



Alan Frederick Tobie

April 3, 2020

Alan Frederick Tobie was born in Bloomfield, CT to Llewellyn and Ethelwyn Bidwell Tobie. He passed away at Willow Valley Communities on Friday, April 3, 2020 at the age of 94.

Alan attended the Mt. Herman School and the University of Connecticut where he received his BS degree. In May of 1944, he was drafted out of his freshman year and sent to France during the Battle of the Bulge. He was taken prisoner of war in January 1945 and imprisoned at Stalag IV-B in Muhlberg, Germany, until the end of the war. Upon his return, Alan completed his undergraduate degree and went on to receive an MS in Dairy Science from Cornell University where he met his future wife, Josephine McKenrick. They married in 1949 and had 4 daughters before moving to Wyncote, PA where he worked for Sealtest Foods in Philadelphia. In 1966 he moved with his family to the "School House" in Lancaster, when he was made General Manager of Zausner Foods in New Holland, PA (subsequently Bongrain International). He retired in 2005 when he and Josie moved to Willow Valley Communities in 2006.

The Tobie household was always filled with a myriad of pets including cats, dogs, mice, sheep, a horse and, for a brief time, a goat (he helped introduce the goat cheese enterprise to the American public through Bongrain). Alan was a committed and much sought after community volunteer and served in

many leadership roles including school board member, an elder with the First Presbyterian Church of Lancaster, and Lancaster/Lebanon Literacy Council. He felt most proud of the work he did on behalf of the Lancaster Housing Development Corporation where he served as a valued board member for 20 years. Known for his fairness, equanimity and generosity (traits he would attribute to his New England upbringing), Alan received great joy in helping to expand affordable housing in Lancaster through HDC.

Alan Tobie was preceded in death by his daughter, Jane; and his wife of 57 years, Josephine McKenrick. Having the gift of a long and loving marriage, he was doubly graced beyond measure to have Susan Tobie as a wife and loving companion for almost ten years.

He is survived by his half-brother, Neil of CA; step-brother, Gordon Davis of ME; and wife, Susan Breneman Tobie; daughters Ellen (Larry), Betsy (Stuart), and Mannie (George); 8 grandchildren; 1 great-grandchild; 4 step-daughters (Sarah, Louise, Martha, and Barbara); 10 step-grandchildren; and 2 step-great-grandchildren. He took immense joy in his ever-expanded family. They, along with his many beloved colleagues and friends, will miss him dearly.

In lieu of flowers, memorials in Alan's name may be made to Literacy Council of Lancaster/Lebanon, 407 Lafayette Street, Lancaster, PA 17603, Allegro Orchestra, P.O. Box 1741, Lancaster, Pa 17608 and St. John's Episcopal Church, 320 W. Chestnut Street, Lancaster, PA 17603.

A Service of Remembrance for Alan F. Tobie, who died April 3, 2020, will be held at The Groffs Family Funeral Home, 528 W. Orange Street, Lancaster on Saturday, October 16, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. Guests will be received prior to the gathering between 1:00-2:00 p.m. Masks are recommended. Please omit flowers.

Tribute Wall



“ *Alan Frederick Tobie*

October 22, 2023 at 11:34 PM



“ *I was sad to learn of Alan's passing. We served together for many years on the Housing Development Corporation Board of Directors. Alan patiently guided me along the way and did so with kindness and patience. I found Alan to be a man of great intellect but also with great passion and compassion. Alan will be missed by many, and I send my condolences to family and friends alike.*
George DiLLIO

George DiLLIO - October 24, 2021 at 04:48 PM



“ *cynthia A. purchased a sympathy card for the family of Alan Frederick Tobie.*



cynthia A. - October 21, 2021 at 03:31 PM

BK

“ I will never forget the tall gentle man with the bowtie. I walked into his office at Zausner Foods with an application in my hand and hopes of getting my first job. Alan glanced at my application looked me in the eye and told me if I didn't have sandals on I could start immediately. That day started a special friendship with Alan Tobie and I will be forever thankful that he gave me a chance. I stayed at that job for 25 years and always enjoyed talking to Mr. Tobie. I extend my condolences to Mr. Toby's family and friends. He will be forever remembered.

Barbara King - October 03, 2021 at 11:13 AM

WC

“ Alan was an encourager He left things better than he found them and we are better for him acting on his impulses towards grace!

William W. Campbell - October 03, 2021 at 07:28 AM

WH

“ Dear Family, I wanted to send my sympathies on the passing of your loved one. My father worked at Zausners and Mr. Toby was his boss and as a teenager I also worked there in the summers, and he was the nicest boss. He always treated my father with the most respect and he was so very kind. He was a very nice man with a very warm smile. I am so sorry for your loss.

Most sincerely, Wendy Hammer

Wendy Hammer - April 06, 2020 at 04:16 PM

LL

“ Mr. and Mrs. Tobie were very generous people. When I was a student at Lancaster Bible College, they graciously allowed me to stay in the upstairs of their home on Butter Road in Eden. I cleaned for my room and board, but in actuality, they did far more for me than I was ever able or capable of doing for them at the time. I remember clearly wanting to apply for a particular job that I had seen in the Newspaper and Mr. Tobie wisely guiding me away from that situation which would have been very harmful to me. I always believed that God placed the Tobies in my life at that time to serve as "protectors" or "angels of light". Other things that I remember about them was a love for their girls, books, great food, cheese, and the Saint Bernard dog. They set a great example that I will be mindful to pay it forward. When passing that beautiful stately brick home, I will always have fond memories of the Tobies. My sympathy to all of your family during this most difficult time. May God be your source of strength and comfort.
Sincerely, Linda D. (Shepherd) Lewis

Linda Lewis - April 06, 2020 at 08:20 AM

TA

“ I have such fond memories of Alan and Sue serving as volunteer greeters at Allegro Orchestra's concerts. They were a wonderful welcoming pair who exemplified the Allegro musical community. - TJ Titcomb

TJ Titcomb, President Emerita, Allegro - April 06, 2020 at 01:34 AM

CD

“ I'm sorry to learn of Alan's passing. I served many years with Alan on the Board of Directors of the Housing Development Corporation. I found him to be knowledgeable, compassionate, humorous, and very friendly. I will cherish those memories, and I extend heartfelt condolences to his family.

C GEORGE DIILIO - April 05, 2020 at 07:05 PM

BR

“ I am deeply sadden to hear of the passing of Mr. Tobie...during one of my working careers, as a salesman, I had the opportunity to have Alan as a customer as I recall in the 1980's or 1990's...was the company Fleur de Lait? what a gentleman and class act...going to lunch with Jeff Gehman (sp?) to People's restaurant, down the street from his office....he might have been the only customer I had that would take turns picking up the checkI fondly remember talking to him about his Volvo as I had a 1982 Volvo diesel at the time....I do remember he proudly spoke about one of his daughter's who was an actor living in NYC.... I never knew he a P.O.W during WW2...along with his other life's experiences....my wife & I moved to Columbia in 2017 and I have often thought of Alan....saddens me to learn he lived in Willow Valley...so close, I would have loved to visit....I would hope to attend his memorial service....please extend my condolences to his family....Bob Ream, 3726 Marietta Ave., Columbia, PA 17512.

Bob Ream - April 04, 2020 at 02:01 PM

BK

“ In August of 1973 at 18 years old I walked thru the doors of the then Zausners and filled out an application. After completing the application I was directed to Alan Tobie to have him review it. He glanced at the front and back of my application and looked down at my feet and said “If you didn't have those sandals on you could start today”. That day started a friendship between me and the tall gentle man with the bow tie who gave the greatest hugs. I retired from that job in 2004 and I never forgot the man who gave me my first and only job. I send condolences to his family and to all of those who knew him.

Barbara (Weller) King

Barbara King - April 04, 2020 at 12:06 PM

DK

“ I knew Alan from Willow Valley Communities where we would see Sue and Alan everyday having lunch together in the cafe. He was always so sweet to us team members and would always make sure we were doing ok and even make sure our families were as well. We would always have so many laughs and would always leave with “make sure you stay out of trouble!” The world lost a great man and he will be forever missed. Sue and family, you are in our thoughts.

Donnavie Kohl - April 04, 2020 at 10:36 AM

CH

“ To Alan's family,
On behalf of all of us at The Literacy Council of Lancaster-Lebanon, I want to express our condolences. We are sad to hear of Alan's passing. He was a long time supporter and friend. He was one of the good guys.
Warmly,
Cheryl Hiester
Executive Director
The Literacy Council of Lancaster-Lebanon

Cheryl Hiester - April 04, 2020 at 09:14 AM

FY

I worked for Alan at Zausner Foods, as a teenager, in the 70's. I remember him fondly as being a kind, caring and compassionate person who loved people and telling stories. Alan was truly one of the great people I had the pleasure of knowing in my lifetime! I'm sure he was a blessing to your family and will be greatly missed! May the memories of the past bring you comfort and peace.

Fred Young - April 04, 2020 at 11:16 AM

CA

The world needs more people like Tobie. He was the kindest person to everyone from all walks of life. Tobie took me in for about a month when I was having difficulties in my life. We would sit in the living room and read books for hours. I'll never forget him and all that he did for me. He was the father I never had. I'm so sorry to have missed his viewing. I've thought about him over the years and it was always with fondness. He will be greatly missed.

Cindy Allison - October 21, 2021 at 03:24 PM