

Vernon Henry (Bud) Kempffer



Vernon Henry (Bud) Kempffer was born on June 9, 1906 in Smiths Falls, Ontario. His parents were James Henry Kempffer and Anna Augusta Leetch. Vernon was the only son and had ten sisters

The family moved to Ottawa and Bud attended Osgoode Street Public School and Ottawa Technical High School. Bud was an avid bowler and loved most sports. He was an executive member of the Ottawa Professional Fire Fighters Association and headed up the Sports Committee. He was a member of the Garrison Sergeants Association and a member of Saint Matthews Anglican Church. Vernon married Dorothy Gwendolyn Olmstead of Merrickville in 1927 and had a son Calvin Burton James Kempffer born March 18, 1928 in Fulton, New York, U.S.A. After returning to the Ottawa area Bud joined the Ottawa Fire Department on November 10, 1930

He enlisted and served with the Princess Louise Dragoon Guards (reserve) Where he served on the Mounted Guard ahead of the King and Queen during their procession through Ottawa when they visited here in 1939. The Guard wore their elaborate dress uniform, including plumes and lances. In June of 1940 Bud obtained a Leave of Absence and went overseas. He was attached to the Royal Hamilton Light infantry where he served with headquarters Second Division. In June of 1942 he crossed the English Channel with fellow Canadians and took part in the raid on Dieppe and was of the few survivors of the battle

Bud Kempffer returned to Canada after the war in January 1945 and resumed his duties with Ottawa Fire Department. He and his wife Dorothy and son Calvin lived in homes on O'Connor St. and Second Ave in the Glebe. In 1946 the Ottawa Fire Department purchased an ambulance, Bud Kempffer was assigned the position of Emergency Car Operator out of Number 2 Station on Albert Street.. This vehicle provided first aid and transportation to medical assistance for both the fire fighters and citizens of Ottawa.

On May 26, 1947 at approximately 11AM the Emergency Car responded to a medical emergency on Nepean Street. Bud Kempffer with assistant John Baker took the call. On returning to the fire station Bud complained that he was not feeling well. He started up the stairs to the second floor and collapsed. He was rushed to the Ottawa Civic Hospital where he died a short time afterwards.

His funeral service was held at the Hulse and Playfair Chapel on McLeod Street in Ottawa. Reverend Serson Clarke the Anglican Chaplain of the Ottawa Fire Department conducted the service. The full fire department honours were afforded this hero. A full contingent of fire fighters, police officers and members of the Garrison Sergeants Association were in attendance. The body was mounted on a fire department pumper and then he was taken to Pinecrest Cemetery for burial.