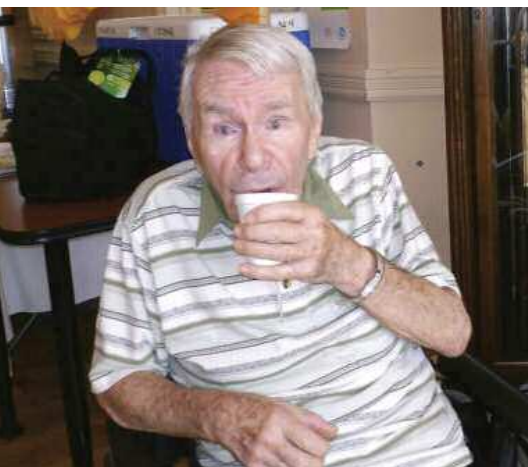


With notes from Sandra Fysh



“I know that miracles still happen. How do I know? Because I have experienced the magic. I have seen how miracles are made and the influence some people can have in their creation.” So begins *Diary of a Miracle*, a book by Dr. Kenneth Hobbs, a resident at Community Nursing Home Pickering. In his book, Dr. Hobbs details his work with Rotary International in the introduction of the measles vaccine to India and the fight to eradicate polio throughout the world.

Dr. Hobbs was in the Eastern Arctic with the Merchant Marines when, at just 16 years of age, he was gripped by the knowledge that he had to become a doctor. On January 3, 1947, he returned to high school to finish grade 13 and in September of 1948 he entered pre-medicine at the University of Western Ontario. Back at a regular summer job driving a bread truck for a local bakery in May of 1954, Dr. Hobbs received word that he had received his MD. He did his internship and residency at Ohio Valley in Wheeling, West Virginia, but, according to Dr. Hobbs, the most significant event of his life was meeting his wife Eva Stumpf. They were married for more than 50 years.

A dedicated physician, Dr. Hobbs structured his practice around his patients. He would arrive at the hospital early, often waking his patients, and then head to his office to begin seeing patients. He took an early lunch so he would be in the office for patients who could only come during their lunch hour. He also scheduled evening hours, worked Saturday mornings and made countless house calls. After hours, the office phone

OLTCA Lifetime Achievement Award

rang in the house and Mrs. Hobbs would call her husband on his CB radio to let him know where his next visit was. He missed many family dinners and special occasions with his wife and three children.

Although he was a very busy man, Dr. Hobbs also became involved in many community activities. He sat on the steering committee of the board of governors for the Whitby General Hospital and became chief of staff. In addition, he became deeply involved in the Rotary Club. In January 1979, he attended a district-zone meeting and had a chance conversation about becoming involved with the World Community Service Committee, expressing an interest in the India project and the measles vaccine. After extensive meetings and cutting through a swath of red tape, a measles vaccination program was launched for India's poor. At that time, measles caused more deaths of and handicaps in children than any other communicable disease. Over the course of 25 years, Dr. and Mrs. Hobbs made 26 trips to India to ensure the success of this initiative.

In addition to the measles vaccination project, Dr. Hobbs spearheaded several other projects during his career, including one in West Africa to teach modern brace technology and several others in India to supply surgical equipment, conduct literacy training and restore water. He also established a \$1.5 million project for a vocational and rehabilitation training centre in India, the Childs' Trust Hospital and the Dr. Ken and Eva Hobbs Rehabilitation and Vocational Training Centre for the Disabled.

In addition to the OLTCA Lifetime Achievement Award, Dr. Hobbs has also received the Meritorious Service Award and the Distinguished Service Award from the Rotary Foundation, the Service Above Self Award from Rotary International, the Order of Ontario for his international humanitarian service, the Order of Canada, a commemorative medal on the 125th anniversary of the Confederation of Canada and the PolioPlus Pioneer Award for his work throughout the world in the fight to eradicate polio. **LTC**

The Rick Winchell Resident of the Year Award

Mrs. Lois Laycock—international war poet of acclaim, accomplished artist and volunteer dynamo—is a much-loved resident of Lord Lansdowne Retirement Residence in Ottawa.

Lois Laycock (née Daley) was born in Jacquet River, New Brunswick, on September 3, 1924. She completed high school at 17. She wanted to be a nurse but was too small, so she headed off to Mount Allison University and graduated at 18 as a secretary. She returned home, but because “there was nothing to do,” she packed her bags and went to work in Montreal. On May 3, 1943, she began volunteering in the evenings at the Air Force House in Montreal as a hostess, chatting and dancing with the men and otherwise keeping them



occupied. On June 6, 1945, she danced with Ralph, a tall, dark and handsome man. Forty-three days later, on August 21, they were married.

The couple had three children in rapid succession and Mrs. Laycock launched into her long volunteer career, which included work with the Heart and Stroke Foundation, the Royal Ottawa Hospital, Nepean Home Support, United Way, the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, the Royal Canadian Legion and, a cancer survivor herself, the Canadian Cancer Society. Mrs. Laycock started 'Dress for Success' in Ottawa in 1993—a business-wear recycling and makeup program developed to assist underprivileged women entering the workforce.

Mrs. Laycock taught herself to paint and she began instructing adults and children (including those with special needs) in 1961. Her own art was highly acclaimed

and she donated her paintings to charity. She started writing poetry when she joined the Legion in Ottawa. Her poem 'The Unknown Soldier Has Come Home' went on to become a Legion-sanctioned poem and appeared in a program distributed to more than 60,000 people during one national Remembrance Day ceremony. She also wrote 'Canada's Forgotten Women' to honour Canada's female war veterans. She continues to read and share her poetry with many organizations and is an avid judge of children's poetry at local schools. She has self-published five books of poetry, including *Valour and Tranquility*, *Poppies and Poetry* and *Yesterday and Today*.

Many awards decorate the walls of Mrs. Laycock's suite at Lord Lansdowne, including the Governor General's Caring Canadian Award (2002), the Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal (2002) and a YWCA

Lifetime Achievement Award (2003). She was also honoured by Liberal MP Marlene Catterall in 2002. Her favourite tribute, however, is a Legion of Honour Award that was bestowed through the Four Chaplains Memorial Foundation. The award pays tribute to exceptional people whose efforts exemplify selfless service to community and humanity. Only 13 other Canadians have ever received this award and Mrs. Laycock is in the company of four past US presidents and entertainers Bob Hope and Mickey Rooney.

Mrs. Laycock has three children and five great-grandchildren and she is an active resident at Lord Lansdowne. She created the welcoming committee to embrace new residents and engage shy residents with others in conversation, and enjoys reading her poetry to her friends at the occasional afternoon tea. **LTC**