



## Robert "Bob" Tunnickliff

May 1, 1924 - November 21, 2014

Robert D. "Bob" Tunnickliff, 90, of Libertyville, passed away on Friday, Nov. 21, 2014 at Advocate Condell Medical Center. He was born May 1, 1924 in Burwell, Nebraska and was a gifted athlete and graduate of Kewanee, IL High School. He was also a graduate of Northwestern University and received his Masters degree from the University of Colorado.

Following high school graduation, Bob enlisted in the US Navy and served in the Pacific Theatre during WWII. The destroyer that he served on was the USS Lansdowne and he was proud that his ship was selected to carry the Japanese emissaries to sign the peace treaty at the end of the war. Bob moved to Libertyville in 1954 to become the head varsity football coach and the school's first athletic director. He retired in 1986 after serving the school for 32 years. He was a member of St. Lawrence Episcopal Church in Libertyville and remained a Northwestern Wildcat and Libertyville Wildcat fan the rest of his life.

Surviving are his children, Tom (Mary) Tunnickliff and Amy (Steve) Ratican, both of Libertyville; 4 grandchildren, Jack (fiancée April) and Kate Tunnickliff and Kristi and Erin Ratican; his brother Ed (Sheila) Tunnickliff of Mt. Home, AR. He was preceded in death by his wife Bette in 1992, by his parents, A.W. and Mabel Tunnickliff, sister Ethel Jean and brothers, Bill, Jack and Don.

Visitation will be from 3:00 to 8:00 p.m. Monday, Nov. 24 at the Burnett-Dane Funeral Home, 120 W. Park Ave. (Rt. 176, one block west of Milwaukee Ave.) Libertyville. Funeral services will be held at 11:00 a.m. Tues. April 25 at St.

Lawrence Episcopal Church, 125 W. Church St. Libertyville. Interment will follow at Lakeside Cemetery. Memorial contributions to Honor Flight Chicago, 938 W. Montana St. Chicago, IL 60614 would be appreciated. Info: 847-362-3009 or please sign the guest book at [www.burnettdane.com](http://www.burnettdane.com).

# Tribute Wall



“ Thinking of the entire family during this time of loss. I wish we had had the chance to meet him. I know April thought the world of him and loved him so much. Keeping you all in our thoughts and prayers. Joe and Celeste

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**Celeste Michaels** - June 29, 2018 at 01:27 PM



“ Condolences to the family. I knew Mr. Tunicliff, but knew most his son, Tom, who struggled with me at times as my camp counselor at Adler Park Day Camp back in the early 70's. Thanks, Tom, for your patience with me, and my heart goes out to you and your family in this time of sorrow. - Dave Grange - Mesa, AZ

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June 29, 2018 at 01:27 PM



“ Amy and Tom  
Sorry about Dad's passing.  
He was a true inspiration to all of us that he coached.  
Joe Wilson

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**Joe wilson** - June 29, 2018 at 01:27 PM



“ May the memories of good times help you through your grief. By all accounts he was a very special man who loved his family and knew that he was loved in return.

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**Barry and Sue Fenton** - June 29, 2018 at 01:27 PM

MM

“ Mr. Tunnicliff was one of the most influential persons in my life. As a football coach and head of the Park District, he believed in me and my abilities before others did. When I approached him with some misgivings about being the youngest Director of the Adler Day Camp, he said to me, " I have every faith and confidence in you to do a great job". When my high school football career ended due to injury and I asked him about being the youngest coach of the varsity Yankees in the Libertyville Football League, he said the same thing and was a constant mentor to me that season. When I was contemplating college choices ( which included Northwestern), he said his famous motto which was echoed by his brother Ed : " I would rather die than send you to the U of I". I am blessed to have known Bob Tunnicliff. I am forever indebted to him and his family and my prayers are with them now and always". Mark McCareins

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**Mark McCareins** - June 29, 2018 at 01:27 PM

EM

“ A wonderful teacher & coach.

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**Ernest McClannahan** - June 29, 2018 at 01:27 PM

DZ

“ Amy, Steve, Kristi and Erin, Our thoughts and prayers are with you all during this sad and difficult time. Amy, your dad will always be remembered as a Wildcat - first at Northwestern and of course, at LHS. Denise (Levasseur) Zwit and family

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**Denise Zwit** - June 29, 2018 at 01:27 PM

KH

“ Tom and Amy I send my deepest condolences to you and your families on the passing of your father. What a great Football Coach and Athletic Director he was at LHS. My thoughts and prayers are with you all! Kim Kovac Harris and family

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**Kim Harris** - June 29, 2018 at 01:27 PM

DD

“ Prayers and thoughts for a good soul, mentor, and family friend. So many good memories of Coach Tunnicliff and his family. Thankful for the time he was amongst us, thankful and blessed for the impact he had on so many lives, mine included

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**david Duff** - June 29, 2018 at 01:27 PM

DC

“ My condolences to the family. Thank you Bob for all you did for LHS.

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**Doug Callison** - June 29, 2018 at 01:27 PM

GH

“ I will never forget you. You taught me how to play the game (of life) by the rules and win.

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**George Huxhold** - June 29, 2018 at 01:27 PM



“ Tom and Amy. I have so many fond memories of your Dad and your family as your were growing up. My sincere sympathy to you on your loss. Bev Merlock Kojder

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June 29, 2018 at 01:27 PM

KS

“ *Bob Tunnicliff was a second father to me. I absolutely loved him. What a great legacy he leaves behind. May your memories sustain you and love of family and friends support you through these difficult days.*

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**Karen Sandstead** - June 29, 2018 at 01:27 PM

JF

“ *I will always have fond memories of Bob! It was a pleasure to spend time with Bob in the press box at Wildcat football games and hear him pass on advice for his favorite team! I also enjoyed our conversations at Spring Meadows. As I went to visit my in-laws there I often found myself in conversation with Bob in the dining room. He has been an inspiration to me on how to live life and be a Wildcat!  
I'll miss you Bob...*

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**John Fischl** - June 29, 2018 at 01:27 PM

MD

“ *Tom, Amy, Where does one begin. Your father helped to shape the lives of so many young people in Libertyville. I was fortunate to have had him as a mentor during my years at Adler Park. I will miss him but will always remember, with fondness, his wisdom, wit, leadership and most of all his friendship. Cherish the memories. God Bless your families but most of all God Bless Mr. T.*

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**Michael Dolan** - June 29, 2018 at 01:27 PM

WS

“ *Coach Tunnicliff was an outstanding mentor and positive influence in the lives of many of his former students and athletes. His example and a life worth living will be sorely missed by all.*

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**Wally sitz** - June 29, 2018 at 01:27 PM

RR

“ Bob Tunnicliff touched thousands of young lives during his time at LHS. Their betterment was his calling. May God bless him at this hour as he enters the gates of heaven. My sincere sympathy to the family he leaves behind.

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**Robert Ralston** - June 29, 2018 at 01:27 PM

JO

“ Tom, I was so sorry to hear of your loss. I didn't know your father, but I'll never forget what you said to me when my dad passed away. You said, "he must have been a hell of a guy to have raised you" Well....right back at you, buddy. Know that I'm thinking of and praying for you and your family.

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**John** - June 29, 2018 at 01:27 PM

GJ

“ We are sorry to hear of Bob's passing.  
George and Kathy Jirasek

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**George Jirasek** - June 29, 2018 at 01:27 PM

TC

“ Mr. Tunnicliff--still can't think of him as Bob--was a remarkable coach and teacher, He remains a model for how I recognize great coaching. I remember what he said in the locker room just before we went out to face arch-rival Chrystal Lake in the last game of the 1958 season. Instead of some hyped-up rhetoric, he said, "Just go out there and have fun." We did, and won the game in the process. Even after all these years his passing still feels like a loss.

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**Tony Cresswell** - June 29, 2018 at 01:27 PM

SA

“ Tom, Amy and family, sorry to hear of your loss. Can never forget the original Mr. "T"

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**Stu Armstrong** - June 29, 2018 at 01:27 PM

EF

“ Coach Tunnicliff was the ideal coach and an inspiration to all who played for him.

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**Edward FitzSimons** - April 27, 2018 at 05:44 AM

AB

“ *\*PLEASE READ LOUD AND CLEARLY, EVEN THOUGH I AM DOWN IN FLORIDA WITH FAMILY, I WANT MY PRESENCE KNOWN: Written by Andrea (Andi) Tranter Bedell, Cary, Illinois, now in Florida with family. Libertyville kids in the 1960's thought they were just getting a summer job at Adler Park, but little did they know that under the wing of Robert D. Tunnickliff, Village of Libertyville, Parks and Recreation Department, they were entering a teacher training ground of wisdom and guidance. So many Adler Park alum have become wonderful regular ed and special ed teachers. Luckily for me, I raised my hand to type contracts for referees and umpires when Mr. T. came by the LHS typing class in 1967, asking for a volunteer. Best move of my whole life. How ironic that the weakest girl in LHS PE classes was spending all her free time in the Boys' Athletic Director's office. Mr. T, then recruited me out to Adler Park as Summer Day camp counselor and Park Secretary. This man always lovingly talked about his beloved Betty, kids, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Estes Park, and Nebraska, Kewanee, and brother, Ed. I always loved seeing that yellow Mustang drive into the park. He knew a good kid when he saw one, and invested in each and every one of them. The phone call that changed my life: One day the Park phone rang and Mr. T. answered. It was a mom from Waukegan trying to find a Day Camp placement for her 6 year old Deaf son. Their local scout leader was making fun of her son's deaf speech. Mr. T. leaned over to me, Andi, do we take Deaf kids? I replied, I've never seen one? Mr. T talked with the Mom and told her we would give it a try with me. Mom drove Jeff back and forth daily from Waukegan. Mr. T. watched over the situation and the following year Jeff brought his Deaf friend Bobby with him. Mr. T. even had Jeff working in the basket room at the Pool, having Jeff match the basket number to the number embossed on the metal pins to patrons. The inclusion was so successful!! Aptitude testing took place at LHS and when results came, my parents and I were informed by the guidance counselor, she is not college material, don't waste your money. This must not have sat right with Mr. T. When I told him he responded, Well, I don't know about that. He encouraged and researched Deaf Ed Programs and there was one*

*at Illinois State University. Some of his park kids drove me down and back in one day to Normal to see the place. He continued to encourage and help me. I graduated from Illinois State University in 1974 in Deaf Education. I taught for 38 wonderful years, loved it, and when I retired in Crystal Lake in 2012, my husband drove to Libertyville to get & bring my Honored Guest, Mr. T. to my retirement banquet. All of my colleagues felt as if they knew him because they had heard so much about him. In 2007, I was in a graduate Program through ISU and we were sharing our pasts and how we got into teaching. One lady talked about a very special teacher she had in Elementary School. That woman changed her life. Libertyville came up, and then Rockland School. After the session, I went to ask the name of that wonderful inspiration. She said, Betty Tunncliff. Mr. and Mrs. T. had two wonderful kids, Tom and Amy. But in reality, Tom and Amy had probably hundreds of brothers and sisters over the years. The Tunncliffs were models, mentors, and encouragers to so many. Tom and Amy did indeed win the parent lottery, but they shared it, too. Bob and Betty have caused a ripple effect, probably nation-wide, investing in kids. In a pool a few years ago down in Orlando, Florida, I was talking to a lady, also from Libertyville. Teaching came up, etc. and my mentor came up, and she asked his name. I told her my story, and her reply, being from Libertyville, Oh, honey, that was not just for you, he did that for so many kids. Maybe, but he sure made me feel special!! I am who I am today because of Mr. T's believing in me. I have tried to be a Mr. T. and mentor to as many children/students as he did, and I will continue to do so. I am so glad that h*

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**Andrea Bedell** - April 27, 2018 at 05:44 AM

CP

“ *I attended LFHS from 1955-59 and was a member of the football team. I remember Coach Tunncliff fondly. I'm so glad that I was able to reconnect with him at one of our class reunions, I believe in 2009. My condolences to the family, he was a special man.*

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**Chris Parson** - April 27, 2018 at 05:44 AM

PB

“ Coach Tunnicliff was one of my life's heroes. He was a great coach, but more than that, he was a terrific role model and a wonderful human being. Rest in peace Coach. Your legend will live forever.

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**Patrick Bibby** - April 27, 2018 at 05:44 AM

FW

“ Coach Tunnicliff was most proud of the 1956 team when we beat Barrington without four starters whom he had to discipline. He was our hero and mentor.  
Frank Wellwerts QB

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**Frank Wellwerts** - April 27, 2018 at 05:44 AM

LB

“ Condolences

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**Lawrence (Larry) Black** - April 27, 2018 at 05:44 AM

MG

“ Fond memories of a fine man. May the Lord bless you and comfort your family in your time of need.  
Sincerely,  
Marsha Olson Groves

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**Marsha Olson Groves** - April 27, 2018 at 05:44 AM

WW

“ Our loss, heavens gain - God rest his soul. My condolences to Tom & Amy. It looks like the Kewanee gang is reforming in heaven for eternity. My memories of Coach Tunnicliff are long and strong. I can still see the pictures on my parents basement wall of him on the sidelines in white short sleeves coaching the LHS Wildcats football team in the 1960's. I remember seeing him with his crew cut and black coaching shoes walking down the hall at LHS back to the AD office. Then there was the time he calmly told us we couldn't play pickup basketball in the field house because we didn't have supervision. At the time I was upset & didn't understand why but took the time to explain the risks & because of my respect for him I let it go. There were the FCA meetings he encourages us to attend. What difference that made after my Dad died. He was from the greatest generation that was honorable, polite, disciplined, determined and sacrificial in all they did. I just know a few of the great men he coached and taught that influenced my life like Bill Debruler & Max Sanders. I even had Coach Tunnicliff for PE class one semester, it was the best PE class I had, we lined up for roll call and learned about different sports. He was always the professional - doing it the RIGHT WAY. His laugh, his stories about Kewanee, what great memories. He was such fine husband to the ever sweet Mrs. Tunnicliff, a good Dad raising great kids. I still remember hearing "TNT" for the first time at a LHS HS track meet when of course Tommy was some where throwing up then going out and winning the 100 and 200yd dash. What great memories- thank you Coach Tunnicliff for being a strong and fine example for young men like myself and dedicating your life to giving us the wonderful opportunities in education, athletics and in faith at Libertyville High School, Home of the Wildcats. RIP Bill Whitmore 440-773-5517 mobile

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William Whitmore - April 27, 2018 at 05:44 AM

MG

“ My sincere condolences for your loss. "Coach" had a most positive influence on thousands of young people. I know I will never forget him.

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**Michael Geary** - April 27, 2018 at 05:44 AM

CV

“ Tom and Amy, Deepest sympathies to you and your families on the passing of your father. I have great memories of your Dad and you all when we lived on Lincoln Ave. growing up. Thoughts and prayers are with you, and may God bless you and your family at this sad time.

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**Cindy (Merlock Kojder) Volk** - April 27, 2018 at 05:44 AM