



Tom Pratt

May 15, 1928 - October 22, 2020

Thomas Herring Pratt, Jr. was born May 15, 1928 in Kingsport, Tennessee to Thomas Herring Pratt, Sr., and Josephine Russell Pratt. He was born a twin, the other not surviving. An older sister, Pat, now deceased, called him “Tuck”, short for “Little Tommy Tucker”.

Tom graduated from Dobyons-Bennett High School and enrolled in East Tennessee State University after graduation. Two years in, he enlisted in the Navy and served aboard ship where he was a radio technician until 1952. After his service, he married Jean Kilday.

Returning to college, he graduated and enrolled in Florida State University Graduate Chemistry School. His professor there moved to Yale and recruited Tom to join him where he received his Doctorate.

Dr. Pratt took his first job at Rohm and Haas in Huntsville, AL where he worked on space and rocket technology. He was a real “rocket scientist”. His career took Tom and Jean from there to Philadelphia, PA, and Cumberland, MD. Upon his retirement in the late 80s, they moved to Marietta, GA. He continued his career part time with Burgoyne Company where he consulted on analysis of unexpected explosions, or as he said, “things that catch fire and go ‘BANG’”. He was a published expert in this field and served as an expert witness in litigation.

Tom married Leota “Lee” Coffey Bierce on December 31, 2000. He was a beloved stepfather to Glen, Hal, Nora, and Paul, and step grandfather to Nathan, Kyle, Riley, Philip, John Paul, Aaron, Joe, Lee, Jesse, and Elizabeth. Tom and his beloved Lee traveled extensively until recently, and Tom spent many happy hours in his woodworking shop.

Rather than flowers, please direct memorial donations to the Jean Pratt Memorial Fund at the Georgia Methodist Foundation, 15 Technology Parkway South, Peachtree Corners, GA 30092. Checks should be made out to the foundations with “For Jean Pratt Memorial

Trust" noted.

A private Graveside Service will be held.

Mayes Ward-Dobbins Funeral Home in Marietta is handling the arrangements.

www.mayeswarddobbins.com

Comments



“ It was a privilege to know Tom and talk to him at the AICHE Loss Prevention Symposium Meetings regularly. A legend in the process safety field in the area of electrostatics. Professor Ronald J. Willey, Ph.D. P.E. editor-in-chief process safety progress.

Ronald J. Willey - October 24, 2020 at 12:55 PM



“ Dear All,

The first time I remember chatting with Dr. Thomas H. Pratt was at the 1987 AIChE Loss Prevention Symposium in Minneapolis. Tom presented a paper (co-authored by Brian Berkley and George Williams) on "Review of Literature Related to Human Spark Scenarios" whereas my papers were on "Static Hazards of Drum Filling" and "Systems for Electrostatic Evaluation in Industrial Silos". There was some technical overlap between our papers and this marked the beginning of a 30-year friendship. In the 1990s, after joining Burgoyne Inc., Tom became a Principal Member of the NFPA 77 Technical Committee "Recommended Practice on Static Electricity" and served for about 25 years. I'd meet Tom at meetings of NFPA 77 and at AIChE Loss Prevention Symposia. I especially recall the S&H Division Dinners where we all got together. It's hard to believe Tom told me about his marriage plans about 20 years ago, because that happy news seems so recent. Anyway, buy and read Tom's excellent book on Electrostatics, now published by AIChE-CCPS and available on Amazon.

Best wishes --- Larry Britton

larry - October 24, 2020 at 09:22 PM



“ The first time Lee brought Tom to Arkansas to meet our Mother was the first time I met him. The two of us went to Walmart to get something, and I had a hard time keeping up with him. I also had a hard time "sizing him up", to see if he was "good enough" for my sister. It didn't take many encounters for me to realize just how much he loved Lee and her entire family. The trips we made to see our brother are memories I will cherish. On the trip back to Arkansas, there was a place in Texas where we would stop to buy Tom and me Barbeque sandwiches for lunch. I could never remember where it was, but Tom always remembered. I will miss their visits to my house and the last time he was here. It was January 2020 for my birthday which would not have been complete without Tom. I love you, Lee. God bless you and the "family" he inherited when y'all got married.

Your baby sister, Joan Coffey Sutton

Joan C Sutton - October 26, 2020 at 11:51 AM



“ To the family of Tom Pratt and especially to Lee:

I'm sorry to hear of Tom's passing. Tom was a member of the NFPA Technical Committee on Static Electricity for the many years I managed the project. He was one of my most valuable mentors and a great contributor to the fields of safety and loss prevention.

Rest in peace, my friend.

Bob Benedetti

Bob Benedetti - October 26, 2020 at 04:52 PM



“ I remember Tom from his days at Allegany Ballistics Laboratory (ABL), in Rocket Center, WV just south of Cumberland MD. I was then a wet-behind-the-ears chemical engineer learning what it meant to do rocket science. Tom was one of a number of patient teachers I was fortunate to have. A man of great intelligence, but approachable and very willing to share and help. More than 30 years later I still appreciate the lessons.

My thoughts and prayers to the Tom's family and close friends.

May he rest in peace.

Ken Tappe

Ken Tappe - October 26, 2020 at 08:13 PM