

Hydro boss Gathercole dies at 86

Former Ontario Hydro Chairman George Gathercole, who gave freely of his time to innumerable local and provincial charities died of complications from pneumonia at Mississauga Hospital Friday at age 86.

A Mississauga resident for 48 years, Gathercole began his bureaucratic career with Ontario Hydro as an economist after graduating from McMaster University in 1935.

After serving with the Canadian Navy in the Second World War, Gathercole joined the Ontario government as its first economist. He rose through the bureaucracy to become deputy minister in 1956 and then returned to Hydro.

While he headed Ontario Hydro from 1966-74, the Hamilton native presided over unprecedented expansion of the province's electrical distribution system, including the initiation of its nuclear energy program. He also served as director of the Mississauga-based Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd.

During his long career both before and after his retirement, Gathercole was active in a number of community groups. Over the years he was president of the Canadian Club and Ticker Club, and served on the boards of directors of the Mississauga Symphony, McMaster University, the Royal Shakespearean Festival and the Royal Botanical Gardens.

Gathercole was a passionate golfer who moved to the Credit Reserve area to be close to the Mississauga Golf Club, where he also served as president.

Gathercole was buried yesterday at Springcreek Cemetery. He is survived by his wife Helen and daughters Lynne Brown and Georgia McCormick, three grandchildren and by his sister Bertha.