



A MAN NOT ONLY WELL LIKED BUT ALSO WELL RESPECTED.... THAT'S BILL DAVIS

Bill meets life fully in his gracious way with tact and a warm smile

Bill Davis was born in the Wyoming Valley of North Eastern Pennsylvania in the old coal mining town of Pittston. Bill's mom was from Irish heritage and Bill's dad was of Welsh decent. When Bill's father returned from World War 11, he decided it was time for the family to move on to greener pastures and so off he went to work in New Jersey: first at the Kearney Ship Yard and then to Ford Motor Company's newly built Edison assembly plant.

The Davis family followed and they bought a home in Hillside and it was there Bill grew up and went to high school. "I worked each day after school at Sweeder's Food Market in Hillside stocking shelves and bagging food and delivering groceries on my bicycle. The extra money I earned was appreciated in my family. I still remember Mrs. Sweeder really well; she spoke little English and she was also little in stature but boy she commanded respect and when she told us something we listened" remarked Bill.

When Bill wasn't working or doing schoolwork he found time to do some high school wrestling and played some tennis. Then after graduation from Hillside High in 1956 Bill enlisted in the United States Marine Corp. serving for six years. "The Corp was a good thing for me cause at 18 I was a kid and when I was discharged I had grown up. I spent part of my active duty at Marine Headquarters in Arlington Virginia. I wasn't trained as a young boy with a rifle but it turned out I was a bit of a natural and during my infantry training I still feel proud that I attained the level of Sharpshooter with the M1 carbine" said Bill.

Bill always wanted to help people and help his community and after discharge he was drawn to consider becoming a funeral director. "I asked my mom what she thought and she said "Bill, why not give it a try" and so the rest is history. I graduated from American Academy and apprenticed for 4 years. I then sat for my NJ Funeral Director's test in 1965 and passed with flying colors on the first try. Boy did that make me feel good 'cause most applicants still don't pass that test on the first try" noted Bill.

Bill was a bachelor in the spring of 1966 and while at a political function in Elizabeth his eye caught the eye of a beautiful young Irish girl

who was to become his wife within 6 months. "I asked Miss Mary Duhig if I could buy her a cup of coffee but since she had come that evening with another date she said no, but on her way out she slipped me her telephone number on a piece of paper." Bill and Mary were married that same year and that was 39 years ago.

The newlyweds started to raise a family and then Bill was given the opportunity to purchase a well respected funeral home in Rahway that had been established in 1832. Bill had done work for the Pettit Funeral Home and got along well with Mrs. Pettit. In 1973 Bill purchased the business from Jeanette Pettit and the named changed to Pettit-Davis Funeral Home.

Bill reads three newspapers each day and loves to walk. "If I'm not at Rahway River Park I often go back to my old Hillside neighborhood and walk for an hour or so. I'm fortunate that Mary and I over the years have been able to travel to many, many places around the world, yet I've never met nicer people than those right here in Rahway. Our city may be facing tough times as so many other towns are but I just know we're going to make it" remarked Bill.

Bill Davis' community involvement is long and deep. Youth soccer coach, founding member of Chamber of Commerce, RSI Bank Director, and serving on the boards of; St Mary's Church,



(left) Bill Davis as Marine Corp. basic training graduate.



(below) Bill relaxing by staircase at Pettit-Davis Funeral Home.



(right) Young Bill Davis.



(above, left, right) Bill's lovely wife Mary and a family shot with son Will and his wife Mandy.

American Legion, PBA, Elks, Knights of Columbus to name just a few. Bill and Mary Davis are the proud parents of their three children Will and Mary Pat and Cathleen as well as 7 grand children. Son Will is currently Funeral Director at Pettit-Davis.



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