

## BOB BAXTER, Honourary Life Member

\*1917 +1991

Bob Baxter left for the "Happy Hiking Grounds" on December 24, 1991, after a long battle with cancer. He was introduced to the Ramblers in the late 50's by Tom Thurston when they were both working for Field Aviation out at the Airport, where as Bob put it he "was selling prop wash." Bob always had a great gift for words with a keen sense of humour. I still remember his describing me as a "Volkswagen with a Cadillac engine." His only complaint against his good friend, Tommy, was that Tommy hadn't told him about the Ramblers sooner.

Bob was born in Montreal but raised mainly in Trois Rivier's, where as he put it "winter was sure." But his love for the Rockies and Foothills kept him here in Calgary for the last 40 years of his life in spite of our Chinook winters and undependable snow cover. He became a bilingual Canadian at an early age, because French was necessary to make a hit with the girls in Quebec.

Bob spent most of his life doing what he really liked to do and not unhappily chasing the dollar. He loved books, and went into the used books business in 1960. Bob's Book store was home to the Ramblers for our weekly meetings and equipment storage from 1960 to 1971, when we finally outgrew the larger store at 1026 - 16th Ave NW (something about the fire regulations). In 1965 it took several trips in several Rambler vehicles, to move all the dusty books and Ramblers stuff from the store in the little old building at 211 - 16th Ave NW. to the nice newer store.

Bob could never understand why Ramblers did not read more. He ultimately became recognized as the Dean of Calgary's used book dealers.

One of Bob's last remarks about his life was "---I've had a ball." A truly happy man.

Bob also found time to enjoy Ramblers trips and serve on the executive. He was awarded the silver Pin for leadership in 1962 and served as a Treasurer from 1963 to 1966.

Even after we had to move out of Bob's Bookstore (later Bob's Books) and even later than that when he was no longer able to hike or ski with us, Bob served as the Ramblers answering service, until finally replaced by high tech., which as Bob put it "could not answer questions". Ramblers or interested strangers could phone Bob at his store and find out about upcoming trips and other information about the Ramblers. It was for this valuable service that Bob Baxter was awarded an Honourary Life Membership.

Bob had a happy, loving and secure family life with his wife, Marie, his son Doug and daughter, Jean. Doug left his home and studies in Victoria to help out at home and in the store in Calgary during the last year of his father's life. It takes a good family to raise a son like that.

I was honoured to represent the Ramblers as a pallbearer for this great man at the funeral service on December 28, 1991. A number of Ramblers attended in spite of short notice in the middle of the holiday season. Those of us in the club early enough to really have known Bob Baxter, will miss his wit and friendship while remembering his many contributions to the Rocky Mountain Ramblers.

Wally Drew



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