

Life stories

A celebration of lives well lived and people well loved
Read more Life Stories on yorkregion.com

Kenneth McDowell a beloved family man

BY SIMONE JOSEPH
sjoseph@yrmg.com

When Pat Carefoot dated Kenneth McDowell in the mid-1950s, she might have expected romance.

But more often than not, four of her younger siblings tagged along, to drive-in movies or to Port Dover Beach.

This was thanks to McDowell, who was prone to inviting his date's three younger brothers and a sister to join them.

"They would refer to him as the kindest man they ever knew. He could give love unconditionally," said daughter Kim Carretta.

The kids would show up to McDowell's baseball game when he was playing for the Brantford Red Sox, knowing he would invite them for ice cream after the game.

Pat's brother, Marty, told a story at McDowell's Celebration of Life Sept. 17. He talked about the time they were all playing crokinole at the Carefoot family home and Pat was waiting to go out with Kenneth on a date.

McDowell kept saying "yep...just finishing the game" and kept playing.

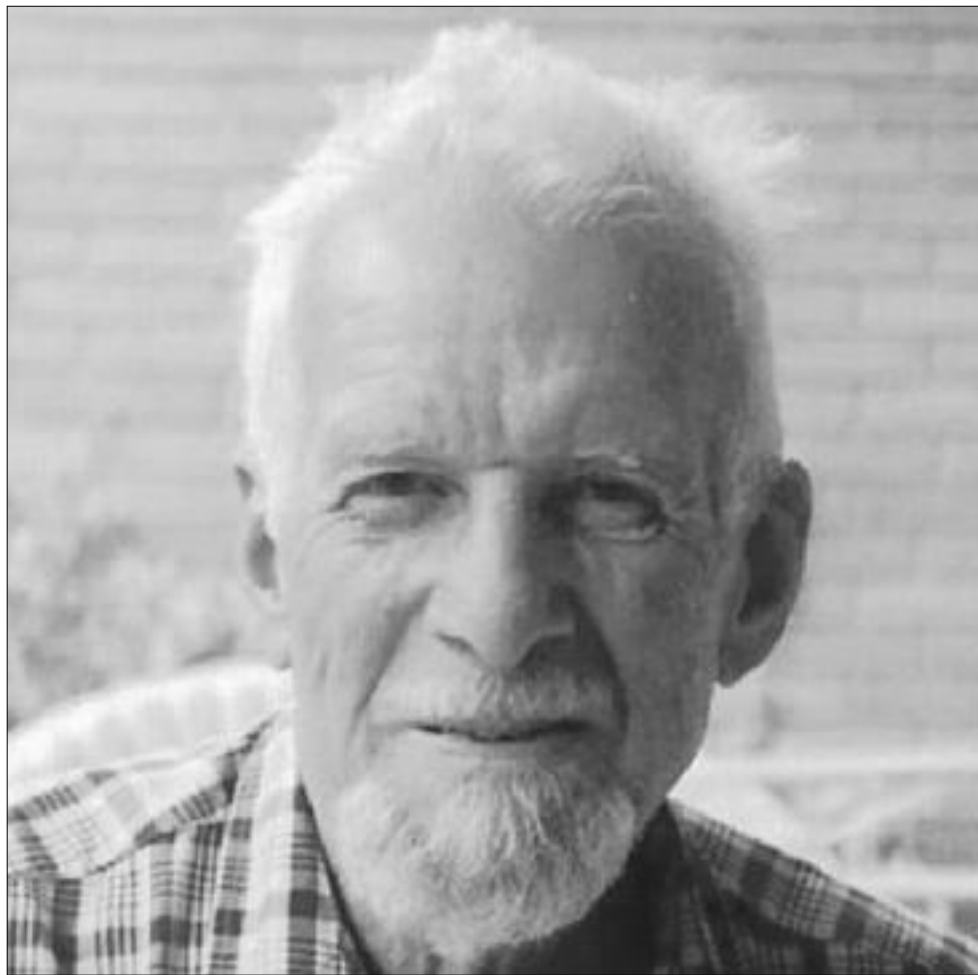
Carretta tells the rest: "Guess my mom lost it and hit him over the head with a broom to get him moving."

The couple met in Brantford through mutual friends and were married in 1957.

But back in Kenneth's childhood, really in his late teens, he had a huge baseball opportunity.

At 18, he was invited to the New York Giants training school in Sanford, Florida.

It was spring training 1951/1952 and he was trying out for the farm team. He ended up breaking his leg while sliding into homeplate. Kenneth went onto play left field for the Brantford Juveniles. At 19, he returned to the Giants' school in Melbourne, Fla. in 1952. He was asked to tryouts again and so he went, but the Korean War had started and Pat says since they were drafting Canadians in the USA



Kenneth McDowell

and McDowell did not want that, he came home.

Kenneth built a house on Birch Avenue in Richmond Hill.

The family moved there in 1970.

"He did love Richmond Hill. He was drawn to the open spaces," Carretta said.

Kenneth coached hockey. During the mid to late 1970s, he was president of the

Richvale Minor Hockey Association. Richvale eventually became part of Richmond Hill.

Kenneth's father Ernest always thought his son would be a minister. After all, he was religious, caring and always had a Bible.

"He had an inner peace, calm about him" Carretta said. "He had a love of

people in his own quiet way. He loved and accepted people for who they were."

He had the patience of Job, she said. "I don't remember dad ever raising his voice," Carretta said.

Kenneth was also a handyman and an electrician with a sense of humour.

He made a sign that said: "Never trust an electrician with scorched eyebrows."

He put his carpentry skills to use, building both a dream home and a cottage for his family.

In his early years, Kenneth worked with his father, who ran the local Electrohome store in downtown Brantford. He also had a long career as a teacher at various North York Board of Education.

After retiring, he enjoyed summers at his cottage in Southampton on Lake Huron.

Kenneth died on Aug. 9, 2016 after a lengthy illness, at the age of 83.

The longtime Richmond Hill resident leaves behind three children, nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

He and Pat were married 59 years.

"He enriched anybody's life he crossed paths with with his kindness and inner calm - you felt it," Carretta said.

Granddaughter Olivia wrote about her grandfather on the Marshall Funeral Home website: "Grandpa was the kindest, most gentle man I've ever known. Thoughtful with a heart of pure gold. He was a true hero and a beautiful person. The kind things he did for us and the way he made us laugh will always play back in my heart."

Life stories



Celebrate a life well lived!

"Adored by children, universally respected and an inspiration to her peers, Mrs. McCluskey was a tireless volunteer, quick to deflect the praise heaped on her."

Your community newspaper is celebrating the achievements and contributions of everyday, ordinary people, who have affected the lives of others in extraordinary ways. Leaving a lasting impression on the community, our award-winning journalists will write a fitting tribute in memory of those who have a special story to share. Through your community newspaper and LifeNews.ca, we celebrate those no longer with us and remember the memories we share.

For more information or to contact one of our professional writers please call

Newmarket/Aurora EG Tracy Kibble	905-853-8888
Georgina & Bradford Ted McFadden	905-853-8888
Markham, Bernie O'Neill	905-294-2200
Stouffville Jim Mason	905-640-2612
Vaughan & King Kim Champion	905-264-8703
Richmond Hill/Thornhill Marney Beck	905-294-2200