



Mississauga Legends Row

Visionary's plan determined city's centre

BY JOHN STEWART

Staff
Sept. 4, 2013

Mississauga's downtown core might well have been in Cooksville were it not for Stuart

Bruce McLaughlin, the visionary developer who owned and operated one of the "Big Three" development companies in Mississauga, S.B. McLaughlin Associates.

The day after a fire heavily damaged the city hall at Confederation Square, near Highways 5 and 10 in 1969, the Mississauga lawyer presented a scheme to provide a new city hall at no cost to

the municipality on 10 acres of land at the northwest corner of Burnhamthorpe Rd. and Huronario St.

It just happened to be right beside the land where he would build Square One Shopping Centre.

It was a brilliant stroke that created the

Class of 2013: Bruce McLaughlin

unusual opportunity to build a city's downtown core on empty farm fields.

It also ensured the future core would unravel around his holdings and McLaughlin would be a major player.

McLaughlin also designed and built the Mississauga Valley community, the largest plan of subdivision ever approved in Ontario at the time.

His development empire eventually grew to include numerous golf courses, ski resorts and condominiums in Canada and the U.S.

He ran into trouble with the regulators of the Ontario Securities Commission in the mid-1980s when the OSC launched a civil suit alleging McLaughlin siphoned \$35 million from his company for personal use.

At one point he was forced by his board of directors to resign from the company he founded.

McLaughlin denied the allegations and fought the case through the courts for 24 years.

The OSC finally dropped the action in 2010.

The avid outdoorsman and golfer died July 23, 2012.



Bruce McLaughlin

The lowdown

- born April 23, 1926
- founded and financed the Mississauga Board of Trade for its first several years
- served as head of the Canadian equestrian three-day event team at the Olympics, Pan Am Games and world championships
- was the highest-paid business executive in Canada in 1980, earning \$2.4 million
- wrote two books, 40 Million Places to Stand and 100 Million Canadians, expressing his philosophy that "all nations should implement a total planning system immediately"
- a lifelong member of Mississauga Golf Club. Built a beautiful Spanish-style mansion near the course entrance
- saved and restored the historic Cherry Hill House owned by the Silverthorn family when it was slated for demolition