



Dr. John W. Otten

November 24, 1923 - September 13, 2015

Dr. John W. Otten, 91, of Washington, formerly of Peoria, passed away at 12:30 p.m. Sunday, September 13, 2015 at Riverview Senior Living Community in East Peoria.

He was born November 24, 1923 in Peoria, IL to John H. and Alice Carroll Otten. He married Nora Jane Minch in Washington, IL on June 1, 1947. She preceded him in death on February 4, 2015. He was also preceded in death by his parents; and one brother, Gerald.

Surviving are four children, Michael J. (Nancy) Otten of Westmont, Kevin (Wendy) Otten of Albuquerque, NM, Mary Lynn Otten of Washington, Janet K. (Todd) Burke of Washington; five grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; two brothers, Jim Otten of Washington, Charles Michael (Patricia) Otten of San Jose, CA; and sister-in-law, Deloris Otten of Washington.

Dr. Otten's Career Achievements include:

- 40 years as general surgeon with sub-specialties in trauma and oncology.
- Developed and directed major regional emergency medical service program serving 1.1 million Illinois residents.
- Pioneered, implemented and conducted an EMS police training course stressing inter-agency cooperation.
- Appointed as consultant to the Illinois Department of Public Health to develop the mobile intensive care systems.
- Introduced multi-disciplinary trauma team concept to Regional Trauma Center physicians and personnel in 1974.

- Implemented trauma response and transfer teams as Medical Director of regional EMS System.
- Obtained \$1.6 million legislative appropriation for additional state helicopter and pilots.
- Coordinated with Henry Slane (chairman of the board and chief executive officer of the Peoria Journal Star) to base the newly acquired state helicopter and pilots at the Peoria Journal Star.
- Consultant to the United States Secret Service in developing procedures and protocols to provide health care for the President, Vice President, Cabinet Members, and Heads of State when traveling within the U.S.
- Worked on international projects on behalf of U.S. agencies and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), as a member of a NATO committee.
- Initiated the first down-state drug rehabilitation program (Stonehenge) with cooperation of State and Local law-enforcement agencies.
- Volunteer at Wildlife Prairie Park.

Dr. Otten was a member of:

- American Cancer Society
 - American College of Surgeons
 - American Board of Surgery
 - Society of Head and Neck Surgeons
 - Founding Member and Member of the Board of Directors ... American Trauma Society
 - American College of Surgeons
 - Member, Board of Directors...American Red Cross, Regional Blood Bank
 - Member and President, Board of Directors...American Cancer Society, Illinois Division
 - Founding Member of the Board of Directors ... Public Broadcasting Station in Central Illinois
 - Founding Member...International Society of Emergency Medical Services
- 1942-1946 U.S. Army T/Sgt. - Honorable Discharge.

He also enjoyed hunting and fishing with his family and friends. He also loved scuba diving with his sons.

He was a member of St. Patrick Catholic Church in Washington and later St. Thomas Catholic Church in Peoria.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the American Cancer Society or Wildlife Prairie Park.

A Memorial Mass will be held at 11:00 a.m. September 26th at St. Patrick Catholic Church with Fr. Julius Turyatoranwa officiating.

Family will receive friends at St. Patrick Catholic Church in Washington, two hours prior to the Memorial Mass from 9:00-11:00 a.m. Inurnment will be at a later date.

Previous Events

Memorial Visitation

SEP **26.** 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Patrick Catholic Church
705 E. Jefferson Street
Washington, IL

Memorial Mass

SEP **26.** 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Patrick Catholic Church
705 E. Jefferson Street
Washington, IL

Tribute Wall

“ Dear Family

My brother John died yesterday. I loved my brother.

But a better term is that he passed away because I believe he has gone to a better place. If so he was met by Nora Jane and he was happy to be reunited. They met when they were fourteen. Right behind would be my brother Gerry with his fishing pole and wisecracks. And Mom and Dad would welcome their eldest son.

Rationally, I am happy for him, but in my heart there is a sadness and loss. John needed to pass on. A nursing home was not the place for my brother.

I want to tell you what he meant to me.

I really don't remember living with John in our house. I have no memories of him except the time when he saved Gerry's life after I accidentally threw a scissors and nearly killed Gerry. I vividly remember, John, a high school kid, knowing enough to tie off a cut artery. That was my brother John.

He was more than a brother; he was like an uncle, part of my family, but not living with us. He met Nora Jane when he was about 17, and I was only 6. From that time on he spent his time with her, then off to college and then the army. I was 8 when he left home for the army.

So John was more like a revered uncle. I was just learning to write and wrote him at least once a month while he was in the army.

Without planning each of us played a special role in the family. John was the model and hero. I, for example, was the responsible maverick. Gerry was the solid, likeable, hard working, and Jim was the searching, teen-ager who, after the Navy, became our most solid citizen. I would add the most organized and neat as well.

Early in life he became an adult. He had no teen-age fun stuff like I did. He was man at 13 or 14, growing our food, keeping up a farm contributing like an adult. The exception was Nora Jane...his love and companion during those years and for the rest of his life.

John was a product and victim of his times. He was the epitome of what Tom Brocaw call The Greatest Generation. There were four of us. Dad finally got a job at the post office, but we were poor and John and Job became part of the provider team. It may sound romantic. It wasn't. Many times he told me how he regretted. I asked him to summarize his feelings. "Work, work, work and more godamn work." John never stopped working and being the generous older brother. He was burdened and blessed with a deep need to be successful and responsible. Since I am the youngest kid, I am softer. I cry for your loss and for gratitude.

mike otten - October 08, 2015 at 12:31 PM

DL

“ *So sorry we were unable to attend Dr. John's memorial and personally extend our sympathy to the great Otten family. We met Dr. John in the late '60's and am very proud to have known such a great man. There is no way to estimate how many lives he saved because of the tremendous innovations he created in emergency and trauma protocols. He actually changed the entire concept of what life saving is all about. His innovations and procedures were in demand throughout the country and the world, for that matter.....our community and many across the nation owe him a great debt of gratitude. May God Bless his Soul.
With love and prayers to the Otten family.
Dennis and Wanda Landry*

Dennis Landry - September 29, 2015 at 11:35 AM

CB

“ I wish that you find peace at this time of your loss. I first met your father at Presbyterian Hospital in Chicago when he was a surgery resident. (I worked in the hospital library) I was in a dinner group for a few years here in Peoria with your mother and father along with Dr. Nace, Dr. Myers, Dr. Myrna, and Richard Myers. Your father was very energetic and always ready for something new. People like him are always missed.

Again, sorry for your loss. Dr. Cliff Brown

Clifford Brown - September 26, 2015 at 11:03 AM

ST

“ To Mary Lynn Otten,
I remember you, of course, through school in our younger years. I enjoyed our friendship during that time and hope you are doing well. I'm so sorry to hear of the passing of your father. Please know you are in my thoughts and prayers are with you during this difficult time.

Take Care

*Stephanie Mustakas Kareotes-formerly of Peoria- RHS H.S.'77
89 Fox Creek Ct
Morton, IL*

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StephanieMustakasKareotes - September 24, 2015 at 03:48 PM