



William Henry Rudge

May 7, 1915 - June 28, 2016

Obituary of William Rudge

William Henry Rudge, "Bill," passed away at home on June 28, 2016. He was 101 years old.

Bill was born in Chicago, IL, on May 7, 1915. He was the oldest of three children, Bill, Frank, and Nancy, born to Leah and Henry Rudge. His parents emigrated from Shropshire and Yorkshire, England, to the U.S. in 1912. Young Bill was raised in a three-story apartment building at 1207 N. State Street in Chicago. His family's gas-lit apartment had two individual coal stoves, and the coal and ashes had to be carried up and down the three flights of stairs, several times per day to provide heat and hot water. A hand-cranked telephone hung on the wall, and the milk and ice was delivered daily by horse and cart.

Swimming was a big part of young Bill's life. From the age of 6, he was taken regularly (in good weather) to the Oak Street Beach, only two blocks from home. Soon he headed there on his own. Through grammar school and High school, he spent a lot of time on the "rocks" at the edge of Lake Michigan, hanging out with groups of boys and girls, and swimming long stretches along

the shoreline, often as far as a mile.

Bill graduated from Lane Tech High School in 1932 - in the midst of the Great Depression. He felt very lucky to land a job as "messenger boy" for Swift & Company in the Chicago Stockyards. In those days he could take the elevated train from the north side of the city right into Swift's third floor office at the Stockyards. His pay was \$8.00 per week, and the cost to ride the "El" was \$1.00 per week. Little did he know that except for two years' service in the U.S. Army during World War II, Swift & Company would turn out to be his first and only employer - for over 45 years!

In 1941 Bill married Dorothy Elizabeth Sebastian, youngest of four daughters of Anna and Francis Sebastian, who both emigrated from Germany. Dorothy, "Dot," liked to tell the story of how slow Bill had been to propose marriage. So Ernie, her sister Ruth's husband, suggested that Dot accompany them on a long vacation out West. The plan was to make Bill miss her. It worked, and they were engaged as soon as she returned!

Bill and Dot had two children, Karen and Alice. They raised their children in Chicago and Clarendon Hills, IL, and for a short time, San Gabriel, CA. They were loving and self-sacrificing parents, dedicated to ensuring their children had a secure and happy childhood as well as every opportunity for a happy and successful adulthood.

Later, when Bill retired in 1979, the couple moved to Continental Country Club in Wildwood, FL. Apparently, Continental was a good choice, since they lived there happily for the rest of their lives. Bill and Dot were active in community

activities through the years, particularly enjoying golf and bridge. Dot had her first hole-in-one at age 80. Bill played golf until age 92. He was also an enthusiastic and skilled gardener. His vegetable gardens were bountiful, and his flowers were lush. He experimented with hydroponics as well as propagation. Many of his amaryllis plants still flourish, propagated from a single plant given to him over 30 years ago.

Bill's siblings, Frank and Nancy, have predeceased him, as well as his beloved wife Dorothy and daughter, Alice. Succeeding him are his daughter, Karen, and his grandchildren, Cindy Holtz, Julie Taylor, and Amy Richards. The family will hold a private memorial.

Tribute Wall



“ We are so sorry for the loss of your family member. May the God of all comfort be with your family during this time and days ahead.

Eddie Griffin - July 15, 2016 at 12:00 AM



“ Karen, Uncle Bill was such an inspiration and a wonderful man. He will always be remembered and loved by us.

Marlene - July 11, 2016 at 12:00 AM



“ William Henry Rudge

July 01, 2016 at 12:00 AM