

# Jack Smith

Photo by Ed Foland

## A Canadian Club icon

**Getting to Know You**

A monthly feature about the people in your  
On Top of the World community

by John Koning



"It all started in Toronto, April 29, 1914. I was born on a kitchen table, which was common in those days. No fancy hospital delivery room. No specialist. Just the family doctor, a kettle of boiling water and a few bath towels."

Those pragmatic words begin Jack Smith's memoirs entitled, "Jack Smith Says It Like It Was."

It is an interesting, yet modest document, much like the man himself.

Jack spent the first 65 years of his life in and around Ontario's capital city, a modest place at the time.

Since then, Toronto has morphed into the fourth largest city in North America, ahead of Chicago and Houston.

His fledgling neighborhood of Lawrence Park, then a suburb, has long since been engulfed by urban sprawl.

As a child, Jack spent his summers on what he calls his personal playground, a few blocks of residential lots that remained undeveloped for several years.

During the long winters, he and his friends amused themselves skiing, sledging and tobogganing on the hills and in the valleys of the exclusive Rosedale

Golf Club. All this they did with permission of course. Right.

Because of his diminutive stature, Jack wasn't much of a jock as a young lad and he had trouble making the school athletic teams, but he did very well academically. He took to golf with a passion at the age of 10, but not on the manicured fairways of Rosedale Golf Club. In those days he settled for driving scrounged golf balls into the fallow fields surrounding their home. Jack's love for the game has never waned.

Jack also loves to dance, as you might have noticed if you've seen him on the East Activity Center dance floor in his white pants and white hair.

He has been a season ticket holder for Entertainment Committee events as long as they have been sold and he rarely misses a show or a dance. You might also have noticed that Jack is never without a dance partner.

Jack and his wife, Marg, who was a great dancer, used to glide around the EAC dance floor during most concerts in the good old days. After Marg passed away in 1986, Jack began the hunt for a

new dance partner. Sometimes he finds a partner for one evening or a single dance. When he's really lucky it leads to good company and, occasionally, romance.

Jack and Marg came to OTOW by accident. They were driving east on Sunset Point Road, escaping the Canadian winter 35 years ago, when they passed the front gate with its imposing arch.

"What the heck is that?" Jack declared incredulously.

To make a short story shorter, curiosity got the better of them and soon Jack and Marg were owners of a third floor condo in Middle Eastern Moorish, fittingly located on Canadian Way.

During the time they lived on the third floor, Jack always took the stairs to and from their unit, often two at a time. The only exception was to move heavy articles. On the other hand, Marg, who had a heart condition, would take the elevator.

Jack maintains that driving into OTOW through our unique archway was the best move he's made in a very long time. He commends the late Sidney

Colen and our current management for taking good care of his home and providing some delightful amenities.

Perhaps the proudest accomplishments of Jack's life are the 109 liters of blood he donated in Canada and the 23 gallons of blood he donated in Florida at the Hunter Blood Bank. It was a sad day in November of 1996 when Jack showed up for his 190th blood donation and was told that they would no longer accept his blood. Prostate cancer had elevated his PSA counts.

It seemed natural that this home grown Canadian boy should serve as OTOW Canadian Club President in 1984/85. Today he is the oldest living past president of the club.

Canadian Club members expressed their appreciation to Jack for his service to the club and our community during their Spring Fling celebration with a 100th birthday cake. Yes, it was a few weeks early, but what better time to honor a seemingly ageless Canadian Club icon than during their celebration of the season of renewed life?

Happy 100th birthday Jack Smith!