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LIVES LIVED



Martin Glotman

Husband, grandpa, engineer, scientist, man of integrity. Born Oct. 19, 1929, in Winnipeg, died May 15, 2012, in Vancouver of prostate cancer, aged 82.

Martin Glotman was born just days shy of the Great Depression. He was the only child of Abraham and Bertha Glotman. At the age of 6, he lost his mother after a long illness, and since his dad couldn't support him he was put in an orphanage.

The finest engineers see obstacles as opportunities to create awe-inspiring buildings, and Martin saw his life the same way. To begin the foundation, he knew he needed an education. Passionate about physics and science, he decided engineering was a natural extension. Instead of attending class like most students, he wrote the exams between flipping burgers and delivering newspapers to pay for his degree.

After graduating from the University of British Columbia in 1953, he went to Montreal to find

himself a nice Jewish girl. Shortly after arriving, he met Esther Glotman and they married in 1956.

Esther truly was his everything. When his daughter, Stephanie, was living in Montreal in 1989, Martin came to visit and chose to spend his days reliving his first memory with Esther: He went to the Y, where they'd met, and called home to tell her how much he loved her and what she meant to him.

After meeting in Montreal, Martin and Esther moved to Vancouver, with a brief stop in Victoria, and started the family Martin had never had and always longed for.

In 1964, he planted the first seeds of what we now know as Glotman Simpson Consulting Engineers, one of the top structural engineering firms in B.C. At that time it consisted of his wife,

typing frantically at the kitchen table in her pyjamas, and Martin dictating a letter in her one ear while the children complained about being late to school in the other.

After the chief engineer of a large company had trouble with the math behind the curve of the Vancouver planetarium, Martin figured it out in his kitchen with a basic slide rule. In the course of his lifetime he was involved in more than 1,000 projects. Some of his firm's most notable achievements include the Vancouver Convention Centre, One Wall Centre, the Richmond Speed Skating Oval and Whistler's Peak 2 Peak gondola.

Martin's greatest joy was his family. His next greatest was reading about science. He'd sit in a chair immersed in Einstein's the-

ory of relativity or Newton's laws for hours, completely content, as if waiting for an apple to fall on his head.

Martin was not only intelligent; he was a man of integrity. He applied scientific rigour to everyday life, always able to discern the important from the not important, never asking for more than he needed.

In his final days, which sadly were a great struggle, the doctor asked him what was his greatest achievement, and he responded "my family." "What about all those buildings?" the doctor asked as she pointed out onto the Vancouver skyline. Martin looked over and said, "those pale in comparison."

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Harrison Glotman is Martin's grandson.