

# Former mayor Ron Searle dead at 96

By Peter Criscione  
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Ron Searle, Mississauga's second mayor, died Saturday at the age of 96.

"I think he was known as somebody that would go above and beyond and ask for little," his son Mark told

*The Mississauga News Sunday.*

Searle died with family at his bedside at Mississauga Trillium, where he was admitted more than a week ago with pneumonia.

"He was a gentleman and an honest man," Mark said. Ronald Alfred Searle was born in Southampton, England on July 19, 1919. He was a veteran of the Second World War (Normandy), magazine publisher and long-time city councillor.

He was also Mississauga's mayor for a time 1976-1978 before relinquishing that title in 1978 to the city's longest serving chief magistrate Hazel McCallion.

"It was a close race in '78," McCallion recalled over the phone from her Mississauga home.

"(Searle) was a good mayor. He was very proud of what he was able to contribute to the Town of Mississauga and then to the City of Mississauga. It was in the growing days of this city."

Though she admits that the pair didn't agree on a lot of issues, "especially with development," McCallion described him as a "gentleman" and admired his dedication to community events for the Port Credit Yacht Club and activities for veterans.

"He was very proud of being a veteran with the Toronto Scottish (Regiment)," said McCallion.

Mark recalled that his father struggled growing up. His family lived in poverty. Searle's father fought and died in First World War.

Searle would also serve. Shortly after immigrating to Canada, Searle would return home in 1939 to fight fascism and the Nazi horde that had tightened its grip on Europe.

Following the war Searle got into publishing and married Mark's mother Mollie in 1949. They were married 50 years.

Searle got into local politics in the 1960s through the Orchard Heights Homeowners Association and its fight against the development juggernaut sweeping through Mississauga and the Region of Peel.

He won a seat on local council in 1962-63 before making a run for the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada in 1965 in the riding of Peel, finishing second. He went on to become our newly inaugurated city's second mayor when he defeated Martin Dobkin in 1976. He was one of the founding members of the police commission (Peel Regional Police) and sat on numerous boards and committees at the local and regional level.

Visitation is scheduled at the Turner & Porter funeral home on 2180 Hurontario St. from 2 to 4 p.m. and 6 to 9 p.m. on Sept. 10.

His funeral will take place at the same location at 1 p.m. on Sept. 11. A book of condolences has also been set up at city hall.

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