



## Mr. George James Oreto

April 24, 2018

Oreto, George James

passed away in his 95th year on Tuesday, April 24, 2018 in the loving care of his family and the nursing staff in the Seniors' Special Care Unit at RVH.

Born June 6, 1923 in Hamilton, Ontario to Albertine and James Oreto, George is survived by his wife of 66 years, Eleanor (nee Jamieson) and their three children: Janet Hay (Euan) and grandchildren Zachary (Amanda) and Jocelyn; Deborah Schubert and grandson Jordan (Emily) and great grandson William; Michael Oreto (Catherine) and grandson Jaymison. Uncle George will also be fondly remembered by his extended Oreto and Jamieson families. Last, but not least, Grandpa dearly loved all the furry, four-footed members of the family.

George had a lifelong love of flying. He was an RCAF pilot in 435 and 436 Squadrons, flying DC-3 transport in India and Burma during WWII. He continued to fly for 50 years in his civilian life.

Dad will be fondly remembered for countless family summers spent at "the cottage" on Lake Simcoe with his extended family and friends. Originally a log cabin he and Mom built in the early 1950's, "the cottage" became the family's home in 1971.

A sharp mind and a quick wit, George will long be remembered for his one-liners and keen observations about Life which will now pass into family lore, to be oft-repeated with appreciation, laughter, and love.

A Celebration of George's Life will be held at Thornton Union Cemetery in August 2018.

In lieu of flowers, donations to RVH would be appreciated. Further details and

condolences at [www.steckleygooderham.com](http://www.steckleygooderham.com) .

George James Oreto

Life Story

Early years in Hamilton

Growing up in Hamilton, George's life-long interest in aircraft and aircraft engineering was enhanced with building model airplanes (when from the age of eight he built models from blocks of balsa wood, sometimes for his friends to fly in modeling competitions with the prize being a ride in an airplane) and continued as a welcome hobby through thirty years of retirement in Barrie.

His faith-based education within the Roman Catholic School System where he attended "Cathedral High" fostered his early passion for "all things football" and was the foundation for hours of interesting sports television debate and able analysis in the latter years of his life when he was physically incapacitated. Working as a boat-boy on pleasure craft in Hamilton Harbour during the summers of those teenage years nurtured his innate passion for being near the water – one that led to our construction of a log cabin cottage and eventually a permanent home on Lake Simcoe at Oro Station, Ontario.

Returning to Aviation Life in Toronto

After completing his Grade XIII in Hamilton, George moved with his family to their new home in Toronto where he worked at Imperial Varnish, a Paint Refining Company at the waterfront, until his 19th birthday June 06, 1942 when he was accepted into the Royal Canadian Air Force at Manning Pool and began his training as a pilot.

Beginning initial training at Virden, Manitoba, he earned his Pilot Wings and Commission at Souris, Manitoba on February 11, 1944 and was shipped out on the "Empress of Scotland" on his way to England (a most interesting 'Wartime' crossing to avoid enemy detection). There he flew out of Little Rissington and Biggin Hill before leaving in September 1944 for India and Burma with 435 Squadron DC-3 Dakota O.T.U. via Gibraltar, Cairo, Lake Habbaniah, Bahrain, and Karachi to Gujrat.

In December 1945, he returned to England and by February flew with 436 Squadron transporting mail and personnel to and from European destinations including Bremen, Germany, Amsterdam and Paris.

Leaving Prestwick, Scotland on May 2, 1946 he and his crew flew their Dakota home to

Canada via Reykjavik, Iceland and Goose Bay, Labrador to Rockcliffe, Ontario where he was formally discharged. He continued to fly with the Royal Canadian Air Force Reserves.

## Returning to Civilian Life in Toronto

Initially returning to Imperial Varnish after his Air Force service (as Canadian Law required war veterans be offered the opportunity to return to their prior employment positions), George soon began a new career with the Unemployment Insurance Branch of the Government in the claims department. New friends and the recognition of his skills of accuracy, speed, and efficiency pointed toward a successful career with the government. But by 1949 he chose a completely new path when he was presented with an opportunity to join the Sales staff of Concrete Products and Construction Supplies and began what turned out to be his life-long career in the robust building industry in Toronto and surrounding area. The opportunity to pilot the company aircraft to their plants in Ottawa and Montreal no doubt played a part in this career change.

During this time (1951 to 1971), George and Eleanor lived in the Islington area in Toronto and between 1959 and 1968 raised their three children: Janet (1959); Deborah (1960); and Michael (1968). They spent their weekends building their rustic log cabin cottage on Lakeshore Road at the 6th Line Oro Station, Ontario. By June 1971, they relocated the family from Mississauga to this beloved location on a permanent basis and proceeded to have the cabin restructured into the Tudor Style home where they lived until their retirement in 1986. During this time, George commuted daily to his office in Toronto enjoying the best of both worlds including many hours of private flying over many parts of Canada and maintaining an enthusiastic interest in all aspects of flying.

During 30 years of retirement in their home in Barrie, George and Eleanor have been able to spend precious time with their children, grandchildren, and extended family— to travel and pursue hobbies and interests and to appreciate the company and friendship of long-time precious friends while making new ones along the way.

On December 2, 2016, they celebrated their 65th Wedding Anniversary in their home with their loved ones around them and fully aware of their blessings.

What more could anyone ask?

# Comments

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“ To Janet and family, sorry to hear of the loss of your dad. I know how had it is to loose a father, my thoughts and prayers are with you and your family

**Sandra (Cleroux) Knisley** - May 05, 2018 at 09:59 PM