

Remembering Our Dad

By Denise Kamps

Dad was known by many names; Wee Willie, C.W., Bill, Papa, Ompa, Uncle Bill, but to us he was always Our Dad.

Dad was born on Feb. 15, 1926 in Brussels, Belgium and shortly afterwards his parents moved to Montreal. He started school and skipped Grade 2, which was quite a feat as he only spoke Dutch at home. His family eventually moved to Toronto during World War II and Dad decided to join the Air Force. Then he heard that the Dutch Air Force was looking for recruits and he decided to fight for them.

He trained in England and earned his wings in 1946. He spent the majority of his time stationed in Bali and the Dutch East Indies, and on one occasion was captured by the enemy, but was traded for enemy prisoners of war. After the war, he returned to Toronto and attended Ryerson, where he studied photography.

Mom and Dad married in 1954 and moved to Peterborough where I was born. The next year they moved to Belleville where Dad was credit manager for the Belleville General Hospital and Mike and Colleen were born there. In 1959 he began his pharmaceutical sales career with G.D. Searle. We moved to Richmond Hill where Maureen was born and finally to Stouffville where Chris and Kathleen were born.

Dad loved and excelled at his job. After 32 years with Searle, he retired at the age of 65. His many accom-

plishments included being a founding member of the newly formed Separate School Board that in 1965 brought St. Mark's School to town. He was a founding member of the Stouffville Centurions Drum and Bugle Corps and managed the Colour Guard.

Dad successfully ran for a seat on council where his politics involved standing strong in his beliefs, even if it was against the "party line". He joined the cast of Music Mania for a few years which gave him the acting itch, so he joined a talent agency where he did some bit parts, including the "Super Dave" show and some commercials.

His most infamous part was as "Trucker Pete" for Raisin Bran, which resulted in him losing a couple of days pay as his employer found out that the making of the commercial took place when Dad was allegedly at work. After getting acting out of his system, Dad became a volunteer probation officer, working with young offenders.

After retiring and moving to Qualicum Beach, B.C., Dad became involved in that community. When he left, he had two grandchildren, Norm and Katie. In 2000, Dad decided to move back to Ontario as the number of grandchildren had grown to 11 (now 12) and he wanted the opportunity to get to know them better.

First and foremost Dad was as proud of us as we were of him. Dad and Mom did an excellent job in raising us (if I say so myself) and now that they are both watching over us, we'll continue to do them proud.



Dad, as you told us yourself, you had a great life and we agree. Today is not goodbye, it's see you later; but most of all we just want to say again; love ya Dad.

Denise Kamps is Bill Kamps' oldest daughter and this is an excerpt from her eulogy for her father. She and her five siblings were at their father's side when he died Aug. 5 at York Central Hospital.

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