

BIOGRAPHY:

Nello Bortolotti

For many years Nello has been a respected and involved member of the Ottawa Italian community. He has served on numerous boards and committees, using his conciliatory and consensus-building talents to advance various charitable and community-based activities.

Nello believes that it is his duty to give back to the community, and that it is a great privilege to work with other volunteers who willingly take the time to make a positive contribution to society.

Nello's volunteering can be traced back to his childhood and the influences of his parents, Anselmo and Giuseppina (D'Inca) Bortolotti. Both his parents immigrated to Canada from northern Italy in the early 1920s – Selmo from Udine and Pina from Belluno. They were instrumental in sponsoring and shepherding dozens of new immigrants and were at the forefront of other charitable activities within Ottawa's early Italian community. Following their parents' example, Nello and his three siblings have all been involved in community activities throughout their lives.

Nello started volunteering as a young man in the late 1940s and the early 1950s, participating on an advisory committee of the YMCA that assisted new immigrants in adjusting to life in Ottawa. Over the decades his community work continued on

a number of fronts, including those of a cultural nature. He was a member of a committee, which prepared guidelines for the implementation of multicultural policies for the City of Ottawa. He served on the Multicultural Advisory Committee of the (former) Ottawa Board of Education. For many years Nello was involved in Ottawa's Italian Week, in a number of roles including Treasurer of the organizing committee.

The ongoing preservation of Italian culture is one of Nello's concerns. He expressed how "great" it feels to be of Italian heritage and looks to the younger generation to ensure that this sense of heritage is preserved.

Nello has served on various boards and executives including: the Council on Aging; the Somerset West Community Health Centre; the National Congress of Italian Canadian (National and District); the NCIC's Eastern Ontario and Outaouais District Foundation (which has established the Giovanni Cabotto bursaries); the Italian Canadian Community Centre; and the Ottawa Festival Network. He has also worked with the Ottawa Immigration Council; the Kidney Foundation; the Heart and Stroke Foundation; and the Italian Senior Citizens' group.

He was long time President of the former Order of Italo Canadians (OIC), which was a federally chartered fraternal benefits-insurance society. Through his work with the Order, he became a member of, and eventually National President of the

Canadian Fraternal Association, which represents fraternal insurance benefits societies across Canada.

One of Nello's particular passions has been the Villa Marconi Long-Term Care Centre. As one of a group of principal founders of the Villa, he has been involved in many aspects of the Centre and has served in a number of Board capacities. He currently chairs the annual John Donofrio Golf Tournament, which is a fund-raiser for Villa Marconi.

In the past Nello has been acknowledged for his community work. The federal Minister of Citizenship and Immigration recognized him for his work with newcomers to Canada and by the Province of Ontario for his volunteering service. He was awarded the Millennium 2000 Medal from the (former) City of Nepean for his service as a community builder. At the October 2002 "Village Reunion", Nello received the Community Contribution Award for his dedication to the growth and development of the community.

A native Ottawan born in 1927, Nello attended Ottawa Technical High School and St. Patrick's College. In his younger years he was a well-known local athlete, active in competitive hockey, football, and lacrosse.

Professionally, in 1946, Nello joined Welch and Johnston, a specialized automotive parts distributor. He eventually became a partner-owner of the company.

Nello is married to Dr. Marguerite (Margot) Félix, who has been a supportive force in much of his voluntary work. He is a beloved uncle to ten, a favourite great-uncle to four, and a great-great uncle to three.

Nello stands as a proud Canadian of Italian heritage and believes it is important for individuals to respect and work with citizens from all parts of the Canadian mosaic: "this bond will make us better Canadians".