



*Cornwallis Training - 1953
Can you find Mark?*



Mark with Lois and baby daughter



Mark doing what he loved best

Mark Bayne Merriman was born in 1935 to Lucy Bayne and Wilfrid (always called William) Leo Merriman. He was preceded by two older brothers, and a little sister who died in infancy. Mark joined the family four years later and was followed by two younger sisters.

Unfortunately Mark's father died when he was only seven years old. Besides missing William terribly, Lucy and the children were understandably worried how the family could manage financially. Although Lucy got a small veteran's widow pension, she knew she would have to return to work. Thankfully she had been a qualified nurse and was able to obtain regular hospital shifts that began in early afternoon to better accommodate her children's needs.

Mark attended City View Public School for eight years and then Nepean High. At only fourteen he worked on a farm in North Gower for a year and a half. He quickly realized that farm work was neither for the "faint at heart" nor the "faint of muscles". He returned to high school at Fisher Park for a final year and then got a job delivering telegraphs for Canadian Pacific Railways.

His oldest brother had already joined the Navy and Mark wanted to follow in his footsteps. His ambition was to see the world but **NOT** have to wear a tie. He figured the Navy was his best bet for both goals. He was accepted (at only seventeen and a half) for six months Basic Training at CFB Cornwallis in Deep Brook, Nova Scotia. Recruits east of Manitoba would normally be assigned duties in the Atlantic. However Mark really wanted to get to Korea, so he asked for a transfer to CFB Esquimault on Vancouver Island. He didn't manage to get to Korea though, as he was drafted to HMCS Ontario (originally HMS Minotaur). Back through the Panama Canal he went again. This time he ended up in Portsmouth, England to take part in Queen Elizabeth's Fleet Review, just after her coronation. The crew remained in dry dock for six months, though, as the ship's screw shaft had to be replaced.

During his short Navy career, Mark enjoyed the sport of Boxing. His eldest brother was once Light Intermediate Weight Champion. His boxing skills came in handy when he got into some interesting shenanigans that I won't mention, as I promised not to!! However Mark decided he had had enough "Navy" by the ripe old age of twenty. He returned to Ottawa and got a job at Myer's Motors doing Estimates. He then applied to Canadian National Railways and became a locomotive fireman shovelling coal into engines' fireboxes. He advanced through CNR and retired in 2000.

But we are getting ahead of ourselves. Early in his career at CNR events would propel Mark into the biggest decision of his life. We know that Navy men, even (or perhaps especially?), "retired Navy

men” enjoy good parties. He was at a dance one night and a beautiful young lady caught his eye. Mark’s smooth talking and good looks helped him obtain her phone number. There was only one glitch that could have been insurmountable. He had only written down her number, not her name. Even when sober, he couldn’t for the life of him remember her name!! He “bit the bullet” and phoned her number anyway. When a young lady answered Mark described the young “lady of interest” and the roommate supplied Lois’ name. Mark then moved quickly before he forgot Lois’ name again. He convinced her to marry him and change her name from East(man) to Merri(man). It was then much easier to remember her **surname**. And he figured if he forgot her **first name**, he could always call her “**dear**”, or even “**Mrs. Merriman**”!!

Mark was twenty-three when he and Lois were married in 1958. They have a daughter (their eldest) followed by two sons. They have eight grandchildren and one great granddaughter, almost two at time of writing. They have lived in their house in Pineview since 1968.

Since retirement Mark has had no difficulties filling his time. He has belonged to GSAC for almost twenty years. He did one three-year-stint on GSAC’s board of Directors and now is in the second year of another three-year term. He has volunteered at the Front Desk and has been an avid attendee of Peter Chan’s Tai Chi for years. Mark is great at taking new GSAC Tai Chi-ers under his wing to help minimize their confusion. He also keeps busy with such hobbies as wood turning (on a lathe), mostly producing pens, and is a keen follower of Ezra Levant.

Mark is a real History buff. Since I am too, I was impressed that he has seen Buster Keaton’s 1926 silent film “The General”, which takes place during the American Civil War--a ‘free’ youtube movie, in the public domain: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NCwTdXx51fQ> . He is an avid subscriber to Canada’s History magazine (formerly “The Beaver”) but I won’t, in this publication, go into why that magazine changed its name.

Luckily Mark and Lois have a son living in St. Louis, Missouri, and they will have plenty history to explore once they get down there for a visit. They will be tracing the steps of Canadiens Voyageurs who got a land grant from King Louis IX to create a fur trading post where the great Mississippi and Missouri rivers meet. France gave St. Louis to Spain in 1770 but it was returned to France under Napoleon and then in 1803 became part of the United States. St. Louis became world famous in 1904 when it hosted not only an amazing World’s Fair but also the 1904 Olympics. The catchy “Meet Me in St. Louis, Louis” song was sung the world over. Follow https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aP2QR_m4K1c to hear and see Judy Garland in the St. Louis 1944 Official Music Video.

Mark is also very interested in the “**Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site**”, located near St. Louis. There was an advanced civilization there from about 600 to 1400 AD. This was one thousand years before Europeans arrived with their so-called “modern civilization”. We hope Mark and Lois will have a great time when they get to visit their family in St. Louis. Please bring back many stories of your adventures there.