

pies by more orthodox means. Rock concerts for animal liberationists was not his idea of good public policy.

After he left office, Campbell disappeared from politics and public life. What happened was simply that the hippies and yuppies became yuppies and, ultimately, Campbell's kind of decent working people: lawyers, labourers, judges, builders, brokers and bankers. For the rest of his life, Tom Terrific eluded publicity in all its forms—politics, elder statesmanship, the senate and academia. He must have found that having a life, raising a family and becoming wealthy was a reasonably satisfying alternative. I ran into him in the late 1980s. We had a pleasant conversation in which he mentioned his considerable real estate portfolio and his antique clock collection.

Mayor Gregor Robertson graciously pointed out on hearing of Tom Campbell's passing that Two Bental Centre, the Centennial Museum, the Bloedel Conservatory, the H.R. Macmillan Planetarium and the Pacific Centre were all built under his watch. He oversaw the initial acquisition of some of the south side of False Creek. In the early sixties, Vancouver was often described as a site in search of a city. By the time Campbell left, it had started to become something more.

Jonathan Baker



Robert Delorme Plommer, D.F.C., Q.C.

It is an often-used expression, but so true in the case of Bob Plommer, that after he was born the mould that shaped him was forever broken. To say that Bob was a unique individual in every aspect of his life would be an understatement. He was a one-of-a-kind person. Any lawyer on the other side of a case to Bob will recall how tenacious he was in pursuing his client's cause, all the while using his individualism to achieve that goal. Someone who did not know Bob could only conclude after reading his obituary in the *Vancouver Sun* that this must have been a truly remarkable and unique man. An example of his uniqueness that I recall is the reply he gave at his retirement dinner to the many speeches given by his partners at Douglas Symes & Brissenden extolling his many achievements. After countless

such speeches, which must have gone on for over an hour, Bob rose to the podium with a book in his hand to give his reply. As would be the norm in these circumstances, everyone expected that the honouree would similarly heap praise on those who had praised him. Not Bob. Without one word of thanks or one word of introduction to the audience, he read a golf story from his book. The golf story had no connection to the law, to the firm, to the lawyers or to his retirement. After he finished reading the story, he simply sat down and said nothing more. That was Bob Plommer the individual. I truly doubt that we will ever see another lawyer like him.

Carrying on with the theme of his individualism, Bob was a true free spirit. He expressed his views without regard for what the listener might think or whether his comments were politically correct. As an example, I offer the following: the Honourable Meredith McFarlane was sitting as a commissioner in May 1985 to determine the compensation, if any, to be given to Norman Fox, who had been wrongfully imprisoned for the crime of rape in 1976. Bob was retained by a woman who had been raped by Fox (who had been properly convicted of that offence) many years earlier. Bob sought status before McFarlane's inquiry for the purpose of directing any money Fox might receive to the woman that he did rape, Bob's client. When Med McFarlane questioned the relevance of the woman's planned evidence to the mandate of his inquiry, Bob said: "It is one thing to [wrongfully imprison] a fine and pure and upstanding citizen, but it is another [to imprison] a thug." Parenthetically, this quote was the front-page lead story for the next day's *Globe and Mail*.

Lawyers on the other side of cases against Bob who annoyed Bob would also know that a unique mind was at work. To give but one example, in a letter that he wrote to a lawyer on the other side of a case who was not complying with his requests, Bob, after giving the lawyer a substantial tongue lashing, closed the letter by saying "Yours dejectedly". A lawyer without Bob's mettle would have still ended the letter saying something cordial like "Yours truly". Not Bob.

Bob grew up in Vancouver, attended Magee high school and fell in love with golf as a junior at the old Shaughnessy Golf Club. While he was attending UBC, the Second World War broke out. After Germany attacked Russia in July 1941, Bob, at 19, decided that he had better enlist because the war might end before his draft number came up. He joined the air force where he became a navigator. He completed 27 bombing missions over Germany and Occupied France with RCAF 432 Squadron under Bomber Command. Only one other crew survived a tour of ops during the six months he was on 432 Squadron.

After the war, he enrolled in the first law class at UBC (after missing about a month due to his late return from the war) and was called to the B.C. bar

in 1948. He practised throughout his legal career with Douglas Symes & Brissenden, until he retired in 1990.

Bob was an exceptional barrister, both in the civil and criminal courts. Acting under the old ad hoc prosecutor system where lawyers in private practice were retained by the Attorney General to prosecute criminal cases, Bob prosecuted about 800 such cases, usually involving some form of white-collar crime. From 1955 to 1965, for two months each year, he served as Crown counsel in the Court of Appeal, where he acted for the Crown on all criminal appeals. Bob trained many up-and-coming barristers who were assigned to junior him in his many cases, such as Ken Fawcus (later Fawcus J.) and Boyd Ferris, to name a few.

His most celebrated white-collar crime prosecutions were those against Duncan Crux and Frank Trebell. Duncan Crux was the head of Commonwealth Trust Company and was accused of pilfering money from the company. After Crux fled to the Bahamas, Bob and his team of lawyers—Ken Fawcus and John Spencer (later Spencer J.)—in tow went to the Bahamas to have Crux successfully extradited and brought to trial in British Columbia. The trial proceeded before a jury with McFarlane J. (as he then was) presiding. Hugh McGivern and his son Jack represented Crux. After a lengthy trial in 1971, Crux was convicted.

Frank Trebell was the head of Yorkshire Trust Company and was charged for receiving interest-free loans from the company. Allan McEachern (later McEachern C.J.) represented Trebell in the trial that lasted for over one year, ending in 1978, before a jury with Toy J. presiding. Trebell was convicted. It was rumoured at the time that McEachern was so exhausted after battling Bob for over a year that the bench looked like a waiting respite, which he took up almost immediately upon the Trebell case ending.

Bob had the respect of any judge that he appeared before. One of the best examples of the judiciary's acknowledgement of his skills was in a statement made by Med McFarlane in the aforementioned Norman Fox inquiry, where he referred to Bob as "a counsel of very considerable experience and respected by all who know him, including me".

I had the considerable fortune to have worked with Bob from the time of my articles at Douglas Symes & Brissenden until his retirement. He taught me so much, and we became good friends and trusting colleagues. He was a tireless worker when he was involved in a trial. Preparing for the next day of trial, he would rarely leave the office before 2 a.m. and would often chastise me, when I was his junior, for nodding off in the wee hours. Bob worked his cases to death. He would pore over documents time and time again to try to find something he might have missed. He taught me that hard work wins cases.

Bob's mastery of the English language was legendary. He was a phenomenal writer, with a vast vocabulary. I wonder how many lawyers receiving letters and briefs from him reached for their dictionaries to look up words that he had used. I know I did on many occasions.

Bob also had a great sense of humour. He loved to tell jokes, and in telling some he could barely get through the story because he was laughing so hard. Woody Allen was one of his favourite comedians. He liked to quote Allen's words on reincarnation: "I wouldn't want to be reincarnated because I'd probably have to sit through the Ice Capades again."

Other than his family, Bob's love away from the office was playing golf. He was a long-time member of the Capilano Golf Club in West Vancouver, where he was Seniors' Club champion four times. He won the B.C. Amateur in 1946 and was the Shaughnessy Golf Club champion twice. He played at the British Amateur, the Canadian Men's and British Senior Amateur (placing fifth with the lowest single round of the tournament at Walton Heath in 1986, and the same year won the Canadian Seniors' Golf Association championship at Royal Montreal). When Bob retired from practice, he moved to Kamloops to be with his children and grandchildren and built a home on what became his beloved course, Rivershore.

Bob is survived by his loving wife Sybil, daughter Leslie, sons Hamish (Janet), Evan (Christy), Tim (Vanessa) and grandchildren Matthew, Maxie (Lucie), Emily, Hart, Will, Jacoba, Alexandra and Jack.

Although gregarious and outgoing, Bob was also a very modest man. He never gloated about his considerable skills. It wasn't until his retirement that, through some background checking, we were able to discover that he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his many bombing raids during the Second World War. The DFC was a most prestigious award which entitled him to use it after his name, much the same way as one could use a Q.C. However, Bob never used the DFC after his name until after he retired from law.

There was never a lawyer so totally and utterly dedicated to his clients' cause. When he took on a case, he would devote all of his energy to win for his client. He wouldn't stop working until the last stone had been turned over. He was the ultimate investigator. His motto was: "There is no substitute for a full and thorough investigation of the facts." One of his oft-repeated statements showed his attention to the facts of any case he was involved in. The one I remember is this: "Look after the evidence and the law will take care of itself." How true that was in so many of the cases he handled.

The bar has lost a true courtroom warrior, the likes of which may never be seen again.

David Martin