

WIFE OF LONG-TIME LINDSAY RADIO STATION OWNER PASSES AT 90

Wyn McNabb Played Instrumental Role In Growth Of CKLY Lindsay



1969



1969



2005

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (Mon. Jan. 6, 2020 – Lindsay, Ont.): Wyn McNabb, wife of long-time CKLY 910 radio owner (now Bob FM), Pete McNabb, passed away Sunday, January 5, 2020, after an 11+ year struggle with Alzheimer's disease. Mrs. McNabb, having turned 90 on Dec. 13, passed away at Lindsay's Ross Memorial Hospital, with youngest son, Lindsay surgeon, Dr. Jamie McNabb, by her side. Wyn leaves behind the families of her three children: eldest son, Andy, youngest son, Jamie, and daughter Tammy. Tammy and Wyn's husband, Pete, both predeceased her in 2008.

Wyn played an instrumental role – both behind the scenes and behind the microphone – in the growth of CKLY's service to Lindsay, and the greater Victoria-Haliburton area (see CKLY Years).

Funeral and Visitations

The funeral will be held at the Mackey Funeral Home in Lindsay on Friday at 7 pm. Visitations are scheduled on Thursday from 7pm-9pm, and on Friday, from 6 pm-7pm, preceding the 7 pm funeral.

Early Years and the Battle of Britain

Two months and a day after the stock market crash of 1929, Wyn was brought home from Wiarion Hospital on Christmas Day, bundled in blankets – most fittingly, in a one-horse open sleigh.

In 1935, her father, Harry moved the family to England, to assume operation of his family's farm, Hunston Dairy, immediately south of Chichester. Wyn was a first-hand witness to the Battle of Britain, as Allied gunnery crews stationed on and around the farm would down German fighters and bombers. The Chichester Cathedral spire pointed a direct line to London, serving as a guide to the Luftwaffe planes that passed over the family farm on their way to bomb London. A number of times, her father would take her out by horse and wagon to retrieve downed Allied flyers, and mother Eva would have them in for tea and biscuits. Brother John was killed in an RAF training crash.

After the war, Wyn enrolled at Clark's College in Brighton for secretarial studies. Later, after attending the London Olympics in 1948, Wyn and parents returned to Canada; whilst then surviving brother Bill stayed in England and became a career RAF officer.

Wyn found secretarial work in Toronto with Maclean Hunter Publishing. Later, she became personal secretary to Lord Thomson of Fleet, Roy H. Thomson, who became one of the world's 10 wealthiest men. Via holdings in a number of companies, Roy's grandson David, has ownership in the Winnipeg Jets.

After Wyn's having met husband Pete in 1950, the couple married in 1952 at University of Toronto's Wycliffe College Chapel.

Not long thereafter, forsaking the soot and the smog of the city, for the blue skies and green grass of the Kawarthas, Wyn and Pete chose to move to the more intimate and friendly environs of Lindsay. Upon arriving in Lindsay, Wyn became plant secretary at Visking for Barney Schenk.

Wyn was also a charter member of the Lindsay chapter of the I.O.D.E., a charitable organization providing scholarships, bursaries, book prizes, and awards, and pursues other philanthropic and educational projects, which resulted in Wyn's being invited to Buckingham Palace in 1974, to make a presentation on behalf of the chapter, to the organization's Regent, Queen Elizabeth.

CKLY Years And Thereafter

From 1961 to 1986, while husband Pete pursued his vision of community service through local radio ownership of CKLY, it was said that Wyn provided the glue that held that vision (and her family) together. Pete often remarked of her irreplaceable counsel in key decisions, as the radio station grew to be one of Canada's highest rated radio stations (percentage of market audience).

From the early 1960s onward, Wyn voiced remote broadcasts for CKLY's community and advertiser events. Her voice can be heard via the Ontario government archives; co-hosting the broadcast of the 1973 funeral of former premier, Leslie Frost, from Cambridge St. United Church.

As Pete grew from managing partner to majority owner of CKLY, Wyn would arrange the financing with and for him in Toronto's financial district. When Pete collapsed from exhaustion on Christmas Eve of 1969, Wyn was thrust into the position of acting CKLY general manager for the winter of 1970; and managed the station prior to CKLY's expansion to cover a significant portion of Central Ontario. During the summers, Wyn would join the CKLY "radio boat" host in broadcasting the CKLY Swimathons, Skiathons, Sailathons and Canoeathons on Sturgeon Lake.

"We had a good marriage – it was a partnership" she'd often say; a remark that was a trait of her always looking at the positive side of things, no matter the circumstances.

A long-time member of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, and later, attending the Salvation Army, Wyn would gain strength from reading scripture in her Daily Bread devotional. "I have a very deep faith and feel my life is guided. I was brought up in a family where we went to church and grew in faith within my family. The family is a firm foundation."

Her most often repeated quote was "The years of raising my family were the happiest years of my life."