



## In Memory of

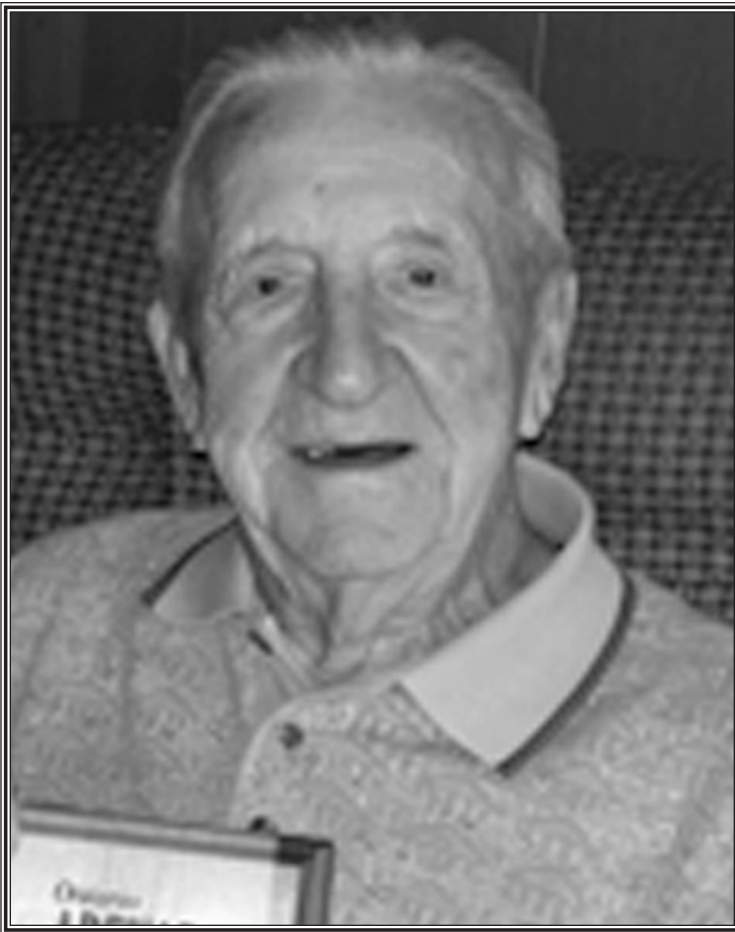
Clarence (Hoot) GIBSON

**Strathroy, ON**

November 15th 2010

**Northern Ontario, ON**

March 10th 1918



**GIBSON, Clarence (Hoot)** - Peacefully at Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital with family by his side on Monday, November 15, 2010. Clarence C. (HOOT) Gibson, a life long resident of Strathroy in his 93rd year. Predeceased by his wife Amy Gibson (2006) and dear father to Gail MacCarl(Ray), Jane Gibson and Patricia Brown(Robert). He was a loving Grampa to 6 grandchildren Michelle, Brad and Amy, Adam, Genny and Carrie and 4 great grandchildren as well as many nieces and nephews. Hoot was predeceased by his sister Rheta Patterson and brothers Raymond, Russell, Earl and Austin Gibson. Hoot was a veteran of WW# II, serving in the Royal Canadian Navy. He was well known as the arena manger at the West Middlesex Arena in Strathroy from 1953 to 1978. Hoot was a proud and dedicated member of Beaver Lodge #83 AF&AM which he was a 44 year Past Master and Beaver Chapter#74 both of Strathroy; he was also a strong supporter of the Strathocha Shrine Club in Strathroy, Mocha Shrine Centre in London and the Royal Order of the Jesters. Hoot will fondly be remembered on Christmas Eve as Santa by

many families and their children. Visitation will be held at DENNING BROS. FUNERAL HOME LTD., 32 Metcalfe St W. Strathroy on Thursday, November 18, 2010 from 2 pm to 4 pm and 7 pm to 9 pm. Funeral service will be held on Friday November 19, 2010 at 11:00 am from Strathroy United Church, Front St. W. Strathroy with Rev. Charles Seed officiating. Interment to follow service in Strathroy Cemetery. A Masonic memorial service will be held at 6:30 pm Thursday at the funeral home under the direction of Beaver Lodge #83 Strathroy. In lieu of flowers donations in memory of Hoot to the charity of your choice would be appreciated by the family. A tree will be planted as a living memorial to Hoot.

C.C. Gibson received his education in Strathroy and it was during his school years that he was tagged with the nick name "**HOOT**". For reasons we will **NEVER KNOW**, and of course, we dare not ask. Hoot loved the outdoors and water. It all started during his secondary school days when he found summer employment with Canada Steamship Lines. He worked on passenger liners S.S. Hamonic and the Noronic. Upon completing schooling, he accepted a position with Strathroy Furniture in their machine room. When the second world war broke out Hoot enlisted in the Royal Canadian Navy in London as an ordinary seaman. The Navy very quickly noticed that this Strathroy product had a number of good qualities and leadership skills. They elevated this "ordinary seaman" through the ranks to Chief Petty Officer, serving as a torpedo coxswain on several vessels, including the H.M.C.S. Port Arthur.

Hoot also found time to court Sarnia native Amy Handy who was at that time carving out her career as a nurse. They were married October 3rd, 1945, raised daughters Gail, Jane and Patricia. They celebrated their 50th anniversary in 1995. Following a lengthy illness Amy passed away August 2008. Life resumed at Strathroy Furniture following his tour of duty in the navy. In 1950 Hoot accepted the position of Administrator of Census, for Middlesex County. Later appeared as an Insurance Agent with Sun Life. Municipal government was the next stop. The Municipality of Strathroy offered Gibson the opportunity to work at their local Arena, West Middlesex Memorial Centre in 1953. Hoot was officially appointed full time Arena Manager ". He retired 25 years later. Hoot the opportunist took full advantage of the innumerable training programs offered by the Ontario Arenas Association.

In 1970, opportunity knocked again. He was elevated to "Administrator of Parks, Arenas and Recreation". Six years later Hoot experienced heart problems and had by pass surgery. He returned to work after recovering from surgery. Surprised to learn that he would be saddled with the tedious task of supervising the replacement of the arena roof. He described the undertaking as both difficult and unnecessary. Hoot's health once again became an issue. At the urging of his family doctor, he relinquished his duties, retiring in 1978. Reflecting on his municipal career, Gibson enjoyed working with and for the public. At times it was not easy. He enjoyed the respect and friendship of so many youngsters who were now adults, with families of their own. Admitting the happy days they had at the Arena... even though Hoot gave them "hell at times".. or had them "thrown out".

Acknowledging that retirement was great. They travelled to California, Arizona, Florida, South America, across Canada. Fishing trips to Manitoulin Islands...bragging about landing "the big ones",.. and the bigger ones that "got away". He enjoyed woodworking, curling, golf... the latter needed "much more work" before he could qualify for the masters tour. A member of the Masonic Lodge. Served as Master of the Beaver Lodge.... a member of the Shriners' "Mocha Temple", and Strathroy United Church. A member of the Masonic Lodge. Served as Master of the Beaver Lodge.... a member of the Shriners' "Mocha Temple", and Strathroy United Church. A Life Member of the Alumni.

A former Strathroy arena employee shared the following.. claiming to witness first hand... "**Gibson's magic of Christmas**". Hoot was appointed Santa's designated helper in 1946. His brother Earl was ready to pass along the sleigh and the gift bag to Hoot, Earl had served as Santa's local representative for several years. Hoot held the post for 30 years, up until 1976. The tradition was later passed on to Hoot's nephew..... Hoot was a great guy!! Even more so at Christmas, when he would trade in his fedora for a Santa hat and become Saint Nick. Appearing at local and rural schools, church concerts, and was a star in the Annual Jaycees Santa Claus Parade. Would call on more than 75 homes Christmas Eve. Regardless of rain, sleet or snow. At an unbelievably busy time of the year. Hoot received a lot of help and support from family and friends. At each home on the Christmas Eve run, Santa Hoot, usually arrived some time between 5:00PM and 10:30PM, with a driver in his station wagon. Would give each wide-eyed child a bag of candy and a promise to return later with presents. The only compensation he received was the wonder in the eyes of the children. Hoot fondly remembered those days.