

## BARSTOW, John Michael (1923 – 1990)

**J**ohn Michael Barstow was a Toronto architect who was responsible for the planning and management of many important building projects in Ontario. His architectural work is acknowledged to have been of the highest standard. He also made a significant contribution to the profession through service on the Registration Board of the Ontario Association of Architects, the Architectural Certification Board of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, and especially the RAIC Syllabus National Advisory Board.

Michael Barstow was born in Peshawar, North West Frontier Province, India (now in Pakistan), on December 23, 1923, the son of a British army officer. He was educated at Marlborough College in Marlborough, England, and, for two terms, at Oxford University. He enlisted in the Royal Air Force in 1941, received his training as a pilot in Canada under the Commonwealth Air Training Plan, and served in Coastal Command, in Scotland and Gibraltar, until 1945.

In 1947, Barstow immigrated to Canada, and started to work as an architectural draftsman for Mathers & Haldenby, Architects, Toronto. Over the next ten years, he was involved in a wide variety of projects undertaken by that firm, notably the headquarters of the Liquor Control Board of Ontario, on Lakeshore Boulevard East, Toronto. He also successfully completed his architectural studies through the qualifying course of the Ontario Association of Architects, becoming a member of the Association and the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada in 1958.

In 1958-59, Barstow worked with Agnew & Ludlow, Architects, Toronto. At the termination of that partnership, he became a partner in the firm of B. G. Ludlow & Partners, Architects, where he was responsible for a number of Liquor Control Board of Ontario stores and Bell Telephone exchanges across the Province of Ontario, and for two projects at the University of Toronto: the renovations to the old School of Dentistry building at College and Huron Streets for the School of Architecture, and the new building at Russell and Huron Streets for the Faculty of Pharmacy.

In 1965, Barstow rejoined Mathers & Haldenby, Architects. For the next twenty-five years, until his untimely death on June 25, 1990, he acted as the

senior associate of the firm, in charge of a number of important projects. These were mostly hospitals: Toronto General Hospital, Lyndhurst Lodge Hospital, Queen Elizabeth Hospital on Dunn Avenue, Queen Elizabeth Hospital on University Avenue (renovations to the former Mount Sinai Hospital) and St. Michael's Hospital, all in Toronto, and the Markham-Stouffville Hospital. He also worked on the Hamilton Spectator building in Hamilton, and Roy Thomson Hall in Toronto (for which Mathers & Haldenby were associated with Arthur Erickson, Architect). He was also the co-author of a major report on interstitial spaces in hospitals and other health care facilities prepared for Health and Welfare Canada.

Michael Barstow was admired for his ability to manage large projects. He was both practical and diplomatic in his approach, working well with clients, consultants and designers. He was especially gifted as a planner of complex building projects, and as an interior and exterior detail designer.

Barstow's dedication to the profession was evident in his service to provincial and national organizations. He was a member of the OAA Registration Board from 1974 to 1976, serving as chairman for two years. He was also involved in the development of the RAIC Architectural Certification Board (now the Canadian Architectural Certification Board), and was the OAA representative on that board for five years, serving as chairman for three years. He was very active in the development of the Association of Architectural Technologists of Ontario, especially of its Certification Board, of which he became a member. He also served on the Consultative Committee for Architectural Programs for the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, Ontario.

One of Barstow's most significant contributions to the profession was his active involvement in promoting the acceptance of part-time studies as an alternative to university programs in architecture, and more specifically in the development of the Minimum Syllabus Program, now known as the RAIC Syllabus. He was instrumental in the establishment of the RAIC Syllabus National Advisory Board, and sat as its first chairman.

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In 1977, Michael Barstow was elected a Fellow of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada. In the citation, his contribution to the profession was summarized as follows: "In all his activities Michael has provided positive and sound leadership, and provided total dedication to his profession."