

Hooper served on City council during the '70s

Former Mississauga Ward 6 Councillor Fred Hooper, a fiscal conservative who insisted that politicians pay close attention to the bottom line in all of their dealings, has died.

Hooper, 77, died this week in Sunnybrook Hospital, where he lived for the past year, after suffering a pair of strokes.

Hooper rose to political prominence as the president of the West Erindale Homeowners' Association and won the Ward 6 seat in 1976, when the incumbent councillor, David Culham, ran unsuccessfully for mayor.

Hooper easily won re-election in 1978 but then lost to Culham by a scant 171 votes in a close election in 1980 when Culham returned to politics.

Hooper's philosophy of "zero-based budgeting" prompted him to insist that city council go through its operating budget every year line by line. He wanted municipal staff to start at a zero budget every year and justify each of its expenditures.

"That was his strength," recalled former Mayor Ron Searle, a close personal friend who was the mayor during Hooper's first term of office. "He was the chairman of our finance committee and he did an extraordinary job. But he still had a social conscience," Searle said.

Brian Schmidt, a friend and supporter of Hooper's says he was different from many other politicians. "He didn't go into it for himself," he said. "That wasn't Fred. He genuinely wanted to help people. That was really important to him."

Hooper was particularly proud of derailing a proposal to have The Queensway extended across the Credit River by having the idea removed from the Official Plan. "The Queensway comes from nowhere and goes nowhere," he once said in explaining his position.

Hooper, a long-time Sheridan Homelands resident, had several different careers during his working life.

After being trained for the Canadian Navy at Kingston, he served as a nightfighter pilot in the North Atlantic, combating submarines, beginning in early 1944. He was one of the first navy pilots to train to become part of the newly established Fleet Air Arm of the Canadian Navy.

During the war, Hooper was shot down, but recovered and returned to see additional action. When he left the service, he had risen to the rank of Lieutenant-Commander.

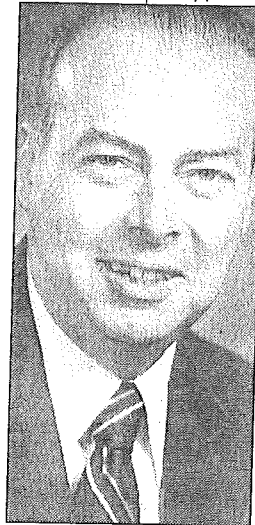
After the war, Hooper farmed near Ottawa for 13 years. He then went into the publicity and advertising business working for Jack Kent Cooke's Consolidated Press and, later, McLaren Advertising. He was the manager of the Ontario Place Marina at the time of his election to City council.

Searle notes that Hooper gave up a good job and a government pension to devote himself full-time to his elected duties.

While the manager of Ontario Place, Hooper was the chief designer of the Port Credit Marina in Mississauga.

After he left politics, Hooper served in appointed positions as a board member for the Federal Parole Board and the Liquor Control Board of Ontario.

He is survived by his wife Jennifer and their daughter Dr. Cathy Hooper, an Erindale Secondary School graduate who is a veterinarian. He is also survived by son Scott and daughters Lynn, Phyllis and Valerie. A service will be held Saturday at 11 a.m. at St. Peter's Anglican Church.



HOOPER