

A LIFE AND LEGACY IN FILM

New CapU film award honours a Canadian innovator

This past year, we lost acclaimed documentarian, journalist and film industry leader Bob Crone. His legacy, however, lives on—in his work, in his family of talented filmmakers and in the Bob Crone Memorial Award, a new scholarship set up by the Crone family to support CapU film students.

"Bob was a doer. Filmmaking is a powerful media, and Bob always wanted to encourage young people in the industry," says Vi Crone, Bob Crone's widow and a veteran documentary filmmaker.

David Crone, a veteran cinematographer and son of the late pioneer, knows how to become an innovator in the film and TV industry. He's seen it firsthand and lived it.

"You have to choose the film industry because you love it," said David, newly retired and living in West Vancouver. "The hours can be crazy, and the days are long. You have to be optimistic, dependable, believe in yourself and be self-promoting."

David could be describing the traits he treasured in his father, Bob, a renowned camera operator and cinematographer who helped transform the Canadian film and television industry. He earned a reputation as a mentor and champion of new and upcoming filmmakers.

Bob started making documentaries soon after graduating from the Television Workshop of New York. He was the first cameraman CBC sent overseas. Over the next 6 years Bob logged over 100 journeys around the world often with Vi filling every other crew position.

He captured candid moments of Fidel Castro, Prime Minister's Lester B. Pearson and Pierre Eliot Trudeau, President John F. Kennedy, Pope John Paul II, Wayne Gretzky and Charlie Chaplin to name a few.

A SURVIVOR AND AN INNOVATOR

It was 1963, and Bob and Vi chartered a small plane from Toronto to Washington, one of thousands of flights they'd take during their working lives together. The weather took a turn, and the plane crashed into a mountain. "It was really frightening," Vi recalls.

Vi suffered a broken back and Bob broke several ribs in the crash. Still, they managed to walk down the mountain to get help.

While they healed from their injuries, Bob and Vi started Film House, a production facility in Toronto. The company quickly grew to over 150 employees, making it the largest post-production facility in Canada at the time. Bob was honoured with membership in the Young Presidents Organization.

After selling Film House, Bob went back to documentaries. David joined him for 5 years, flying their own twin engine aircraft all over North America. "Doing the documentaries with him was a great pleasure of my life," David said.

In 1976, they bought the third Steadicam built—a wearable camera stabilization system. As a pioneer of this new technology, Bob taught Steadicam courses all around the world.

A GOOD-NATURED MENTOR

Bob and Vi arrived in West Vancouver 37 years ago, attracted by the number of productions in the region that needed his expertise as a Steadicam operator.

Today, David's son, Rob is carrying on the family tradition of filmmaking.

"Bob never complained; he was known as an easygoing, innovative professional who promoted the work of others. He liked to say that if he did a good job no one would notice his work," David said.

Bob also led Canadian film organizations. He was honoured with lifetime memberships to the Directors Guild of Canada, Canadian Society of Cinematographers, Canadian Film Editors Guild and he was the founder and President of IATSE Canada. Vi and Bob also helped build up the Canadian Film Awards.

After a long career of mentoring new filmmakers, Bob considered CapU's students the next generation of creative innovators—talents who deserve early motivation and assistance in breaking down barriers to education.

Bob was keen to achieve lasting work, Vi said, and it's clear he met that goal.





