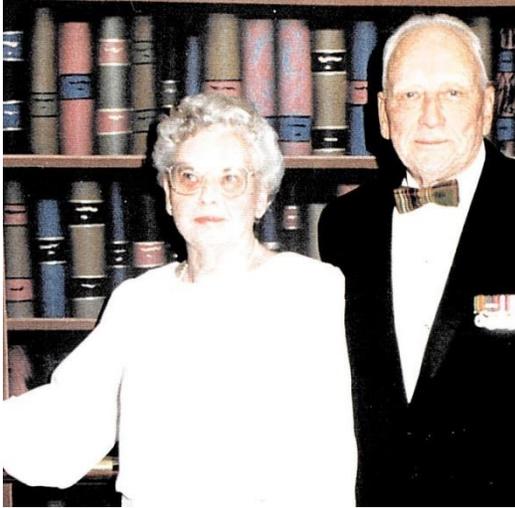


J. A. (Spud) Murphy's Abbotsford Legacy Story

John Alexander Murphy was born on June 3, 1921 at the Royal Columbian Hospital in New Westminster, BC. His mother, Kathleen Conroy was born in Matsqui in 1897 and father, Jack Murphy, a Scottish immigrant, came to Canada in 1911.



Spud's roots are deep in the Abbotsford Community. His maternal grandparents settled in Matsqui in the mid 1880's. He attended Matsqui Elementary, Conroy High School (named after his grandfather, and Philip Sheffield High School.

In his youth, Spud was involved heavily in sports, setting a Fraser Valley record for pole vault in 1940. He also played soccer, lacrosse, rugby, golf and for many years, basketball.

He joined the RCAF in 1941 and received his pilot's wing at Claresholm, Alberta in early 1942 and was sent overseas shortly thereafter.

He served as a flying instructor in northern Scotland, returning home in the fall of 1944. He flew Tiger

Moths at Boundary Bay, Cessnas at Claresholm and Oxfords in Scotland.

Upon returning to Canada, he and Muriel, nee Wakefield, were married and started their family of two girls – Alexis and Darcie, who in turn gave them five grandchildren.

In late 1945, Spud started a plumbing and irrigation business with his father-in-law and named it Murphy & Wakefield Ltd. The business served the community at the corner of Trethewey & South Fraserway from 1945 until 2007. Known for his great customer service, Spud was also instrumental in selling at cost, the job site and proven well land to the City for their main water supply.

Perhaps Spud's greatest contribution to the community was his involvement in politics. He was at one point or another a Municipal Councilor, Reeve of Matsqui, Chairperson of the Matsqui Police Board, Chairman Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board, Chairman of MSA Sewer Board, which brought the first sewer system to the area, President of the Chamber of Commerce, City Councilor, and Air Show Director.

Spud was also a member of the Air Force Officers Association of Vancouver, 861 Wing, Air Force Association of Canada, Royal Canadian Legion and the Abbotsford Masonic Lodge. He was given many awards over the years for his community involvement including: Citizen of the Year – Matsqui Centennial 1992, Freeman of Matsqui, Order of Abbotsford in 2006 and the Queens Jubilee Medal. J. A. (Spud) Murphy park was named after him in 2007.

Even into his 80's Spud still enjoyed second world war planes. Spud lost his wife, Muriel in 1996 to cancer and he passed away at age 88 in 2010. He was described in the local paper as a "great voice for Abbotsford", a "giant in this community", a "gregarious storyteller", a "true gentleman" and his death was a "profound loss" to the community. The Murphy family has the following funds at ACF:

John A. & Muriel Murphy Community Endowment

John A. & Muriel Murphy Memorial Endowment Student Award