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Community celebrates retirement of local entrepreneur

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Well-known local entrepreneur Bob McBride, owner of Shelburne Memorials, has officially retired after almost 30 years of work in the community.

Co-workers, community members, friends, and family gathered at the local business, located at 709 Industrial Rd, last Friday (Aug. 27) to honour McBride's retirement after 54 years as an entrepreneur in the community.

?It's too bad to get old,? McBride humbly tells the Free Press when speaking about his retirement. ?It's been very overwhelming and fantastic to think that you had that many friends and touched a lot of people's lives over the course of years. It's nice that they remembered me in the same aspect.?

McBride, who is a third generation Shelburne resident, worked for Canada Packers from 1964 until 1966 before starting his career as a self-employed entrepreneur with his company McBride Produce (1966-1979).

?I've only got sight in one eye and I failed a medical test, and that's one of the reason I went into business for myself,? McBride explains. ?I knew I couldn't get a good paying job somewhere else.?

McBride went on to open Dufferin Potato Storage and Hi-Land Potatoes in 1979, which he would own for the next 10 years until selling the company to Downey Farms.

It was in 1991 when he officially took purchase of Shelburne Memorials, the town's second oldest running business dating back to 1888. With no previous training or knowledge into the making of cemetery monuments, McBride learned the trade on the job.

?I always wanted to be a funeral director, but I didn't like school so I quit,? recalled McBride. ?This came up for sale, and I wasn't working at the time so here I am. It was a little business with only one employee at the time, but I enjoyed coming. You only enjoy what you put your heart into working, no matter what it is.?

What started out as a business of one employee has grown into 10, with 15 other locations, such as Huntsville, Wiarton, Georgetown, and Orangeville.

Alongside being a local entrepreneur, McBride has also been a long standing pillar in the community, with his involvement in the local Kinsmen, the arena board, EDC board, and sponsoring sports teams.

Shelburne's Mayor Wade Mills was in attendance for the retirement celebration to present McBride with a certificate from the Town in recognition of his years of work.

?It is a pleasure to be here to honour Bob's retirement after 54 years as an entrepreneur,? said Mills. ?You've had a long and distinguished career and it's time for you to sit and relax so on behalf of a grateful community we'd like to congratulate you and wish you the best for many years of a healthy and happy retirement.?

While McBride has officially retired, his children ? Michelle Thompson, Annisa Prins, and Brian McBride ? will continue the work of Shelburne Memorials.

Speaking to the career and community involvement of their father Thompson and Prins said:

?When he go into this business he was new and learned a lot, he's not driven by money but by the good sale. He's a people person and just happy to be part of the community.

?He's the kind of guy that can strive for what he wants and he'll put his mind to it, and just do it.?

When asked by the Free Press about what is next for him, McBride says he will be taking some time off to relax and get healthy.

?You never know though, I may start something small up again,? said McBride.