

# Dr. Bob Milne and the R.E.A. Milne Scholarship

by Lynne Belluscio

Last Thursday, while dedicated volunteers were placing flags on veterans' gravesites at Machpelah Cemetery, I happened to check to see if the flag had been placed on Dr. Milne's grave. It's not an imposing stone, just flush with the ground and I had to move some of the grass clipping to take the picture.

You may have heard of Dr. Milne, especially if you know of a student who has received a LeRoy Rotary Scholarship, because the scholarship was established in the memory of Dr. Robert (Bob) E. A. Milne. Over the years, thousands of dollars have been given out to hundreds of LeRoy college students. The scholarship is given throughout four years of school.

Bob Milne was born in Welland, Canada on April 6, 1900. He graduated from the Toronto University School of Medicine in 1925 and interned at General Hospital in Hamilton, Ontario. According to one historian, he served in the Canadian armed services during World War I, but little is known about his unit or length of service.

He practiced medicine at Watertown, Ontario for nine years before moving to LeRoy in 1936. He was active in the community, serving on the Board of Education, and was a member of the Genesee County Medical Association, Olive Branch Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons, the Oatka Hose Company, and the Presbyterian Church.

In 1940, he became a charter member of the LeRoy Rotary Club. In 1943, although he was 43, he enlisted in the Air Force. He saw active duty in the Italian and African Campaigns and was promoted to the rank of Major with the 41st Air Group of the Army Aviation Medical Corps. Just before he was to be discharged, he developed meningitis and was seriously ill for several weeks. His discharge was deferred and he did not leave the service until the early months of 1946. He returned home to continue his practice. He and his wife Evelyn, and their two sons, Bruce and Robert, lived on Wolcott Street.

His bout with meningitis had left his health impaired, and in the spring of 1948, he was hospitalized in Rochester. He died on May 4th, 1948. His two sons were still in high school and the Rotary Club was concerned about their future, so the Club established a scholarship program. But it was not solely for the Milne boys. Its purpose was "To adopt worthy individuals of the LeRoy area for the purpose of assisting them in completing an educational program consistent with the aims and ideals of Rotary. It was the united opinion of the committee that this fund should not be considered in any sense as a loan to the individual assisted. Rather it was felt that this fund was to be an investment in youth, believing that by contributing to society, an educated man or woman, we might see progress toward the purpose for which we seek."

To raise money for the Milne Scholarship, the Rotary Club held a Rotary Show. The show continued for over forty years, and then it was replaced by what is known as "The Graze to Raise." Thousands of dollars are raised each year and given out in scholarships. The Milne family continued to give to the scholarship. But now both of



Bob's sons have passed away. This year, the LeRoy Rotary Club, in commemoration of their 75th anniversary, have designated Dr. R.E.A. Milne to receive posthumously the Rotary Paul Harris Award. The award will be announced at the LeRoy Rotary installation dinner, June 24, at the Stafford Country Club.

If you know of a student who lives in the LeRoy Central School District, who might need financial aid for college for next year, visit the LeRoy Rotary website

at [www.leroyrotary.org](http://www.leroyrotary.org). The goal of the R.E.A. Milne Scholarship Fund is to help students who reside within the LeRoy Central School District to further their education. Grants are made on a financial need basis. The amount distributed each year is determined by available funds. Currently, each recipient receives \$750 each year for up to four years. Recipients must re-apply each year to receive the full amount. \$3,000 per student is our present limit.

