



PHOTOS:

Above left, L-R are Kaz (the Kyle family's dog), Larry, Shannon, David, and Brad with their parents at the family cottage (which Bill helped build) on Lake of the Woods in the early 80s.

Above right: Two of Dr. Kyle's son's – Brad and Dave are family physicians in Kenora. They are both well known and respected in our hospital and throughout the region, following in their father's footsteps. Larry Kyle (pictured left) practises law in Vancouver and Shannon (not pictured), Bill and Eleanor's only daughter, is a specialized educational tutor in North Vancouver. The family has now grown to include ten wonderful grandchildren. Eleanor, also pictured, has been a longtime advocate for healthcare in Kenora, she played a key role in establishing Kenora's first Occupational Therapy department in the old St. Joes hospital which still stands on our hospital grounds today. Her dedication continues today with a meaningful gift to the Beyond the Scan campaign in Bill's name. She has helped to advance diagnostic imaging and ensure his legacy lives on through improved care for patients in Kenora for generations to come.

LWDH Trailblazers: Celebrating the Legacy of Dr. William Kyle

Dr. William (Bill) Kyle's professional journey began with a fascination for all things mechanical, initially pursuing engineering at the University of Toronto. There, he played varsity football, rugby and met his future wife, Eleanor Johnson. Bill's curiosity about the human body led him to enter medical school after attaining his BSc. He followed the path of his father and two uncles who were specialist physicians. He graduated from medicine in 1968 and after completing his internship at Toronto Western Hospital moved to Kenora with Eleanor to start their family and his career as a family doctor.

Bill's dedication to his profession saw him return to Toronto to specialize in radiology, earning his fellowship in the fall of 1975. He spent six years working in North Bay and was known as a force there, working in two hospitals as their radiologist. In 1981, a relentless Kenora recruitment team including Pediatrician Dr. Peter Harland, Radiologist Dr. Alfred Molle and Hospital Administrator Dick Schneider were finally successful in attracting Bill back to the place he loved, Lake of the Woods, to lead the Radiology Department in our hospital. A condition of his acceptance was that the hospital would prioritize getting cutting edge technologies such as ultrasound, immediately.

This time when he returned to the area, he and Eleanor (who was born and raised in Kenora – her grandmother was of a pioneering family in Kenora in the 1880s) brought their children Larry, Shannon, Dave and Brad. Dr. Kyle combined his professional and personal passions for many years as he was an avid pilot and would fly himself to Fort Frances, Rainy River,

Emo, Dryden, and Red Lake performing radiologist duties and advocating for improved diagnostic equipment and services.

Dr. Kyle's commitment to LWDH spanned over three decades, during which he served as Chief of the Radiology Department and Chief of Staff in the mid-90s. Throughout this tenure, he was pivotal in bringing new imaging technologies to the hospital, significantly enhancing diagnostic capabilities. He was instrumental in campaigning for a CT Scanner, ensuring our communities had access to advanced medical imaging.

Bill's impact in Kenora extended far beyond the hospital walls. His efforts in improving healthcare infrastructure were complemented by his involvement in community activities, such as bringing pickleball to Kenora and blazing the Nordic Ski Trails. Bill's organized approach to life saw him rise early to work on various projects before heading to the hospital. He did the wiring, plumbing and interior woodwork at his camp, all while overseeing a very busy radiology department.

Dr. Kyle started our weekly Grand Rounds at the hospital and

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was the first to extend the learning opportunities to nurses. He was also a driving force behind LWDH's shift to becoming a non-smoking facility. It's very hard to believe now, but the Women's Auxiliary used to push a cart down the halls selling cigarettes to patients, who would smoke in their rooms (up until the 1980's). We are so glad things have changed!

Personally, aside from enjoying all things with his family, Bill was an active Rotarian, serving as president with the Kenora Rotary Club. The Kyles hosted many exchange students over the years. He loved adventure - skiing, white water canoeing, camping, but also enjoyed attending performances of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet being a season ticket holder for many years. He studied wilderness medicine as a member of the Wilderness Medical Society and practised survival techniques during Kenora's wintertime. All the while, he found time for golf, curling, building several watercraft and an RV6 low wing aerobatic plane - and yes, he flew it! This aircraft is now owned and flown by Bill's Dr-Pilot son, David.

Bill's legacy is not only marked by his professional achievements but also by his personal connections. He knew everyone in the hospital, treating them like family and always striving for the common good. His commitment to ongoing education and his role in welcoming new doctors to the community, often hosting them in his home - further highlight his lasting influence.

Dr. Kyle retired in 2007 but continued to contribute to the hospital until his official retirement in 2011. Diagnosed with Parkinson's at age 60, he remained dedicated to his work as long as the quality

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ABOVE: A young Bill windsurfing in his early years in Kenora. He was often at the forefront of introducing new sports and activities in our area.

BELOW: Bill and daughter Shannon paddle on Lake of the Woods. The kayak Shannon is in was another of Bill's many carefully crafted winter garage projects.



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LWDH Trailblazers: Dr. William Kyle

of his contributions was maintained. Bill passed away in October 2023, but his legacy truly lives on through the robust Diagnostic Imaging Department he helped to build and the countless lives he touched. This summer, a plaque commemorating Dr. Kyle's career was quietly installed and unveiled (as per his family's wishes) in our Diagnostic Imaging department. Sean Hailstone, Director of Diagnostic Imaging shares "Dr. Kyle's pioneering efforts have ensured that thousands of patients have access to essential diagnostic services and care close to home. He was instrumental in bringing CT, Mammography, and Bone Mineral Density to our facility." Today, the LWDH Diagnostic Imaging (DI) Department is an extremely busy area of our hospital, now offering nine state-of-the-art imaging modalities and serving an average of 120 patients daily.

So, next time you are in DI, be sure to take a moment to look at the beautiful tribute to Dr. Kyle in the Waiting Area. We are grateful to LWDH Trailblazers like Dr. Kyle for their dedication, advocacy and passion which helped shape the path we walk today. Many thanks to Eleanor Kyle and her family for sharing about Bill's incredibly full life for this feature!

Pictured below, left: Dr. Kyle in his garage cross-referencing the plans for his aircraft (on the wall) with an inventory list when he began the build in the early 90s.



ABOVE: Eleanor and Bill near the Pickle Ball court. They, along with a group of friends were instrumental in first bringing the sport to Kenora.

Centre photo: Dr. Kyle stands beside his partially complete RV6 low-wing aerobatic plane. This labour of love took four winters to complete with the help of his wife Eleanor and several aviation type friends. Pictured right: 12,000 rivets later, Bill's picture-perfect plane was in the air!



Bill stands above the Snake River in the Yukon, on one of his many adventures taken with Eleanor and their friends.

