disrepair."

The gift will pay for improve-

ments — both interior and exterior — to the historic building that the society is housed in. It also will fund archiving and restoring the landscaping to its original condition.

"So the money will go to a lot of things," Douglas said.

As Douglas talked, vice president Bonnie Jepsen opened a commemorative folder containing the \$27,000 check. "This is awesome," she said, as historical society treasurer Don Hendrix stood by, grinning from ear to ear.

"We are just really pleased with this gift," said Gretchen Nichols, chief administrative officer of Legacy Mount Hood Medical Center. The hospital is hosting a ceremony in which the check will be presented at 2 p.m. Wednesday, May 25, in the medical center's new healing garden.

"We're finishing up some enhancements in his honor," Nichols said. "Mr. Malcom has a brick in the garden with his name on it, so it's all very appropriate."

card, \$1.50 without.

interesting. OUT-19 DEC-1963



# Not Too Late

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Floral Orders

Portland, Sandy and  
East County Deliveries

Flowers Wired  
World Wide

## Flowers by Malcoms

221 E. Powell  
GRESHAM

MO 5-5212  
ANYTIME

### GRESHAM HISTORY FILE

#### *Businesses*

## Florist having open house

Jack Malcom, owner of Flowers by Malcoms Limited, will celebrate 40 years in business Nov. 13 with an open house from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Malcom estimated that he opened around Nov. 13 in 1953 at a shop one block away on Powell Boulevard. Eight years ago, the business relocated to 202 N.E. 2nd St.

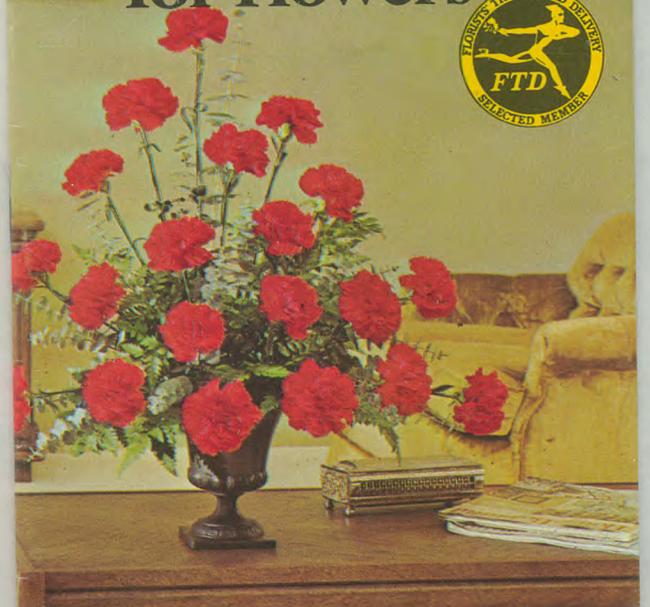
Organizing the event are store manager Colleen Clark and Malcom's sister, Mary Allen, who still works at the shop part time.

Flowers by Malcoms ranks as one of the city's long-standing businesses and the owner is known for his participation in civic causes and donations of flowers to charitable events, Clark said.

"Every possible thing you could be on a board in Gresham, he has — the hospital, Mt. Hood Pops, jazz festival, and he teaches at Mt. Hood Community College," Clark said.

*Outlook 11/3/63*

## your 1968 Selection Guide for flowers



(effective September 15, 1967)

**FLOWERS BY MALCOMS**

221 E. Powell Blvd.

Gresham, Oregon

PHONE MO 5-5212

## THE BENEFICIARIES OF 'JACK' MALCOLM ESTATE

**Mount Hood Medical Center Foundation, \$200,000** — Funds will benefit cardiac services, spiritual services and the healing garden. Jack served on the board of trustees in 1992, donated arrangements for hospital fundraisers and employed students to make vases that were sold in the hospital gift shop to support patient care. He also helped found St. Aidan's Adult Day Care Center for Alzheimer's patients, which is now part of Legacy Mount Hood Medical Center.

**Gresham United Methodist Church, \$200,000** — The gift will be invested while the congregation completes plans to renew the sanctuary and fellowship areas. Other possibilities include refurbishing and elevating the organ chamber and creating an endowment fund to perpetually pay for altar flowers and choral music. Jack's mother, Lytha, was an active member of the church, noted Pastor Jim Fellers. "We want to continue to honor her by accepting this remarkable gift and by accepting the challenge to practice similar extravagant generosity ourselves," he wrote in a statement.

**St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, \$200,000** — The church will take its time deciding on the best use of the gift. But the church believes the funds can help grow the congregation and help the church better serve the community in the long term. "We

see ourselves as 'the church that cares,' and we want to manifest that more fully," reads a statement from the church. St. Aidan's has a history of helping Snow-CAP Community Charities; Pacific Gardens, which is a residential community for Alzheimer's and dementia patients; and Loaves and Fishes. It is working on creating a community garden at Camp Nadaka, an old Camp Fire property that is now a city of Gresham park. Jack was a member of the church.

**St. Luke the Physician Episcopal Church, \$200,000** — "Given the size of Jack's gift, we have decided to enter into a period of discernment for where and how this money can have the greatest impact," reads a prepared statement from the church. Possibilities include a contribution to a local community organization, funding for new ministries and completing capital projects at the church. But given Jack's fondness for flowers and plants, it's likely some of the money will purchase plants for the church's outdoor labyrinth garden. Jack was a member of the church.

**Smith Memorial Presbyterian Church, \$200,000** — "The Session (the board of ruling elders) will prayerfully consider how best to honor the memory of Jack Malcom and Mary Allen in applying the gift," reads a statement from the church. Jack's sister, Mary Allen, was a member of the church and served as a dea-

con. His family also worshiped there. Possible uses include various church ministries, facility improvements, spiritual development and help for those in need.

**The Gresham-Barlow Education Foundation, \$75,000** — New lighting, sound system and drapes for the auditorium. Possibly new seating. Will benefit drama and music students who perform there. Jack loved music and theater, and graduated from Gresham High School in 1942. His sister, Mary Allen, also taught home economics at the school.

**Oregon Maritime Museum, \$75,000** — Expansion of educational and curatorial programs, technological upgrades and seed money for grants that require matching funds. The museum also recently received five original nautical paintings from Jack, who served in the Merchant Marine and worked for American President Lines, a container transportation and shipping company.

**Gresham Historical Society, \$27,000** — Building repairs, landscape restoration and archiving. Jack belonged to the historical society and was a former board member.

**Community Music Center, Inc., \$20,000** — Will fund a third round of repairs to seven pianos in the piano lab, which is used by more than 100 students a week as well as senior citizens. The money also will pay for instruments and equipment.

# The flowers by Malcoms Story



**JACK MALCOM** was literally born into the flower business in 1924. His parents, Roy and Lytha, had relocated from Wyoming to Oregon a few years before and started a gladiolus farm on the slopes of Troutdale. The colorful acres became a Troutdale trademark. Jack and his sister, Mary, both helped on the farm as kids during the hard depression years. Jack graduated from Gresham High School in 1942 and entered University of Oregon. He joined the Navy (actually, Merchant Marine) before graduating.

He served mostly on Okinawa until his discharge in 1946. While there he swam dangerous, secret night missions with highly classified information to contacts in small boats. Upon returning home, Jack went back to U of O, graduated in 1947 and took a job with the prestigious American President Lines in NYC. He traveled the Orient as a Purser on the President Cleveland. He later worked in the steamship company's San Francisco and New York offices until fate called him home. His dad's health started to fail. Long, hard days of farming had to end. Tommy Luke, Portland's best known florist at the time, encouraged Mrs. Malcom to talk with Jack about opening a Gresham flower shop. Flowers by Malcom opened in 1953. Jack learned floral design, made arrangements and helped his staff with everything, including deliveries. Lytha's outgoing personality was perfect on the front counter, greeting customers and taking phone orders.

Mary Malcom helped in the shop only during holiday rushes. She had graduated from OSU and was teaching Home Economics at Gresham High School. Mary had also become Mrs. Harry Allen. Harry was a well liked elementary school teacher. They reared three children, Richard, Patti and Suzanne. Harry died prematurely of Multiple Sclerosis, and Mary gradually worked more and more in the shop in its later years. She died in 1998.



Jack Malcom was always a big supporter of anything that helped Gresham. He worked to establish Mt. Hood Community College, eventually taught in its floral program, worked on early Mt. Hood Jazz Festivals, served on the Metropolitan Arts Commission and was active in the Gresham Historical Society. He helped found St. Aidan's Adult Day Care Center for Alzheimer's patients (now a part of Legacy Mt. Hood Medical Center). He was an inveterate traveler who visited every continent and most countries in the world at least one time. Some countries, like India, he visited five or more times. He met Mother Theresa there in 1997. His active membership in national and international floral associations like FTD facilitated much of his travel. He loved music and made it a point to see most of the great entertainers and shows wherever he was. Jazz was his favorite.

Like many people who grew up in the Depression years, John Malcom was known to be "close" with a dollar but generous with his time and energy. In death, however, he was generous to institutions and causes he valued.