

Tuesday October 6, 2009

HAROLD WILLIAM PRICE

Husband, father, grandfather, brother, uncle, forestry engineer, stockbroker, bon vivant, fisherman, skier, yachtsman, raconteur, proud Canadian, even prouder Quebecker. Born Aug. 24, 1927, in Quebec City. Died Feb. 19 in Montreal of an old heart, aged 81.

HELEN MEREDITH AND CYNTHIA PRICE

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Known as "H" or "*le petit roi de Tadoussac*," as residents of the Quebec village where he spent the summers called him, Harold Price was first and foremost a family man. He loved his family, black Labs, salmon fishing and the Lower St. Lawrence more than anything else in the world.

Born, raised and educated in Quebec City, Harold graduated from Laval University with a degree in forestry engineering. It took him five years because of a detour he took to the University of New Brunswick where, after playing too much hockey and football, neglecting to buy books and dating the dean's daughter, the dean suggested he try another educational institution.

Married shortly after graduation, Harold took his new bride, Pam, away from city life and into the bush - 240 kilometres northeast of Chicoutimi, Que. They lived in a log cabin surrounded by employees of Price Brothers lumber company.

When Pam was pregnant with their first child, they moved first to Rimouski, where Cynthia was born, then Kenogami, where William was born, and then alighted in Quebec City, where Gordon was born. After experiencing life on the front lines harvesting trees, Harold went into the sales side of the business, moving his young family to Rye, N.Y.

Harold was the last member of his family to work for the company that had been founded by his great-great-grandfather, William, before it changed hands. When it did, he followed another passion of his and spent the rest of his career as a stockbroker in Montreal.

No matter where they lived, summers were always spent at the mouth of the Saguenay River in Tadoussac, where one of the company's first sawmills was built in 1836. From his century-old Pilot House, Harold earned the moniker of "guardian of the Saguenay" as he monitored the marine traffic, the whales and seabirds, and the countless tourists strolling by.

Harold revelled in entertaining everyone young and old. Visitors were often greeted by their host wearing a bright red bandana around his neck and a chef's apron around his waist. The bar was always open and if you were there at mealtime, you were expected to stay. If he was out on the Jamboree, you were welcomed aboard the family yacht.

Harold's sense of community was expressed in his lifelong and loyal commitment to the Shriners. He made friends enthusiastically and kept them easily, so when a celebration was held in his memory, hundreds turned out to say goodbye.

Helen Meredith is a family friend, and Cynthia Price is Harold's daughter.

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