

- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -

## **BILL “BERT” DONNELLY, REXDALE WARRIORS / TEAM CANADA GM, PASSES AWAY**

TORONTO, ON – May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021 – Bill “Bert” Donnelly passed away on May 4, 2021, but he will be remembered by the lacrosse community as a tireless volunteer supporter of the Team Canada Field Program throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

Bill grew up in Toronto as part of a large family and settled in Rexdale, a small neighbourhood northwest of Etobicoke in Toronto, in the late 1950s. A plumber and steamfitter by trade, he ran his own successful business for more than two decades while supporting his two sons, Mike and Joe, in sports that included lacrosse, with the Rexdale Warriors.

Known as “Bert” to players over the years, he served as General Manager of the Rexdale Warriors Junior “A” Lacrosse Club from 1975-78 and shortly after, was appointed General Manager for six seasons with the Men’s National Field Team of the Canadian Lacrosse Association.

“I was very fortunate to be with Bert in Rexdale and with Team Canada” said former Rexdale Warrior and Stanley Cup champion Colin Patterson. “Other than my father, he was the biggest influence on my lacrosse career. Bert was organized, hard-working, dedicated, committed and he would expect the same from his players. He would do anything and everything to help our teams perform their best.”

“I had the pleasure of working with Bill in both our Junior “A” Lacrosse League and with Team Canada,” added former Ontario Junior “A” Lacrosse League Commissioner Dean McLeod. “He was a class-act, well respected in our league and was a great ambassador for the sport at the national and international levels.”

As a member of the Johns Hopkins Blue Jays, Bill’s son Mike played in four NCAA championship games between 1979-82, twice capturing the national collegiate championship. In the early 1990s, Bill joined Mike in Baltimore, Maryland to help run restaurant businesses, and was instrumental in establishing an annual golf tournament in the area that has raised over \$150,000 for the Johns Hopkins Children’s Center.

The Ontario Lacrosse Association, on behalf of its membership, conveys our sincere condolences to the family and friends of Bill “Bert” Donnelly.



*Rexdale Junior "A" Warriors, 1977; Bill Donnelly pictured far right with son Mike immediately in front (wearing jersey #2, bottom right)*



*Bill Donnelly (left) and Fran, pictured with son Mike*



*Bill Donnelly (right) pictured with son Mike*