

Paul and Rose Anderson's Abbotsford Legacy Story

July 18, 2017

As the undersigned, we promise to contribute to the future of the community of Abbotsford through a bequest to the Abbotsford Community Foundation

Every couple has a “how we met” story but few include the words “horror story”. Paul and Rose Anderson’s story does. A friend of Paul’s set him up on a blind date with Rose. His friend and his girlfriend joined them for an evening at the movies. Turned out the movie was Hitchcock’s classic “Psycho”.



Despite this harrowing start in 1962 the two were quickly a couple and have stayed devoted to each other for over 54 years.

Both of Paul’s parents were from Denmark and emigrated to Edmonton where Paul was born in 1932. The family moved to BC and his father bought and ran a bakery in Ashcroft. Sadly, he died at the age of 38 from lung cancer. Later, in 1947, when Paul was 15, the family moved to Abbotsford. At

that time the town was very small. Clearbrook had only a local convenience store and Seven Oaks Mall was just empty ground. The Abbotsford shopping center was just a ravine.

While still in high school, Paul worked for Bennion’s Pharmacy located in downtown Abbotsford, near Jake’s Barbershop. He left Abbotsford for Vancouver where he earned a pharmacy degree at UBC. After he and Rose were married they lived in Vancouver for another three years before returning to settle in Abbotsford. Paul purchased Bennion’s Pharmacy in 1965 and joined the Pharmasave chain. “I had to borrow \$18,000 to buy the store and I wouldn’t have got the loan if my mother hadn’t co-signed for it,” Paul explained. He owned and operated the pharmacy for twenty years. When he sold it, his store was number one (out of 95 Pharmasave stores) in sales in BC. Paul was also very involved in the creation of the Pharmasave co-operative stores which is now Canada wide. He served as Director and President in the formative years of the chain.

“We had a partnership, Rose and I,” Paul explained. “I ran the business and she ran the house, took care of the children (two daughters Charlotte Heywood and Karen Finnan and a son Paul F. Anderson), paid the bills and managed all the household chores, maintenance and payments”. After selling his business and retiring he and Rose enjoyed many years of travel. “We travelled all over North America in a motorhome. We were both avid golfers so we played golf along the way. We actually played golf in every U.S. state in our four cross continent trips and we also spent time in our condo in Palm Springs,” he said.

Paul has been active in the community for many years. In the 1970s, his daughter Karen Finnan excelled in running in high school and this led Paul to get involved with the Valley Royals Track and Field Association. “There were two clubs. I was the President of the Valley Royals and Henry Braun was President of the Abbotsford Track and Field Association and we decided to put the two clubs together.”

The new association initially used the name Abbotsford Royals and they created an endowment fund in 1988 held by the Abbotsford Foundation. This fund has enabled the track club to continue to exist and be very successful. With Jane and Jerry Swan organizing and coaching the club has been able to produce many very good athletes. The track club continues to enjoy success and provides opportunities for local athletes to the present time.

Paul was also active in the Abbotsford Lions Club in the late 60s where he served as Director and President. The Lion’s Club was instrumental in creating Mill Lake Park in years past and has created and supported many other worthwhile causes for the betterment of our community.

In 1998, he and Rose decided to create a community endowment fund, adding to it over the years and including it in their estate planning. Income from the Paul and Rose Anderson Community Endowment Fund will go to improve the quality of life for Abbotsford residents by helping fund materials for the library, improve public gardens and parks and support recreation as well as assist charities in Abbotsford that provide social services.

“This community has been very good to us so we felt it was important to give something back,” he said.

Paul and Rose Anderson