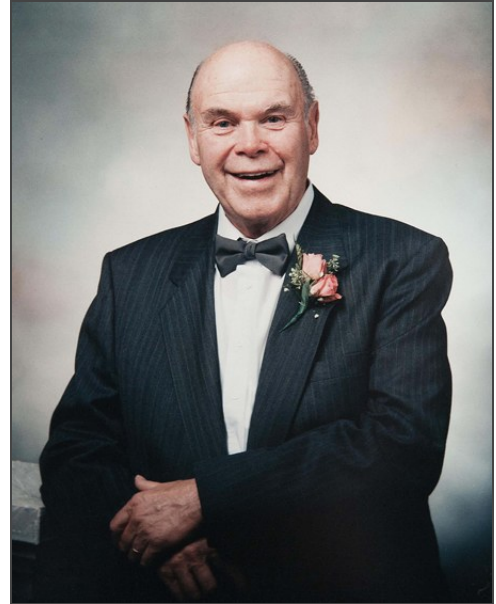


James David Holcombe

NOVEMBER 25, 2011

Jim was born in 1925, to Harry and Ethel Holcombe in their home on Wall Street, Vancouver, B.C. He was the only son and the youngest of three children, two sisters, Louise and Margaret. They later moved to Kitchener Street and lived there until all the family was married.



Jim attended Lord Nelson and Templeton Junior High School. At age fourteen he began singing on occasion for the school concert, a patriotic favourite (1939), "There'll Always Be an England!" This pleased the teachers, who in turn, gave him "much needed" credits on his report cards.

He had a Vancouver Sun paper route and also delivered for a meat market with his bike on Saturdays and after school on weekdays.

After finishing grade 9, Jim decided to learn some trades. His first job at Ross & Howards Foundry doing metal castings, then on to making circular and band saws at Shirley Dietrick Atkins, the machinist trade was next, working at Brisbane Aviation with precision tools making gun-sights.

During the war years, you could pick up a lot of experience while getting paid for it. This came in handy later, when his hobby was buying, refurbishing, and selling saws, generators, engines, cars, and boats, etc.

The family attended the Foursquare Gospel Church on Kingsway and Jim played the huge B flat base horn in the 40-piece band and sang in the choir and in a quartet for the CJOR radio broadcast recorded in the church.

In 1937, a family moved from North Battleford, Saskatchewan, and came to the church. After a couple of years, this new girl joined the junior choir. It was then that Jim became interested in the youngest daughter, June Warnock.

Both being involved in music, gave lots of opportunity to see each other. Between radio broadcast and Crusaders there was time to kill so he would ask her to go for a hamburger; a short walk to the Aristocratic restaurant.

When Jim turned 16 and got his first car, he could take her home in style, in a 1929 Ford Coupe; after evening services. In 1943, there were some special meetings at Evangelistic Tabernacle where June's sister Viola was the pianist. Jim was soon asked to sing, also in a male octet, played in the orchestra, and on a radio broadcast at CKMO station in downtown Vancouver; Sunday nights after the evening service. The mid-week Bible Studies, and twice on Sundays, drew a capacity crowd long after a special campaign was over. The young people attended all services, a youth night Fridays, and street meetings. It was "the Word that drew them.

Jim's employment took on a different role when he decided to try the meat cutting trade. He got on at Hudson's Bay and they promised steady work.

When he would suggest marriage, she'd tell him she wouldn't marry a teenager. Finally he turned 20 and they got engaged for his birthday, "qualified!" Wedding plans were made, and on October 13, 1945, Pastor Ern Baxter married them at the 11th Avenue location. In 1948, the first son Grant arrived on June 2, right on his dad's birthday. What a tremendous gift, he looked just like his dad.

The church, still having a seating problem, finally bought the bigger St. Giles United on 10th Avenue at Quebec Street. By September, Grant was the first baby to be dedicated in the new church.

When the soldiers started returning home after WW 2, the Hudson Bay was obligated to give back their jobs. Jim was in the last four hired and he had to go but soon got on at Safeway and then got a manager's job at a smaller meat shop near home and our new little family.

In 1950 Jim and June built their first new home nearer the church. It was also near Jim's new job with the "Pony Express" (eventually incorporated into Canada Post) driving a mail truck on a mail run and parcel post delivery.

On Dec. 31, 1952, a second son, Dean, came one day after his mom's birthday, now they each had a birthday gift, looked just like his dad and big brother. In May, he was dedicated at the same place, by the same pastor who married them.

Jim was the doting father who spent every spare moment with his kids and he wouldn't go anywhere without them. They were never one night apart, unless for hospital confinement, even hunting trips, it was the "wife, kids, and the dog!" It was a joy for him to see Grant follow in singing for the Lord and Dean in the orchestra with his trumpet. The boys were never any problem and loved going to church. They gave their hearts to the Lord at an early age. They made their parents proud when they became fine young men and married Christian girls.

Dean married Janice Welk in 1973, Lynda arrived in 1980 and Mark in 1987. Grant married Cherril Low in 1974, Lance arrived in 1979 and Lacey in 1984. Jim and June were blessed with five great grandchildren by Lynda and Jason with Lochlan and Georgia, and by Lance and Shara with Laney, Clara, and Merritt.

In 1988 Jim retired from Canada Post, in the securities division, 38 years in one job and was known to all as "tiny." After 49 years in the same church, the Tabernacle

congregation moved to Caribou Road and they began attending People's Full Gospel Church. They sold their Richmond home and moved to Cloverdale.

Jim will always be remembered for his singing ministry. Many cards and calls were witness to the fact that he had blessed so many with his anointed gift.

The family will remember his constant reminders of "I love you!" and his morning greeting was "I love you darling, I'm so lucky to have a girl like you!"...Well we were so blessed to have a dad and husband like Jim! His constant remark was, "Isn't the Lord good to us?"...His favourite song was, "Great is Thy Faithfulness."..."He surely was faithful!"

You are invited to leave a personal message of condolence at the family registry.

Messages of Condolence

What a terrible loss for your family.

Please accept my deepest condolences.

Uncle Jim was such a wonderful person - a tad scarey when your a small shy child - but wonderful all the same.

How my mother loved to hear her brother sing. She would cry every time, but loved it all the same. 'Oh Holy Night' was a major favourite.

I will never forget the words he and Aunty Juney said to me at one of my most totally rejected times. For that I will always be indebted and I thank them both.

May he live on in your joy, of his memories and love.

— **Charlotte Whittaker**

My deepest sympathies to you on your loss. May you know the comfort of the Lord
at this time

— **Pieter Brouwer**

James David Holcombe is his given name, but most people here knew him as Jim, I called him Dad. All of my memories of Dad are positive, and he always had time to spend with his kids.

Some of my earliest memories are wrestling with dad. He would come home from work, walk through the door, grab you, throw you in the air, pin you to the floor and proceed to tickle you until mom came to the rescue. We did lots of fun stuff, camping, hunting, and fishing and always had lots of friends around our house. Dad loved kids, and always had time to spend time with kids and tease them, especially total strangers. His trick of choice, with kids he didn't know was to call them a ridiculous name. It would go something like this. If a little boy, he would say "Hi Mary. This usually brought the dialogue, "My name isn't Mary, I'm a boy, that's a girl's name my name is John" No, you are wrong, I think it is Mary. Before long the kid was his next best friend, and they would be engaged in some chatter or some little trick like stealing their nose. With little girls, the same dialogue, only it would start off with Hi Fred. Today he would probably be accused of causing the kid some great emotional trauma.

Every once in a while I got to go to work with Dad. This was during a much more relaxed era in the world. He worked for the Pony Express driving a truck downtown, delivering parcels. Most people didn't know that Vancouver had a pony express, but it later became Canada Post.

This is when I saw another attribute of Dad. He loved to make a deal of some sort. Anything -- he loved to buy and sell stuff, as long as he could make a deal. His real job was delivering mail, but I think he only did this so that he could carry on his sales hobby.

He worked on the downtown route, Seymour, Granville and Howe street areas. Many businesses on his route were in the retail and wholesale business and they seemed to always have lots of samples that they needed to liquidate. One of his favorites was a toy wholesaler - Harry Smith & Co. He would buy up the sample

toys just before Christmas and fill his truck up, and then proceed to sell them along his mail route to others.

It was entertaining for me to travel some days with him on his mail route. When he arrived at a business loading dock this is what you would hear. Somebody would yell - Tiny is here! People would arrive from everywhere to see what Tiny had today to sell. Depending on the season, it could be anything from clothing to toys. This sales hobby also extended past work, to his home hobby. We had everything coming and going from TV sets to power tools. Next to Dad's Bible, which he read lots, I think his next choice in literature was the Buy and Sell paper.

It was spending time with dad at work that I learned that he had another name, other than Jim. Everyone downtown seemed to know him as Tiny. This came from the fact that he was 6'3" and 265 pounds.

I also saw the generous side of dad with his toy selling. He was always on the watch for someone that needed a helping hand, or some encouragement. I noticed that he always kept some toys aside, and had a box of "special toys" that he would collect at home. He would say that we need to make sure that the kids that won't get anything at Christmas also get a toy. He had some special people along his mail route or in our neighborhood that he knew could use a little help. These special people to Dad, would get toys for their kids for free and a Merry Christmas. Dad's employer seemed to have a special place in their hearts for dad. I remember one day when dad brought his truck back for the night. The pony express in those days was under the Cambie Street Bridge. When we went into the warehouse to turn in his keys, I overheard his boss say. Tiny - I have requested a bigger truck for you, so that you will have enough space to carry the mail. Of course this ended with Dad making some quick remark and the whole place was in laughter.

Dad always treated mom well and was a great example for Dean and I, of how to treat our families when we grew up. I consider the home, Dad & Mom created for us, to be extremely blessed. As a testimony to this, Mom and Dad celebrated their

66th wedding anniversary in October of this year, 2011. Mom was telling me the other day, that she does not recall any days, when her and dad were not together. Dad loved to sing for the Lord. I am sure many people here today have heard dad sing, and have perhaps had him sing at your wedding. He didn't like to public speak, but put dad in front of 100's of people and he was in his element. He sang at special evangelistic meetings, at church, as the visiting soloist for other churches and on the radio. If there is one common comment I have heard over the last few days, it has been the many comments about dad's tremendous voice. One example. One evening dad was at the church practicing for the evening service. Thelma Lade was on the pipe organ. I was outside the church playing with a buddy waiting for church to start. A group of people were walking down the road, on the opposite side of the street. I overheard them say "Wow, listen to that guy sing! Let's sit in and see what is going on." This was only dad's practice, but I noticed, they stayed for the service to hear more.

Singing was more than a performance to dad however. When dad started to coach me with my singing, I learned what it really meant to him. He would tell me "Always remember, your voice is only the instrument and the musician is the Holy Spirit. If the Holy Spirit isn't ministering through your voice, then you should sit down and shut up." He really meant this, and it is true.

Dad loved a joke and fun. You could always tell when dad was someplace around. You would hear his booming voice, and people laughing. You could hear his laughter above the rest. This combined with his quick wit would make something funny even when it wasn't meant to be.

Our life was always very social. Our home always had lots of people around, and my friends were meant to feel welcome at our home. Dad engaged in many of our church's youth activities, including driving the bus for camp and youth outings and many of the youth events. My friends even seemed to enjoy having him around. Dad had a keen eye to watch for those that were not entering in, or for some

reason were a little less popular. He often gave me the instruction, Watch for those that are not entering in, are new, or are not being accepted. Be friendly to that person, and God will reward you.

In later years when we have our own families, Dad always had a keen interest in how we were doing and loved to play with his grand kids. Our kids are truly blessed by dad, and much of his characteristics are showing up in their lives as well.

It was so difficult to watch the effects of Parkinson's disease take its toll on dad for the last number of years. As his body started to trap him, he spoke much about heaven. Now he is free. One of his favorite songs that he used to sing is:

UNTIL THEN

But, until then, my heart will go on singing,

Until then, with joy I'll carry on,

Until the day, my eyes behold the city,

Until the day, God calls me home

Catch up with you later Dad.

— **Grant Holcombe**



<https://www.myalternatives.ca/obituaries/holcombe-james-david>

Printed on June 19, 2026