

Legacy of love and giving left behind by Eddie Creed

By Mark Pavilons

Eddie Creed touched many lives. And he left a lasting legacy ? building stronger ties with one's own family is the building block for everything in life.

Edmond (Eddie) Martin Creed passed away Aug. 13 at 94, surrounded by his family. A memorial of his life was held at his favorite place, Doneddy Farm, Aug. 16.

The family asked that in lieu of donations, the best way to honour his example of accomplishment is by ?building an even stronger loving bond with your own family. Eddie would consider this the greatest honour of all.?

Creed was mentor to 2008 Canadian Olympic Show Jumping Champion Eric Lamaze.

Lamaze credited Mr. Creed with giving him his start in show jumping. Lamaze had been working for various professionals before striking out to start his own business at only 19 years of age. Mr. Creed, who had an old polo barn on his property in Schomberg, rented 10 stalls to Lamaze in exchange for low rent and on the condition that he restore the barn. Working out of Mr. Creed's property, Lamaze built his Torrey Pines Stable from nothing into one of Canada's most preeminent show jumping training facilities. In the early days of the business, Lamaze took in horses for training, including race horses off the track, and resold them as hunter and jumper prospects. Having witnessed Lamaze's drive and determination to succeed in the sport, Mr. Creed purchased Cagney to be Lamaze's first grand prix horse. The Irish Sport Horse gelding would carry Lamaze to his Canadian Equestrian Team debut at the 1993 Washington International Horse Show.

?I had been at Eddie's place for several years, and he had seen the business grow,? explained Lamaze. ?I was always looking for a horse for myself, and I came across Cagney. Eddie purchased him for me, and Cagney became my first solid grand prix horse.? Lamaze and Cagney went on to have an incredible career together, representing Canada at back-to-back World Equestrian Games in 1994 and 1998. The pair also competed at the 1995 World Cup Final in Gothenburg, Sweden, and the 1998 World Cup Final in Helsinki, Finland.

Over the years, Mr. Creed and Lamaze formed a formidable friendship. Mr. Creed treated Lamaze as a member of his family, often referring to him as a son. He continued to own several horses for Lamaze, including Espresso Thyme, Gotier Manciais and Why Not.

?Eddie Creed played a huge role in my career and was instrumental in helping me to achieve success in this sport,? said Lamaze, 47. ?I would not be where I am today without his support.?

Following Canada's victory at the Toronto 2015 Pan American Games July 23, Lamaze visited Mr. Creed. The two shared a sentimental moment when Lamaze placed his team gold medal around Creed's neck, a poignant reminder of the success the two had enjoyed together over the years.

?Eddie was a mentor and, most importantly, a close friend whose faith and belief in me throughout my career has been immeasurable,? said Lamaze. ?I will miss him greatly.?

Craig Collins, managing partner of Equestrian Management Group, had fond memories of Mr. Creed.

?Eddie and I went back many, many, many decades,? he remarked. ?He was one of the finest men I ever met.?

?When Eddie said, 'It's a deal,' or, 'You're good to go,' you were 100 per cent sure,? Collins added. ?Wonderful guy. Genius in business.?

?He was a really important guy in my life,? he added.

?Eddie leaves behind an incredible legacy in the horse community and beyond,? said Equine Canada President, Al Patterson. ?He had an unsurpassed zest for life, a strong and unwavering love of family, and a passion for making the world a better place. He will be sorely missed by everyone who knew him.?

?Eddie was a giant among men in terms of his unwavering support of equestrian sport, and particularly show jumping. I had the privilege of working and playing with Eddie for almost two decades on such great team fundraisers as Go For Gold and arguably eastern Canada's most prestigious show jumping event, Tournament of Champions. He set high goals, and equally high expectations for everyone on his team, and expected no less of himself. He personified 'go big or go home,' opening his connections, and more importantly his vision, taking show jumping, its riders and events to new heights,? said Liz Shaughnessy, one of his biggest fans. Creed is known for leading Toronto's landmark luxury department store, Creeds & Co. It was the first department store in Canada to offer in-store boutiques, introducing high-fashion names heavyweights such as Chanel, Yves Saint Laurent and Christian Dior to Toronto.

Creeds & Co. filed for bankruptcy in 1991, after being in business for 75 years.

Creed was also part of the early beginnings of the first Four Seasons hotel in Toronto, which opened in 1961. He partnered with Issy Sharp, Murray Koffler, Max Sharp and Fred Eisen.

Eddie will be lovingly missed and remembered by his wife of 67 years, Edie, and his children, Simone, Jack, Tommy, Wendy, Dodie, and Donna and their spouses, Beverly, Shari and Todd. Eddie will be fondly remembered by his 33 descendants, including his 23 grandchildren.