



Robert "Boots" Boutilier

August 9, 2025

After a life well lived, Robert "Boots" Boutilier crossed the finish line on August 9th, 2025. He was predeceased by his parents, Jean and Gerald Boutilier. He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Anne Boutilier, daughters Robin and Leslie Boutilier, Grandchildren Lewis, Ruby and Gloria Lively and Noah Boutilier, and his brother Bill (Donna) Boutilier.

Born in Halifax on August 5, 1949, water quickly became an important part of Bob's life. He raced everything from one-meter Solings to Bluenoses, including his beloved "Scotia Plan" - winning way more than he lost. In recent years he transitioned to power boats; he and Annie exploring every nook and cranny of the South Shore. His love of all things marine extended to his career and for years he owned and operated Bedford's only boatyard.

He was very proud of his grandchildren and followed their many achievements in minute detail, sharing with anyone who would listen. Boots loved a good debate and was always open to hearing other people's opinions, even if they were wrong. He is rumoured to have once changed his mind. Bob loved animals and had a long line of pets. Perfectly trained dogs, from Daisy to Prius, and somewhat trained cats. His home was always a welcoming place where he reveled in hosting friends, family, and strangers alike with a bowl of chowder on Christmas Eve, or a cold beer on a Friday afternoon on the veranda. Bob was a unique personality whose reputation was known near and

far. Boots was many things to many people; Husband, Brother, Father, Best Friend, Mentor, and Bon Vivant. He will be sorely missed. No funeral by request, but please raise your glass in his honour. To Boots!

Tribute Wall

“ The tributes here are so comprehensive and evocative of the man we all loved and admired that I was reluctant to attempt to add anything worthwhile. However, I have one up on everyone here because Bob, brother Bill, my brother Dave, and I started a lifelong adventure when we were a mere 4 or 5 years old. They lived on Meadowbrook, we on Chapel Hill, now Rutledge, and it didn't take long for us to find each other. We went through all the adventures of the cowboy and Indian 1950s, the early rock 'n' roll years, and on and on. We remained close friends through all the ups and downs of the British invasion, psychedelia, and back-to-the-land hippiedom. All fueled by everything from peanut butter and hot dogs, to beer, whiskey and rum, and did I mention psychedelia?

Here's what I can tell you: Bob was exceptional right from the get go. When we made our first bows and arrows, we thought at first that Bob was shining us when he observed: "That's what I was aiming for." Little did we know that his hand-eye coordination was off the charts. At our first dartboard, Bob got bored with us very quickly because we couldn't keep up. Hitting the bullseye was no problem for him while I, for one, was lucky to hit the dartboard.

I was a fast sprinter though and rarely lost a race. So one day, up by the old Meadow, Bob challenged me to a race. This might seem out of character, but Bob was a mere shadow of the heft he became and he could run. The race was on, I took off at full tilt and halfway to the end of the Meadow, no Bob. I stopped and turned to see what was up, and Bob was still at the starting line! He was waiting for me to stop and then he lit the back burners. I doubt that anyone here has ever seen, or could even imagine, a skinny Bob, legs pumping furiously as he roared past me to the finish line.

Herein lies the real Boots. His speed was matched by his cunning, and I was thoroughly embarrassed to lose to a faster and more clever opponent. When Roger Runner speaks of Bob's unorthodoxy, he is speaking of the core of Boots' being. He was that way from day one.

The highlight of my trips home was dog walkies at DeWolfe Park, with Boots and Prius, RJ and his dog, and various and sundry others. I dread the next trip when my pal of 70 plus years won't be there with his smile, his warm welcome, his inimitable humour, and his extraordinary wit and knowledge. As others have said, he has left a huge hole in the cosmos with his passing. I hope my old meditation teacher is right that we will all meet again. Life would be much diminished for me if I thought I would never meet up with Boots again. He was truly a one off!

My condolences to Annie, Leslie, Robin, children and grandchildren, and brother Bill. And everyone else...

Peter Kerr - October 16, 2025 at 09:36 PM

HL

“ *My deepest condolences to Anne, Robin, and Leslie. I was fortunate to grow up at BBYC, where Boots was a true mentor. I will always remember his creativity and spirit—especially the time he built a conning tower on the “Free Be” to mimic a Canadian submarine, even drawing the attention of the military when it sailed into the outer basin. Though no photos remain, the memory lives on with me. Boots will be deeply missed.*

Hunter van Leeuwen - September 04, 2025 at 08:44 PM

RB

“ *Good bye Uncle Bob... the “Real” Bob Boutilier! An uncle of character and humour. I loved knowing he enjoyed my bear burgers and maple syrup. May God give peace to all in the family - Nephew Bob*

Robert Boutilier - August 31, 2025 at 12:57 PM

JB

“ Smooth sailing Bob, for you have crost the bar. James Bell

James Bell - August 24, 2025 at 07:27 AM

DL

“ I knew him as Bobby when we spent a fair amount of time together one summer making music with Ron Morrison. Bobby had a great spirit and it was a joy to see both Bob and Annie at the Hipperns a few years back. The world was a better place because he lived in it. My sincere condolences.

Donna-Marie (Redden) Lacey - August 22, 2025 at 03:20 PM

DH

“ Dear Anne, Robin and Leslie: We were so saddened to hear of Bob's loss, and what a big one it is, not just for your family, but actually for Bedford and the entire sailing community of which he was such a big part. Daniele and David fondly remember times out on the boat with you both, being regaled with stories of both old and new Bedford and the behind the scenes scuttlebutt than only Bob knew. He was a delightful, colourful human being who lived life fully and on his terms! That is to be celebrated even though his loss will be grieved. Much love to you all and holding you in our hearts and prayers during this time! David and Daniele Hart

David Hart - August 16, 2025 at 02:23 PM

NM

Dear Anne. I just heard of Bob's passing. I am so sorry. You had a wonderful life together. I remember him fondly. Always charming!! Take care of yourself my friend. Margaret

Nargaret MacCulloch - August 22, 2025 at 03:29 PM

DB

“ To Anne, Robin, Leslie and extended family I am so sorry for your loss. Wherever you found Bob you could count on finding a smile, humor and infectious laugh (and often a big summer hat!). With three Robert Boutilier’s in the family he was sure to remind us that he was the “REAL” Bob Boutilier! I’ve enjoyed reading the comments and kind words that people have posted and hope they’ve put a smile on your face, given you some comfort and know he will be missed by many.
-To Uncle Bob!

Derek Boutilier - August 16, 2025 at 06:25 AM

PD

“ Oh how I loved sailing with this guy! Yes, he was an unorthodox man as well as skipper. We carried more sail, with strange configurations, and always ‘on the edge of disaster’. But, when THE BOOTS showed up at The Squadron (RNSYS), they knew their big fancy boats would be giving up the first place finish. BOOTS just loved it! And, we were to be the first into the Governor General rum as we watched the rest of the big boats limp in. A great sailor, but he missed his true calling in life ... a stand-up comic. He was a master of the ‘double entendre’, the delivery with a comic twist. A complex situation could be solved with only several words ... leaving you paused, speechless, and scratching your head. Sitting on the front porch, beer in hand, looking onto the street, Boots would ask me “why are all those people running”. I’d tell him, it’s about expanding aerobic capacity, endorphins, fitness. “Nope, you only run when ya stole something”! It is kinda hard to refute that, well sort of, you know. Okay sailor ... we’ll see you in another world, do some winning sailing again, drink some rum with the lads and be giddy with laughter. Until then ...

Peter Dwyer - August 15, 2025 at 01:29 PM

SB

Peter.. there's a fabulous photo 1977 on Boatingadventures.ca

Sarah Beresford-Green - August 15, 2025 at 06:01 PM

.L

*Peter,loved your tribute to Bob "Boots" Boutlier, You could yet contribute to the comedic world.
Jessie Langille*

.Jessie Langille - August 15, 2025 at 08:28 PM

KM

“ I was a classmate of Bob's. He was a great guy, with a wonderful sense of humour. My deepest sympathy to his wife and family. Another good guy, gone way too soon.

Kathy (Slusarenko) MacFarlane - August 15, 2025 at 12:48 PM

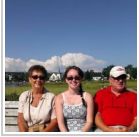
CG

“ Bob and family were a huge part of my life growing up in Bedford. I remember being scared of Bob when I was a small kiddo (booming voice and big presence and whatnot), and would hide behind Robin or Leslie if he said hello. This gave way to fondness as I grew older. A staple of the landscape of Shore Drive sitting on his porch with his customary hat, I looked forward to spotting him when I returned home for visits.

A quick chat on the porch catching me up on neighborhood news, beloved pets, or general musings of the world reminded me of why I loved growing up in Bedford.

Bob had such a jovial, kind warmth that I feel fortunate to have known. It was an honor to be his neighbor.

Cristina Graham-Dwyer - August 15, 2025 at 12:19 PM



“ *Condolences to Anne and family. Bob was a mentor to me, even though I was older...I knew nothing about sailing, but if I listened to him, all would be well. It was a distraction, on my 85th birthday, to see Bob's obit, no more friend, no more mentor, no more Boots. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.*

Lorraine Waller - August 15, 2025 at 11:40 AM



from Mike Waller

Lorraine Waller - August 15, 2025 at 11:42 AM



“ *Bob was always a fun guy to be around. His love of boats and the Basin were always up front. Thinking of you Anne and your family and wishing you comfort at this time.*

Dianne Nickerson (Hippert) - August 15, 2025 at 10:14 AM



“ *Boots was like a second father to me. Our families had such great times together on Shore Drive.. Lawn Darts championships, dinner parties, so many great memories. My deepest condolences to Annie, Robin and Leslie. This man was larger than life and had a great impact on so many people. Hold the memories close to your heart. Thanks for all your support, Boots. I will cherish you forever.*
Sarah Beresford-Green

Sarah Bond - August 15, 2025 at 07:45 AM



Thank you for always being so kind and thoughtful when we would visit Bill and Donna including a nice boat ride! You will surely be missed by all who knew you! Condolences to your family and friends!

Crystal Lindsay (Donna's sister) - August 15, 2025 at 09:04 AM

SD

“ My condolences to the Boutilier's. Bob was a great guy! I always felt welcome in his home when I was a kid. Rest peacefully Bob ❤️

Shauna Drummey - August 14, 2025 at 05:30 PM

BB

“ I've lost a brother like no other
And a friend so true
I'll raise a glass to honour him
And maybe even two!
I had a meaningful talk with Bob an hour before his passing, a great gift ! Our sorrow is lessened knowing he wouldn't want us to grieve for him and that his pain is over.
Nevertheless he leaves a big hole in our hearts... Cheers my Brother!

Bill Boutilier - August 14, 2025 at 01:55 PM

WM

Bob always had a wonderful smile and warm and inviting face, even as a child. It was wonderful to be in his company. Annie, we're so very sorry for your huge loss and your family's loss. Hugs 💕

Wanda and Bruce MacInnes - August 14, 2025 at 08:22 PM

FR

Bobby, who on earth will fill your boots!! You were such a great story teller and a huge part of Shore Drive life . Sail free for evermore. Annie and family, O have no words that will ease your grief but Chris and I are thinking of you a lot. What a loss!

Fiona Roper - August 19, 2025 at 07:39 PM

AJ

“ *Very sad to hear this, and I can only imagine the loss radiates throughout the Bedford community. He had a personality that filled a room, and a voice that boomed and made you feel comforted. I hope all of these wonderful memories bring you smiles and laughter on your hard days. I have no doubt his memory will stay alive with everyone that knew him. Sandy (Rodgersen) Joudrey + fam.*

Alexandra Joudrey - August 14, 2025 at 10:59 AM

JR

“ *Deepest condolences to Anne, Robin and Leslie. Bob was one of Daryl's closest friends with a mutual respect for each other. Bob will be missed! Judy Burgess Rupchan*

Judith Rupchan - August 14, 2025 at 08:14 AM



My condolences Leslie.

Ricardo Bullard - August 14, 2025 at 09:59 AM

JT

“ *As a former bartender and manager of BBYC, I swore an oath to Boots to never share a memory - what happens at BBYC stays at BBYC.
Last call Boots.*

Janet Thurrott - August 13, 2025 at 07:48 PM

HL

Boots made it all part of the adventure. Your post brought me right back — a perfect send-off. Last call, indeed.

Hunter van Leeuwen - September 04, 2025 at 08:49 PM

JM

“ *What to say about such an iconic person? He lived his life his way with a smile and carefree attitude. Always a word to anyone who passed by. With admiration respect and friendship, I raise a glass or two in his honour. Much love to Annie Leslie Robin and all the family.*

-Janet Lugar Miller

Janet Lugar Miller - August 13, 2025 at 03:26 PM

KI

Anne Leslie and Robin my heartfelt condolences to you all .

KimDompierre - August 13, 2025 at 07:41 PM

NS

Bob was a special cousin. We had great conversations and I'm so thankful for our recent gab session. Hugs to his beautiful family. Anne, Robin & Leslie and grandchildren and Bill. He will certainly be missed.



nancy stoddart - August 14, 2025 at 12:15 AM

KS

Bear hugs, a big glass of wine and an opinion on everything. Mr. Larger-than-life left us too soon. RIP Bobby. The world will be a bit smaller without you.

Kathy Steen - August 14, 2025 at 02:42 AM

CH

Bobby and Anne were a big part of my life growing up in Bedford; we lived around the corner from his family home. I have many memories of sailing, hanging around BBYC and Shore Drive. The last time I probably saw Bobby was at my mother's funeral. He was always at our house, and my mom enjoyed his company. My sisters and I have many memories that we will carry forever. Love to Anne and your children and grandchildren.

Cathy Keating Hanley - August 14, 2025 at 09:06 AM

CM

Legacy - "Lasting Impact", this certainly describes Bobby to a T. One of my favourite Christmases was when we lived across Shore Drive from you. It was a beautiful snowy day the type we all wish for at Christmas time with the road covered in snow so no where to go. All of a sudden we heard a lot of voices and the pure joy of laughter so we couldn't help but look and see the source.

There was Bobby towing a large wagon by his sit down lawn mower full of friends with their kids. Going down Ship Yard road became tricky due to the weight was too much for the engine, there we were jumping off and grabbing kids thus preventing going down the launching ramp to Bedford Basin. As the song goes "Thanks for The Memories" Bobby. Anne, Robin, Leslie and all your families, my sincerest sympathies, thank you for sharing Bobby with everyone.

May all the wonderful memories full of laughter sustain you.

There will be more than one glass raised for Bobby.

Charlotte Murray

Charlotte Murray - August 14, 2025 at 09:58 AM

AM

Boots was always such a big part of our lives, and became somewhat of an "extra" big brother to me; I have great memories of watching the "unemployment movie" together in the afternoons, and solving many important world problems! I particularly remember one long afternoon pondering the possibility of time travel; hopefully our paths will cross again in that other dimension...in the meantime, he will be missed. 😞

Annie MacCulloch - August 14, 2025 at 12:29 PM

SM

I will miss Bob's happy "hello" from the porch during my morning walk. I remember he and Annie well when Robin and Leslie were born and during many fun times at BBYC. Bob was always in the middle of the action and his laugh was infectious. My heart is with Annie, Robin, Leslie, his grandchildren and many close friends and neighbours.

Sharon MacIntosh

Sharon MacIntosh - August 15, 2025 at 08:05 AM

JT

As for so many people, I will miss Bobby dearly. There is much to remember about this guy, we could write a book.

Spending time in the yard working with Anne, he was always around. I would ask him how he was and he always answered "gold as gold".

He loved teasing his french canadian friend (specially when I first moved here in early 80s.) He and Herbie had a field day.

My partner Barry met Bob about 10 years ago and they developed a great friendship. It gave me a break because he got to tease Barry specially about the Maple Leafs.

Bob was knowledgeable about so much....maybe some exaggeration at times, but we loved him for it.

The French gardener 

Jeannine Theriault - August 15, 2025 at 08:51 AM

SE

It was a privilege to spend time with Bob in his last couple of months, sharing stories, opinions and lots of laughs just as we always did. He accepted his fate with his typical sense of humour, and pragmatism.

Watching the world descend upon the Boutilier household to show him the love, has been astounding.

Bob touched so many people, and they came from far and wide to let him know how special he was to them.

I can honestly say that my life would not have been the same if it wasn't for Bob, Annie, Leslie and Robin.

Goodbye dear friend. It was a pleasure knowing you.

You will be greatly missed but never forgotten.

Weiner (Serena)

Serena - August 15, 2025 at 10:26 AM

BH

Bobbie and Annie were two of the first people to welcome me to Bedford when our family arrived at # 89 Shore Drive from England. My two daughters were out on the Basin whether it was thick with ice or they were venturing out in their Laser. I knew that Bobbie kept an eye on them when they were sailing. He and Annie shared many evenings with the family around the dinner table, and Bobbie was instrumental in starting the annual Shore Drive Garden Party. Nothing phased him. He had the best sense of humour, and treated every person with the same respect.

Annie, Robin and Leslie, I may be thousands of kilometres away on Vancouver Island, but my thoughts and prayers are with you now.

Barbara Harwood (formerly Beresford-Green)

Barbara Harwood - August 15, 2025 at 10:51 AM

NB

Annie, Robin, Leslie and families

My thoughts are with you at this time. Boots was such a great part of our community since our family moved there in 1977. He will be sorely missed for sure.

My sincere condolences

Nancy Boyne

Nancy Boyne - August 15, 2025 at 01:40 PM

JO

Bob made the 'mistake' of confiding that he was 'part Irish' so I made the mistake of researching the Irish geneological history of the name and traced him distantly to an Irish King. Boots was quite proud of this rather tenuous link with antiquity and for a number of years displayed his astounding memory by taking the annual opportunity to review the minute details of his descent from Irish Royalty over a jar of Jamesons' on March 17th. Ever the compleat conversationalist, and a font of erudition, Bob could master any subject, discuss it convincingly, and relate to anyone, surprising those of us who made the miscalculation that we had brought something special to the discussion, and only to learn that Boots had unique take on it that was undeniably valid and certainly therefore o be taken into account. Bob was smart, really smart one could only imagine what his IQ was. He mastered us all with his wit and could quickly cut the self- important down to size without them realizing it. Boots is missed and Bedford is the lessor for his passing. One of the mildly eccentric members of a mildly eccentric era, when people appreciated originally and despised the bland and molded personalities of so many today, one can scarcely imagine the gap he leaves in the lives of Annie, Robin and Leslie, let one all who had the privilege of crossing his wake.

James O'Hagan

James O'Hagan - August 15, 2025 at 02:08 PM

SB

Jamie, there's a fabulous photo of you all on Boatingadventures.ca. 1977.. you, Boots, Peter, Herbie, David Forsyth. So fabulous!!!

Sarah Beresford-Green - August 15, 2025 at 06:47 PM

JG

Even when we didn't see each other often, every conversation seemed like no time had past. Sailing was often the focus, or some obscure reference that was a "well known fact."

I got to spend many hours in cars and boats with Boots in pursuit of sailing glory, which we found often. Finns, Solings, Scotiaplannd finally RC sailing.

Not a perfect human, but a valued friend. In the end that is maybe the best any of us can ask.

JW Goddard - August 16, 2025 at 08:10 AM

KG

Bob has entered into Bedford's tradition of unique people. Gone but never forgotten. We were proud to count Bob as a friend. he was a one-off and we mean that in a positive and respectful manner. When Rose Marie and I moved from bedford he said there would always be a guinness waiting for us. I was proud to be associated with Bob & Billie and the late Irvin on a professional basis. May the wind always be at your back " old buddy"

Ken & Rose Marie (The Giffins)

Ken & Rose Marie Giffin - August 16, 2025 at 12:11 PM

BM

Anne thinking of you and your family during this great loss. What a joy to read all the fabulous tributes to his "life and personality". Your family should be really proud of the love so many have shared. Big hugs.

Barbara and Keith MacLeod.

Barbara MacLeod - August 17, 2025 at 04:21 PM

JB

Hi Annie. So sorry to hear of Bob's passing. He was one of a kind and will be missed by everyone.

John Burton

John Burton - August 19, 2025 at 09:53 AM

PM

My condolences to Annie and family. So sad to hear of Boot's passing. He was an awesome human and an outstanding sailor, of whom most of us learned a few tips from .Who can ever forgot the great times we had at his Boatyard, most of us had better laughs there then out on the water, there was always a number of great stories. Hats off to you Boots, you will always be remembered.

Paddy McHugh

Paddy McHugh - September 05, 2025 at 08:43 AM