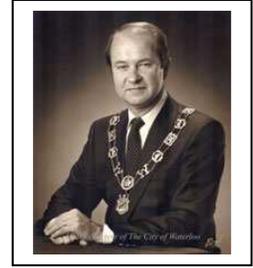


Brian Turnbull



During his long career as a municipal politician, Brian Turnbull shared his love of nature, music and sports with the citizens of Waterloo. As a mayor for three terms, Turnbull's greatest legacy is the establishment of the Waterloo Memorial Recreation Complex.

The recreation centre, which opened in 1993, became an internationally acclaimed facility and a community focus for everyone from infants to the elderly. At the time, it was the largest project ever undertaken by the City of Waterloo. When it opened, Turnbull, who was mayor at the time, said seeing the centre "finally completed is like a dream come true."

Turnbull served as mayor from 1988 until 1997, before stepping down to spend more time with his wife and three children. He had also served as a Waterloo City councillor for eleven years before being elected to the top post.

He is remembered as a politician who treated everyone with respect and managed to remain calm under pressure. "He's a man of vision, thoughtfulness and enthusiasm," said Waterloo MPP Elizabeth Witmer.

When asked once about his grace under pressure, Turnbull said:

"I have confidence if I keep struggling away . . . I will do OK. You can't lose it," he said. "You can't wring your hands; you have to roll up your sleeves. I've done it time and time again."

The veteran politician once said his time spent in the navy reserve as a young man prepared him for the rigours of political life. At one point, Turnbull admitted he had to struggle to retain his place as a cadet. Through hard work and discipline, he eventually worked his way up to lieutenant in the Royal Canadian Navy Reserve in 1965.

After obtaining his degree in civil engineering and agriculture at the University of Guelph, Turnbull received a diploma in Town and Regional Planning from the University of Toronto. He then served as the planning director of the City of Waterloo from 1966 until 1970. He has also established a consulting practice in urban and regional planning, along with two other businesses.

During his time serving Waterloo, Turnbull was an advocate for the community's natural heritage as a member of the Grand River Conservation Authority, and he helped establish the City's Environment First policy. On the cultural scene, he was the founding chair of the Sounds of Summer music festival.

Perhaps his most dramatic moment in local politics was the mayoral election of 1994, when Turnbull went to bed on election night believing he was the winner. However, he was awakened in the middle of the night and told he had lost by nine votes. The following week, Turnbull and his family waited anxiously during a recount before he was finally declared the winner again, by a mere seventeen votes.

Turnbull relished the hard work of leading Waterloo for nine years saying: “The hours are long, the pay isn’t great, the stress level is high and the frustrations are many. But the sense of accomplishment is tremendous.”

Photo courtesy of The City of Waterloo