

Speck, Bob

MAYOR

APRIL 1972

SPECK DIES

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Mississauga Mayor Robert Speck, 56, died at St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto early today (Wednesday,) following what a spokesman described as a "stomach upset."

Mayor Speck, for 15 years a respected member of Mississauga Town Council and the former Township of Toronto Council, fell ill at his home, Monday afternoon, after leaving St. Mike's last Thursday.

Plagued with heart trouble for three years, he underwent a heart transplant operation at St. Mike's last Dec. 20, making a steady recovery in the past three months. He was re-admitted to hospital on Monday after a stomach upset he suffered while at home.

On Thursday, the mayor, who had for some time been looking forward to returning home, said he felt quite strong and well. During the Easter weekend he sat down at home with his family to his favourite roast beef dinner and, on Saturday, took a drive around Mississauga "just to take a look at the place".

Mayor Speck appeared jovial, in good spirits, Thursday, and waved to newsmen as he left St. Mike's with his wife Enid and long-time friend Duke McAlpine.

Sister Mary, executive director of nursing at the hospital, said at the time that doctors considered the mayor fit enough to return home.

The mayor said he did not have any immediate plans

to return to work at Mississauga Civic Centre and that he needed about four weeks' rest at home before coming to a conclusion on it.

OPERATION

The Dec. 20 heart transplant operation, was carried out by a team of doctors, led by Dr. Clare Baker, head of the hospital's cardiovascular team, and Dr. J.K. Wilson, chief medical cardiologist. It took two hours.

The heart was donated by the family of a 14-year-old Fuller Ave., Toronto, boy who died of injuries after being hit by a subway train.

The boy, Richard Wolniwicz, died shortly before his 15th birthday.

Mayor Speck said at a recent press conference at St. Mike's that his town council intended to name a new Mississauga park after the boy.

After receiving his new heart, Mayor Speck said he felt "great" and added: "I feel 10 years younger."

The transplant operation was the third carried out at

St. Michael's by Dr. Baker.

Mayor Speck was Metro's seventh heart recipient and Canada's 18th.

He suffered heart trouble for three years before the major surgery.

He went through his first heart attack Nov. 1, 1967, when he was reeve of the then Township of Toronto Council.

Although laid low with his illness, he still stood for and won the seat as the first mayor of the new town of Mississauga, the following month.

Well known for his bright sense of humour, he at the time issued a message to the residents of the town, from his hospital bed in Oakville, saying he had taken an unexpected, unscheduled holiday.

He also said it was his greatest ambition to become the town's chief magistrate.

When Mayor Speck left hospital, early the following year, he often frequented Huron Park Recreation Centre where he coped with daily bouts of exercises

which soon had him back at work again.

He suffered another heart attack, Jan. 4, 1971, only four hours after presiding over the inaugural meeting of town council at the beginning of its second three-year term of office.

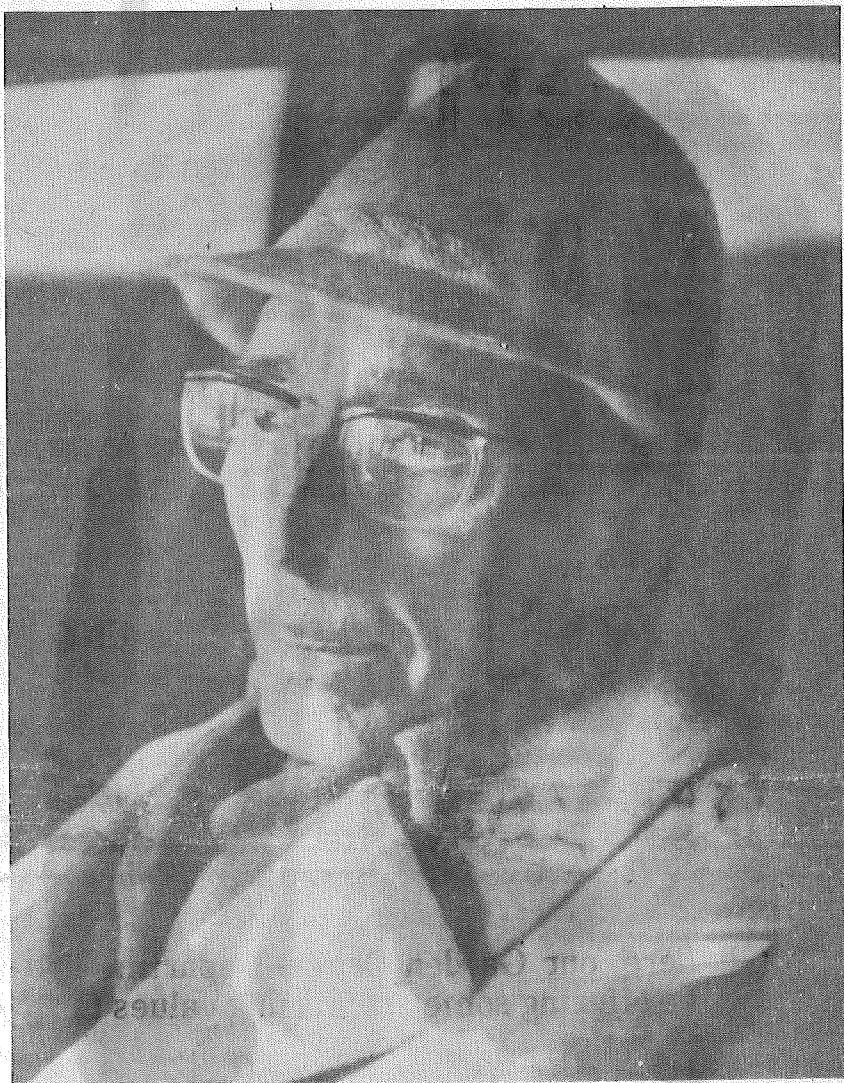
He was then taken back to Oakville-Trafalgar Memorial Hospital where he stayed for some time in the intensive care unit before being released Feb. 12 when he paid a brief visit to one of his favourite local spots — Port Credit Yacht Club.

He said at the time he intended to take things easy for a while before returning to work as municipal head.

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Mississauga Mayor Bob Speck leaving St. Mike's Hospital, Thursday. He said he was looking forward to going home and that he was feeling quite strong.

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