



William Duff Radford

DEC 7, 1921 - NOV 4, 2024



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William D. Radford of Oshkosh, WI passed away peacefully on November 4th, 2024 from natural causes. He was 102. Bill, as he liked to be called, was born on December 7th, 1921 in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. He was the first born of Charles Weston and Lucinda Eunice Duff Radford. At age 6, his father moved the family to Oshkosh, WI, returning the family to a city where Bill's forbearers were pioneer lumbermen. Celebrated as Oshkosh's last remaining "lumber baron" in a 2021 edition of the Oshkosh Herald, Bill would eventually become the 4th generation of Radford's to manage the family's millwork manufacturing & distribution business, the Radford Company. Bill graduated from Oshkosh High School in 1939. He attended the University of Wisconsin Madison with the intent to study medicine in 1941. He cut his studies short in 1942 following the Japanese strike on Pearl Harbor, which occurred on his 20th birthday. He enlisted in the Coast Guard as an Apprentice Seaman. He subsequently graduated from the United States Coast Guard Academy, third in his class of 400. He proudly served his country in the North Atlantic, South Pacific, and Aleutians for four and a half years, as a signalman, Ensign, and Communications Officer. In the meantime, he became engaged to Carla Smith of Neenah, WI, marrying on August 2, 1944. Following his discharge in 1946, Bill started with the Radford Company, founded by his great grandfather in 1871. He moved through sales and management roles, becoming President in 1976, then Chairman of the Board and CEO in 1980, finally retiring in 1985. For many years he was involved in many philanthropic activities, foremost among them, serving on the Board of Directors of the Boys and Girls Club of Oshkosh, to which he donated 45 acres of land to establish a summer camp "Camp Radford", a program that lives on today. Bill also served on the Board of Directors of Wayland Academy, First National Bank of Oshkosh, and the Oshkosh YMCA where he also served as President. He was a



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member of numerous other organizations including the Oshkosh Kiwanis Club, Oshkosh Country Club, Oshkosh Power Boat Club and the North Shore Golf Club.

Bill was preceded in death by his wife Carla Smith Radford of Neenah, WI to cancer, in 1976. Bill & Carla were happily married for 31 years and had five children together. Bill later married Mary Patricia “Patty” Kennedy (Boyle), joining his family of five children with her family of six, making him the patriarch of a large, blended family. They enjoyed spending winters in Naples, FL and summers in the Fox Valley for many years, and drew their greatest enjoyment in watching their ever increasing family exponentially grow in size. Bill was also preceded in death by his parents, brother Robert (Gus) Radford, and his step-granddaughter Caitlin Kelly.

Bill always took great joy in the people around him, continuing to have a youthful exuberance, playfulness, and great sense of humor well into old age. He celebrated his 100th birthday at North Shore Golf Club by regaling family with off color limericks, and loved telling jokes, silly stories and utilizing bizarre words and phrases like “Gadzooks”, “I’m off like a dirty shirt” and, “time to take a toes up.” He charmed all those around him to the last. His many descendants and friends will miss him dearly.

He is survived by his beloved wife Patty of 47 years, and his children and their spouses: Theda & Huascar Jessen, Peter & Terri Radford, Scott & Victoria Radford, Curtis & Kathryn Radford, and John & India Clarke. His stepchildren: Colleen Kennedy & Tom Kelly, Michael Kennedy, Maureen Kennedy & Gary Kikuchi, Kathleen & Jeff Wollersheim, Bill & Denise Kennedy, and Tommy Kennedy. He is also survived by 19 grand children and 18 great grandchildren.

The family would like to extend a special thank you to the staff at the Courtyard – Oshkosh, Preceptor Hospice, his home caretakers especially Carol Wunderlich, his devoted step-daughter Kathleen Wollersheim and doctor son Curtis Radford who took wonderful care of Bill in his final years.

A visitation will be held Saturday November 23, at Trinity Episcopal Church in Oshkosh at 9:30 AM. Funeral service to follow at 11:00 AM. Burial for Bill will be held in Riverside Cemetery with full Military Honors. In lieu of flowers, the family requests for any gifts or donations to be made in Bill’s name to the Boys and Girls Club of Oshkosh.



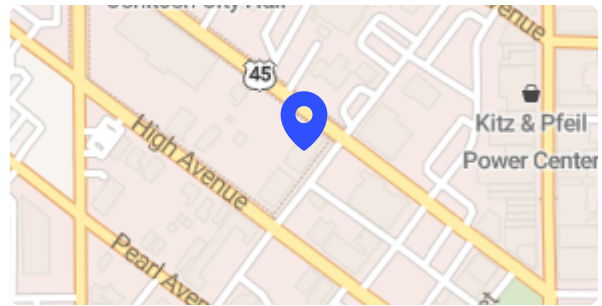
Events

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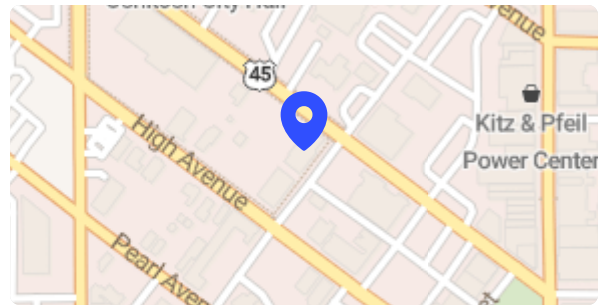
Visitation

- Saturday**, November 23, 2024
- 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM CT
- Trinity Episcopal Church**
203 Algoma Blvd, Oshkosh WI 54901



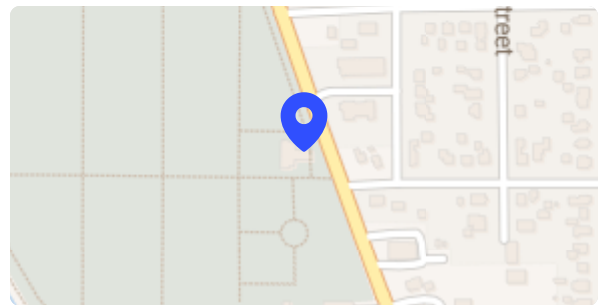
Funeral Service

- Saturday**, November 23, 2024
- 11:00 AM CT
- Trinity Episcopal Church**
203 Algoma Blvd, Oshkosh WI 54901



Cemetery Details

- Riverside Cemetery**
1901 Algoma Blvd, Oshkosh WI 54901





Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring William by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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