

# ROBERT SPECK

Robert Speck was the first and only Mayor of the Town of Mississauga. It was his interest in people that prompted him to enter the political arena of Toronto Township in 1956. Throughout his sixteen years of political contributions to the community, he was Councillor for one year, Deputy Reeve for three years, Reeve for seven years and Mayor for five.



He was born in 1915 and raised on a 175 acre fruit farm in Clarkson. He went to school in Clarkson and married Enid Elizabeth Pattinson, also a native of Clarkson and had three children: John, Marilyn and Paul. Even before entering the political life of Toronto Township, he was deeply involved in the life of the community. He sponsored many sports teams such as the *Specks* senior men basket ball team and the girls's soft-ball team. He was the president of the Lakeview Businessmen Association and of Clarkson Dixie Fruit Growers' Association. Honest and committed to the at the growth and well being of the town, Robert Speck was a visionary.

In 1961 he was elected Reeve for his second term and during his inaugural speech he brought up the question of amalgamation and a new name for a bigger, stronger town. In 1964, Toronto Township applied to the Ontario Municipal Board for town status. In 1967 town status was granted and a new name for the largest town in Canada was chosen: Mississauga. Robert Speck was in the hospital recovering from his first heart attack when he was elected to be the first Mayor of the new Town of Mississauga. Soon after he was re-elected as Mayor in December 1970, Robert Speck suffered his second heart attack. After a brief recovery period, he continued working full time as mayor, until September 1971, when due to more heart problems, he was admitted into the hospital and in December underwent a heart transplant. After tremendous efforts to recover and get back to his job, Bob Speck (as he liked to be called) died on April 5, 1972, from a combination of pneumonia and duodenal ulcer.

Mississauga Mayor Ron Searle (a councillor during the time Robert Speck was the mayor) said at the ceremony of dedicating the Civic Square at Mississauga's first City Hall to Robert Speck:

“ Robert Speck was one of the strongest men I have ever known- both morally and philosophically. All that we shall say here today is that Mayor Bob was a leader, a hard working man, a man who possessed integrity and was truly dedicated to the well being of his growing community.”