

Henry Zigmont Vita Life Review

I was born in Scranton, PA, to George and Ann Zigmont. My father was a miner and my mother worked at Lear Engineering in Naugatuck during the war. I had a brother named Edmund.

I attended Seymour High School, where I played baseball and basketball. I can still recall the time our team played two away games, one in Cape Cod and one in Providence, and we won both games. I decided to hitchhike home and keep the money that would have been spent to take the bus. I got back before the team did!

One of my friends was called by the New York Giants baseball team when he was 15. He was so excited that he walked across town to tell me, because we didn't have telephones at that time. He asked me to come out there with him and we were able to sleep in the clubhouse and work out with the team.

I always liked sports and later became interested in playing golf and running in road races, including a 20K that took place in New Haven on Labor Day.

I worked in the Post Office when I was in high school and I had a friend named Charles Patrick Mulligan, who was a ticket agent at the railroad station. He kept telling me that he knew the perfect girl for me. Her name was Mary Isles and she worked at the bank across the street. He gave me her number and told me to call her. I used to go to the phone booth and pretend that I was dialing but never actually made the call. After about a month of this, Charles asked if I had talked to her yet. I told him that every time I call her she is busy. He said that she couldn't be that busy and one day he followed me to the phone booth where he finally figured out that I had never actually called her.

Mary and I finally met and began dating. She had two brothers and a mother who as English as it was possible to be. I don't think her father was too happy that his daughter was going out with a Polish boy.

We got married at Christ Episcopal Church in Ansonia on September 16, 1950 and went to Lake Wallenpaupack in Pennsylvania for our honeymoon.

Mary and I remained friends with Charles for many years. He once asked us to keep an eye out for a Wally Berger baseball card that he wanted more than anything. We kept an eye out for it everywhere we went and finally found one. We brought it home and displayed it on a table all lit up under a lamp when we finally gave it to him and after we did, he said, "Can you find me a Honus Wagner card?"

Our first apartment was on the third floor of a house in the Shady Knoll area of Seymour. It had five rooms and cost twenty dollars a month to rent. There was only one door to go in and out of, which sometimes made Mary's mother nervous in case there was ever a fire. We later bought a house on French Street in Seymour where we lived for fifty years.

Mary and I had three children and four grandchildren. Beth, our oldest, has two sons who have graduated college. Amy, our second child, has a daughter of her own who is 16 and a son who is 13. James, our son, recently celebrated his five year wedding anniversary. He works for an environmental company and his wife is an artist.

I spent two years in the army in Japan with the MP's. I worked in the 8th Army stockade, where two hundred prisoners were kept. They put me in the meanest cellblocks because I was the tallest guy there. I worked on the catwalks and as a mail clerk. I was later awarded the Victory Medal, which I gave to my grandson who proudly keeps it on display.

When I got out of the army, I went back to work in the Seymour Post office. I was the Superintendent of Postal Operations at that branch and sometimes they would send me to other towns, such as Shelton or Monroe, to help manage their locations. I decided to retire after thirty nine years of service.

Mary and I liked to travel. We took two train trips across the country. We went to Chicago, Seattle and San Francisco. On one of our trips, the railroad workers went on strike, so we decided to fly home.

We went to New Orleans with our son Jim. We went to the NOLA jazz festival. We took a ride on the Mississippi Queen paddle boat. It took a week to go up and back down the big river. Our suite had a porch on it so we could sit outside. Margaret O'Brien was on the boat with us, entertaining everyone.

We also visited Antigua, St. Lucia and Bermuda. During the day, Mary loved to relax on the beach while I would go play golf.

Mary was a happy person who loved life. We would often go out for lunch or dinner because she hated cooking. She was a real lady who treated everyone she cared about as if they were royalty, especially me. She just made my day every day.

We spent a lot of time with our friends, and especially enjoyed our Wednesday morning get-togethers over fruit and pastries where we would talk about everything. We used to go to the New Haven Ravens home games and would meet up with friends at the stadium.

Mary was an avid reader and kept a diary of the books she had read. She also loved to do crossword puzzles and would do the ones in the New York Times and the New Haven Register every day.

Mary and I talked about coming here to Crosby Commons a couple of times than then finally moved in May of 2010. We knew that we would be safe and well cared for as Mary's emphysema became worse. She loved her new carefree lifestyle, especially because she didn't have to cook. Mary used to read the names on every door as we walked by them so that she could greet each person by name. Everyone here loved her and she made a lot of friends. We celebrated our 60th wedding anniversary here.

These days I take walks to the pond with my aide. I spend an hour a day working out at the wellness center. Sometimes I like to read or watch the ballgame or the golf channel. I also look at the photo albums that are filled with wonderful memories of the great times Mary and I spent with each other and with our family and friends. But my favorite picture of all is the one from the day that Mary and I got married. What a lucky man I am to have had such a wonderful marriage, a beautiful family and great friends!