



Desmond Ernest Hayden Smith

April 15, 2025

Desmond Ernest Hayden Smith

November 9, 1933 – April 15, 2025

Desmond (Des) passed peacefully in his sleep at the age of 91. Family and friends had previously celebrated Dad's 90th birthday at a surprise party with many coming from far away and some attending virtually. Dad was thrilled.

Des was born in Bournemouth England, by the sea, to Ernest Smith and Ivy Gray.

Des was a sailor at heart from a young age, joining the Royal Navy in England at 12 and sailing on submarines until he was 23. He married his beloved Pamela Phillips, and they had two daughters, Helen and Karen. He moved his young family to Canada for a better life in 1965. He kept learning and became a top computer technician, eventually becoming the head of the Air Canada Computer Services in Toronto. This gave his family airline passes so they could then visit family in England regularly, as well as travel extensively. The family often enjoyed camping and boating together - treasured memories.

Des enjoyed visits with his daughters, grandchildren, and great grandchildren and in retirement we would find him on his sailboat in the summer months on

Toronto Island. He enjoyed his community of friends there.

His second marriage to Madeleine Johnson gave him many happy years travelling and sailing together.

Des will be missed by his beloved children, Helen Smits (Christoffer), Karen Williamson (Dave) and Caroline Taylor (Peter). Also, by his grandchildren Emily Smits (Bikram), Daniella Smits (Brandon), Juliana Smits (Kenneth), Tori Williamson (Keith) and Graham Williamson (Jaclyn) . His great grandchildren Evindar, Destan, Warren and Quentin shall hear some of some of great grandad's adventures. He will also be missed by his extended family in England who have many fond memories.

He especially will be missed by his dear best friends, Jim and Thelma Hammond, fellow sailors. They became close to Des, as their boat was beside his C&C 30 sailboat on the Island. Many years were shared in Toronto and they stayed together for the move to St. Catharines. Jim and Thelma helped Des enjoy daily life and were devoted friends for many years; he became part of their extended family. We consider them part of ours too. Des will be missed by family and friends.

He is predeceased by his father Ernest Smith, his mother Ivy Gray, his sister Pamela Webster, his first wife Pamela Phillips, his second wife Madeleine Johnson and his closest cousins Bob Houghton and George Smith.

At Desmond's request there will not be a funeral. Des was cremated and his ashes will be scattered at Des's request at places meaningful to him. Close family and friends will gather in his memory, at a later date.

Condolences and memories may be shared online here.

We will dearly miss Dad (Grandad) but wish him happy sailing in heaven. Until we meet again.

Tribute Wall

DA

“ Happy sailing Grandad. A beautiful life lived, with many years adventures, love of family and wonderful friends. ❤️



Daniella - May 10, 2025 at 03:38 PM

HS

“ Dear Dad,
Forever treasured memories of times with you from a young child to adulthood. Always patient and kind with me. Always understanding I was a sensitive child who sometimes did foolish things. Thank you for sailing adventures, travelling even if it meant a small tent and sandy beach holidays. Your faith in me was always appreciated. Though I didn't always live up to it.
My family and your grandchildren and great grand children will remember you always. You loved the ocean and sailing. You had a good life. Enjoy seeing the many family and friends who went before you. Love you always. Happy sailing until we meet again., Love your oldest daughter, Helen xoxo



Helen Smits - May 09, 2025 at 07:34 PM

CT

“ My dearest dad, you've been loved by so many people in your life. I am proud to be your daughter and will miss you dearly. I picture you sailing in heaven with good seas and wind in your sails.
I also thank you and Pam for giving me 2 wonderful sisters. Love you now and forever. Caroline and Peter

Caroline Taylor - May 04, 2025 at 12:58 PM

TW

“ I remember fun summer visits getting to see Granddad on his sail boat on Toronto island. He really knew how to make the most of living in the city!

I'm grateful that he had such a wonderful friendship with Thelma and Jim and he got to spend his final years with them as a chosen family.

Cheers to you Granddad, may the sun shine on your face and the wind always be at your back. Love Tori

Tori Williamson - April 25, 2025 at 02:39 PM

JS

“ Grandad was a treasure to our family, and I will forever remember our many visits together at the sailboat on Toronto centre island, and most recently St.Catherines. Grandad was a man of little words, but his presence and love always shone through. Grandad taught me how to be a great listener, and to cherish every moment with the people you love. So thankful we were able to celebrate his 90th birthday together. Forever in our hearts. Everyday that I look at the water, I will remember you. Sail on Grandad, until we meet again ❤️



Juliana Smits - April 24, 2025 at 11:22 AM

MP

“ *Des was always great fun to spend time with..He would just turn up on my doorstep (here in England!) saying he fancied seeing us.. He was also Godfather to my youngest son as well, who was lucky to spend time with him, he told me, when HE visited Canada about 16 years ago.*

Mary Phillips - April 24, 2025 at 11:08 AM