

Marion John (Jack) Wallace

1927 - 1963

Jack was the son of Marion John Wallace (1902 – 1991) and Lellavene Emma Pearen (1903 – 1994), grandson of Joshua Henry Issac Pearen (1878 – 1953) and Emma Jane Bouchard (1861 – 1946)

Jack was a veteran skydiver. He was 35 years old an about to retire from skydiving. Jack and his wife and three-year-old daughter were on their way home when he spotted a group of skydivers. Jack had one chute left and asked his wife if it were ok if he made this one last jump.

As the other group was preparing to jump from the plane, the pilot announced that there was a novice on board. He asked if any of the other skydivers had static lines on his chute and would be willing to trade with the novice. Jack, being the sensitive, loving person that he was, traded with the novice jumper.

As his wife and daughter watched, he landed on a transformer. Evelyn said that the moment he jumped, she knew something was wrong!

The FAA (Federal Aviation Agency) sent two investigators to investigate the accident. One jumped wearing the chute that Jack used and the other investigator jumped with him. The officer wearing the chute that Jack used said that he realized immediately that he had no control over the chute. It had been rigged wrong! They traced the chute to a small black market shop on the West Coast.

Right after the funeral Jack's folks went to the Detroit rooming house where the young skydiver lived to tell him that they knew accidents do happen and they did not hold any ill feeling toward him. The landlord said it was funny because as soon as he returned from skydiving that day, he came home, packed his bags, and left.

His sister Joan writes: It was a gorgeous warm, sunny afternoon. I shall never forget it as long as I live. My husband and I were out that Sunday looking for a new home. As we approached one new model home, I heard a loud airplane engine flying overhead. A very gentle sweet voice said to me "you will never forget the sound of that airplane". This was the same time that my brother was killed. It was as if the voice were assuring me it was ok, he was at peace. As soon as we returned home, we received the message.

The Ypsilanti Press
Ypsilanti, Michigan
Monday October 21, 1963

Ypsilanti Parachutist Killed by Power Wires

A skydiving Ypsilanti barber and father, Marion J. (Jack) Wallace, Jr., drifted into high voltage power lines while parachuting near Tecumseh yesterday and died instantly as his wife watched helplessly from nearby.

Mr. Wallace, 35, a veteran of 75 jumps, was a member of the Napoleon Skydivers Club and was guest-jumping with the Chuting Angels Sport Parachute team at Tecumseh.

He had operated a barbershop in the Greystone Hotel building for seven years and in April moved to new quarters a few doors down the street at 218 W. Michigan Ave., where the entrance to the former Wuerth Theatre had been. He operated under the name Jack's Barber Shop. His father operates a barber shop at 324 E. Michigan Ave.

Police said Mr. Wallace and Louis Peres, Jr., of Detroit, jumped together from a four-place single-engine plane flying at about 4,000 feet. Peres hit the Meyers Airport target, but spectators said Wallace apparently had trouble with his chute and used his risers in an attempt to clear a road at the edge of the airport.

The spectators said Wallace drifted into a group of three Consumers Power Co. high tension lines about 30 feet off the ground, hit the middle line bearing 7,200 volts and dropped to the ground.

Mr. Wallace's wife Evelyn, an X-ray clerk at the University Medical Center in Ann Arbor, had been visiting a friend's home before her husband's second jump and returned to the airport just in time to see him come down and strike the wire. She was taken to Tecumseh hospital and treated for shock but was back in Ypsilanti today. The Wallaces have a three-year-old daughter, Dawn. Their home is at 302 Emmet St.

Mr. Wallace was an Air Force veteran and had been barbering since he was 16. A native of Owosso, he came with his family to Ypsilanti about 1942. He was a member of the Moose and Phoenix lodge 13, F&AM Masons and a former member of the Ypsilanti Jaycees.

Mr. Wallace was born Feb. 2, 1927, the son of Marion J. and Lellavene Pearen Wallace. He was married to Evelyn McDonnell April 2, 1955, in Ypsilanti. He attended Ypsilanti High School and was graduated from Green's Barber College in Detroit.

Survivors in addition to his wife and daughter include his mother and father; five sisters, Mrs. Joan Ray, Mrs. Sharron Haynes and Miss Nancy Wallace, of Ypsilanti, Mrs. Patricia Sanders of Tampa Fla., and Mrs. Betty Markman of Alpena, Mich.; a brother, Lawrence E. of Ypsilanti; his paternal grandmother, Mrs. Maude Wallace of Vernon, Mich.; and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral arrangements, being made by the Moore Funeral Home, are incomplete. Friends may call at the funeral home beginning at 7 tonight.

Lawrence Edward Wallace

(1945 – 1997)

Lawrence was the youngest son of Marion John Wallace (1902 – 1991) and Lellavene Emma Pearen (1903 – 1994), grandson of Joshua Henry Issac Pearen (1878 – 1953) and Emma Jane Bouchard (1861 – 1946).

Lawrence was a professional musician and magician. He performed on many large stages and on television. A few of the places that he performed were in London and Windsor, in Ontario, Canada and Detroit, Michigan; Miami, Florida; Los Vegas and Reno, Nevada; and in California. He passed away from a heart attack in 1997 at age 51.
