



John Hamilton

May 9, 1925 - August 25, 2023

John Henry Hamilton, born May 9, 1925, in Toronto, Ontario, passed away on August 25, 2023, at Wesley Glen, Columbus, OH. John was a proud member of the first basketball team from Lenawee County (MI) to progress to the semi-final game of the state championship. After high school graduation in June 1943, John was inducted into the Navy the following month, served in the Pacific Campaign and was discharged in May 1946. John married Winona Jean (Waldron) on July 5, 1947, his wife of 72 years. John was an active member of the Worthington Presbyterian Church. John worked for Gulf Oil from 1947 through retirement in 1983; the first ten years as an independent service station operator and then in corporate sales and promotions. He was the 1974 and 1975 District Marketer of the Year. John was a prolific community volunteer. His work spanned seven decades and included the following areas: church (mission and youth fellowship/helped found Highlands Presbyterian Church); spiritual, recreational and leadership with teenagers (Founded Tecumseh Teen Club); community leadership (City Council/County Board of Supervisors/Fire Department/Jaycees); prison ministry; donated more than 100 gallons of whole blood and platelets to the Red Cross; host family to exchange students and international professionals; hunger (food pantry/community gardens); poverty (Habitat for Humanity/CROP Walk); and ticket taker at U of M football games. John is survived by his daughter Carol Hamilton; daughter Kimberly Hamilton-Holmes and son-in-law Scott Holmes; son John Hamilton and daughter-in-law Marilyn (Fowlis); son Mark Hamilton;

granddaughter Hope Parry; grandson Colin Holmes; grandson Lucas Holmes; grandson Stuart Holmes; grandson Matthew Hamilton; and six great grandchildren. John was preceded in death by parents Thomas and Agnes Hamilton; brothers Samuel, Robert and Thomas; sister, Isabel; daughter-in-law Debra (Noe); and granddaughter Kathryn Hamilton. Celebration of Life services will be held at Worthington Presbyterian Church, 773 High Street, Worthington, OH, on 9/22/2023, at 11:00. John's ashes will be buried at the Brookside Cemetery, Tecumseh, MI. Per John's request, please consider a donation to NNEMAP Food Pantry, 677 E 11th Ave, Columbus, OH 43211, in lieu of flowers.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

SEP **22.** 11:00 AM (ET)

Worthington Presbyterian Church
773 High St
Worthington, OH 43085
(614) 885-5355

Tribute Wall

JS

“ I go WAY back. Way back to Tecumseh! I will never forget the vacation John and Winona took me on. A trip of a lifetime!. All the way to Banff National Park across Canada and Yellowstone National Park as a "babysitter" in the back of a station wagon with all four of the little Hamiltons! I will never forget them.

Jan Hall Sterrett - April 19, 2025 at 09:37 AM

KH

“ 15 files added to the album John Henry Hamilton



Kim Hamilton-Holmes - September 19, 2023 at 04:58 PM

MQ

“ I joined the Hamiltons as a student of social work in January 1993. To get a glimpse of volunteerism in America, I couldn't have had a better host family. John and Winona showed me many activities, introduced me to the church, and had time for conversation. It became five very intense months for me, which we continued afterwards with another exchange and vacations in America but also by John, Winona and Joyce in Germany. 30 years have passed that I was allowed to get to know the Hamilton family. 30 years in which I have not forgotten the hospitality and the deep bond. The many evenings at the Basement, the days at sand lake, the football games together at Ann Arbor Stadium, Winona's cooking and John's incredible energy. We will not forget you, GO blue, John!

Michaela Quente - September 17, 2023 at 10:44 AM

QF

“ Qin's and Lily's family purchased the Love's Journey for the family of John Hamilton.



Qin's and Lily's family - September 07, 2023 at 10:37 PM

QF

“ Qin's and Lily's family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of John Hamilton.

Qin's and Lily's family - September 07, 2023 at 10:37 PM

LW

“ I had the most amazing opportunity to meet John and Winona Hamilton through the Columbus International Program. John and Winona had opened their warm and beautiful home to countless participants from all over the world. Their empathy and compassion towards building the world a better place was out of this world. I, being one of the many most fortunate participant have experienced a unforgettable part of my life with John and Winona's family. Coming to the U.S as a timid and inexperienced young professional from China, I was welcomed to their family with open arms, warm hugs and yummy foods. Going to the Hamilton's always made me feel like a royalty. Their house was the most fancy place for English tea and exquisite dinners. We got to use their fancy China every time. Playing piano after dinner was always one of my favorites. I had the privilege to meet and dine with Son John, Kim, Scott, Carol and other family members almost every holiday in those years. When I was invited to his Cottage for the first time, it was exhilarating. That was my very first and most exciting time sailing on a sailboat and going fishing with Scott. I remember the giggles, laughs, and the famous banana splits. Being with them always makes me feel the warm fuzzy in my heart. John and Winona were also inspirations to our minds. John taught me: "Don't take things for granted." To this day his words remind me to appreciate what's going on around the world. John and Winona have left the most valuable legacy to people who are associated with them. The world was a better place when they were around. I miss you John so much! I am glad that you are reunited with Winona and making Heaven shine even brighter! I love you both!

Lily Wagoner

Lily Wagoner - September 07, 2023 at 10:00 PM

JN

“ John and Winona were great friends and I enjoyed their trips to Northern Ireland and my many trips to the USA. Many road trips were taken along with Winona’s great friend Joyce. Always felt part of the family and had many adventures - Grand Canyon, hobie cat sailing in a storm at dawn, eating doughnuts on way to The Little Bighorn - great times and a great man.

john Nicholl - September 02, 2023 at 03:03 PM

BR

“ Every time I saw John, I'd say "Go, Speed Racer, Go!" One of the most joyous moments of my career was when we put on our Christmas program and John ran to his apartment to grab his 100 year old jingle bells! He danced around the room with those bells during the song Jingle Bells. He was one of a kind.

*Brent Rayburn
Events and Programs Manager at Wesley Glen*

Brent Rayburn - August 31, 2023 at 02:51 PM

LY

“ Carol, Kim, Scott & all the Hamilton Family, I was about 14 when I got to know John & Winona, through our mutual involvement with student foreign exchanges & by brother being a classmate & friend of Kim. It was always a pleasure to run into them over the years. To me they were both the epitome of what one should strive to be. I am grateful I had the opportunity to know them & so glad having stopped to talk to John when he was out cutting the grass on Crandall in the later 2010s. My thoughts & prayers go out to each of you, & may your memories help bring you some comfort in the days to come.

Endearingly, Lynn Church-Akin

Lynn - August 29, 2023 at 01:10 AM

DM

“ I'm Dave Moore presently living on the 8th floor east of Wesley Glen. My wife and I have lived here for over a year and a half. We were close neighbors to John and many mornings heard John jogging in our hallway as he practiced for the senior olympics dashes. I knew John before when we both did volunteer work at the NNEMAP Food Pantry. When OSU played Michigan John was the cheer leader for Michigan as we watched the game in the auditorium at Wesley Glen. John's spirited rivalry will be missed.

David Moore - August 28, 2023 at 11:43 AM

 Bob
Holb

Bob and I got to know he and Winona over the years at our church Worthington Presby. They were an inspiration to always participate and share of their gifts. We all attended a Bible study together never to forget their love of God and for each other. A job well done my friend,
Bob and Marilyn Holb

Bob Holb - August 29, 2023 at 01:22 PM

KS

From my daughter Rebekka I heard the news about John's death. I am very sorry he is gone, but my predominant feeling is one of tremendous gratitude that he invited so many of us to share in his life and the life of your family for such a long time.

It was during our common childhood that most of my favourite memories are situated. When I wasn't at home in the Tecumseh Lutheran parsonage, the chances that you would find me hanging around at Hamiltons' house were very high. Of course, it was your mom who was there keeping things together most of the day. But we "others" never had to disappear, when John came home. On the contrary! Then the tent-trailer got put up, or the tree house was open for business or the ice-cream freezer got filled with dry ice and the cranking began or we all got into one of the cars and were driven out to Sand Lake or ... The memories go on and on and on.

Once Winona told me that she and John had had a discussion and had come to a conclusion: They were convinced that they would never have the wherewithal to travel the world extensively, so they decided to invite the world to come to them. That was when they began hosting one or the other student from AFS or occasionally fostering a youth who had nowhere else to go. When I entered at the kitchen door, I could never be completely certain that I would know all the people living at Hamiltons' house. It was an adventure that happened all in one place.

Or not ... depending. I remember so well that John and Winona suddenly packed up the car and drove to Washington for the funeral of President John Kennedy. Nobody else I knew did that, but it didn't surprise me in the least that John and Winona did.

It wasn't until quite a few years later that I realized that little if any of all this was coincidental. Not that they had planned much of any of the adventures you – and we often with you – experienced. It was the openness and the willingness to put themselves "out there" with other people and often for other people that led to their lives' freshness and the adventurous spirit, in which we could also take part. For John, it was the concrete expression of his Christian faith. I think, in sum, John Hamilton taught me more about being Christian than all the theology and philosophy professors I ever heard or encountered in later life. And I say "being Christian" and not Christianity or Christian life. John taught me that following Jesus is verbal, and not some concept to be believed or not intellectually. Jesus said, "Let the children come to me" – so John did. His own children and all kinds of us stray kids along the wayside. Jesus said, "Love your neighbour", so John did, even if the neighbour was an old grump or a very young pastor trying to support too large a family on too small a salary. Not that his Christian road was an easy road to walk: He met with more than his share of frustrations on the way and had to give up on a few intensely desired projects that were simply beyond his power to complete. But he never gave up the walk behind his friend Jesus – about whom he rarely ever specifically

spoke. We who had the privilege to accompany him and Winona on the way got the message without the propaganda.

In the last few decades, I saw John only occasionally – the last time, I think, was about 10 or 15 years ago. One of the memories that has stuck with me is that we picked him up from church in Worthington (I think), and he literally jogged to the car. He was in his late 80s, and I found that kind of exertion surprisingly risky, until Winona said, “No worries. He just wants to stay fit.”

And fit he stayed, relatively anyway, for a very long time. That Winona went first, would, I think, definitely not have been his choice, had he had any say in the matter. Fortunately, that is not the case, and we come and go deo volente – as God will. My fantasy has him jogging again. Behind Jesus. With Winona. Are there Hobie Cats in Heaven? Take me for a sail, John!

The Schmidts

Karla Koeplin Schmidt - Manfred Schmidt - August 31, 2023 at 07:47 PM

FE

When I spent my exchange year in Worthington in the late 1980s, John and Winona - and the entire Hamilton family - took me up as their adopted son for a year. As Karla, to whom I'm grateful for putting me in contact with John and Winona in the first place - writes in the post above: theirs had always been an open home. They had an extended international family and stayed in contact as long as they could.

John said so many things that I will never forget: "Life's too short, start with dessert", "The only way to get things done is doing them", "I'd rather be sailing!", "You hug the curve a bit" (he taught me how to drive) or: "Go Blue!!"

But it were his actions most of all that allowed be to make experiences that really mattered. When I lived at Crandall Drive, John had a sign on the wall by his desk that read: "If you want peace, work for justice." And that is what he did in the most impressive way!

Friedemann Ehrenforth - September 03, 2023 at 08:40 AM