



John (Jack) MATTENLEY died peacefully at Hospice Simcoe on Tuesday, Jan. 19, 2016. A long-time Barrie media man is being remembered by friends and family. The youngest of two sons, Joe Mattenley said his father -- who was in his 100th year -- will be remembered as one of the first men who brought radio and then television to Barrie after the Second World War. "Dad was in the Air Force. He was a radio technician and he trained people how to use radios," Joe said. "He told me he learned on the same radio system the Titanic had used."

Mattenley was born in Toronto in 1916 and grew up in Innisfil in the Gilford area. In 1949, he started working at CKBB – the BB standing for Beautiful Barrie – and by 1955, he was helping Valentine and Ralph Snelgrove as they started CKVR (now CTV TWO) – the VR standing for the owners' initials. "It was television in its infancy," Joe said, proud to add his father stayed with the station when it was sold to CHUM in 1969 and retired in 1991 after 50 years in the business.

Joe said his father worked at the station on Sept. 7, 1977 when a twin-engine plane crashed into the television tower in the fog. All four men – executives from Falconbridge Nickel Mines in Sudbury – perished in the crash, along with the pilot of the plane. The station borrowed a tower from CBC radio and the new 1,000-foot tower used white strobe lights to warn pilots, not the former red lights, he said.

Mattenley and his late wife Bernice (nee Hunter) shared many holiday seasons with 50 to 60 members of their extended family. "He was a member of a group of guys who would meet at The Queens for coffee. It was about eight or 12 men and they called themselves The Senate," Joe said. His father never drank nor smoked, and was sharp witted up until last year when he fell ill.

Mattenley's family is celebrating his life and legacy with a visitation at 1 p.m. on Jan. 30 at the Burton Avenue United Church, followed by a celebration of life reception at 2 p.m.