

Ken and Betty

By Sophy Churches

Walking along the Highland Canal, you don't only admire nature's gifts but meet people who make one's life richer for having known them.

Ken (90) and Betty (89) hail from Culver, Indiana. His parents had a small farm, so he learned early in life all kinds of farm work. He had to milk the cows before going to school. They also had horses that worked the farm. Early in his life he was interested in racehorses but could never purchase one, only went to the races. The biggest winning was \$60.

At 18 years of age he was called up to the army. Such was his luck that the war was over just as soon as he was trained, and they were preparing to send his division to Japan, but that never happened. Instead, he was joined to the Allied Forces to go to Germany straight after the defeat of Germany. The Allied Forces were called upon to regulate Germany as it had no government of its own then. He was assigned to the housing division, whereby his work was to find accommodations for the different national forces who were carrying out the clean-up effort and management of Germany. He was sent to Frankfurt-am-Mein.

Ken showed me some photographs that he had taken in Germany at that time. Tragic scenes of bombardments were shown on the tiny old black and white photographs. Ken was a handsome, tall soldier who obviously took his task very seriously. He met a lot of interesting and high ranking officials through his job as an Accommodations Officer.

The City of Frankfurt itself was not bombed as much as its outskirts; it was always the financial hub of Germany and somehow the office buildings and the churches remained relatively untouched.

An interesting remark made by Ken was that he found the Germans very easy to work with, whereas the French officials were not. While he was in Germany, he could take a few weeks of furlough and visit some other countries, like Denmark, France, and Switzerland. With the exception of France, he noticed that the other countries were not bombarded at all.

Meanwhile in Ken's absence, Betty, his high school sweetheart, had been waiting for Ken's return. After 11 months, he was honorably discharged from the military, and his life could return to normal. He married Betty, when he was 20 years old.

Ken learned new skills after returning from the army. He worked in a machinery workshop, then went into national sales, selling the honing machines that his company manufactured. He went to work for Boeing and became an airplane mechanic with a special skill in preflight mechanics. Ken also became a real estate agent, but as he said, he only "dabbled" with this profession.

They had three sons but tragedy struck one of them, who died. They had their fair share of happiness and tragedy too.

Ken and Betty have always been strong churchgoers and established a life in the Ministry. They are still both engaged in missionary work by having finished a bible college. They are fellowship teachers in bible studies, holding home fellowships and various retreats for interested believers. Here and now in the summer of 2017, they are both sitting on a bench at Windsor Garden's Canal Walk, holding hands and enjoying the walkers and their dogs.

Ken and Betty are the nicest couple you can imagine. Happiness and peace radiate from their smiles which makes all passersby smile at them in return.