

Marianna Brown Dietrich

Marianna Brown was born July 5, 1910 in Cherry Tree, PA, to Dr. and Mrs. David A. Brown. She was the younger of two daughters. Her father moved the family to Greenville, PA, when Marianna was a young girl. In Greenville, he was an eye, ear, nose and throat doctor and practiced for over 50 years. Marianna completed grammar school and high school in Greenville and enrolled at Ward Belmont Junior College for Women in Nashville, TN. She later attended Thiel College, from which she graduated in 1932.

Marianna married Kenneth P. Dietrich on March 25, 1933, who was also from Greenville, shortly after they had both graduated from Thiel College. The wedding was held at Edgewood Presbyterian Church near Pittsburgh. She gave birth to one son, William S. Dietrich II, in 1938 and to one daughter, Linda B. Dietrich, in 1943. The family lived both in Pittsburgh and in Conneaut Lake, PA. While living in Conneaut Lake, Marianna managed the Iroquois Hotel, which the Dietrichs acquired in the late 1940s.

She and her husband lived the final 17 years of her life near Delray Beach, FL. Her son describes Marianna's life centered around her family and her unconditional love for her family.

She died March of 1983, shortly before her 50th wedding anniversary.

Kenneth P. Dietrich

Kenneth P. Dietrich was born June 17, 1907. Kenneth had three younger sisters. In 1932, he graduated from Thiel College in Greenville, PA, where he met his future wife, Marianna Brown.

Kenneth began his business career with the Diamond Alkali Company, a publicly-traded producer of commodity chemicals. He was an outstanding salesman and advanced, by the age of 32, to the position of merchandising manager, one of the top ten jobs in the company.

At the age of forty, with entrepreneurial interests, he raised some outside capital and became President of the Hood Chemical Company, which he moved from New York to Pittsburgh. Hood then launched a detergent product called Sing. Sales boomed for a while, given the opportunity created by the soap shortage, and the stock went from \$1.00 to \$8.00 a share. Kenneth was almost a millionaire. Unfortunately, Procter and Gamble had \$80 to spend on advertising in the Pittsburgh

market for every dollar that Hood could muster. The stock went down to \$2.00 a share. The company added another product line and survived as a viable concern for several years, but the stress of turbulent sales took a severe physical toll. When he finally stepped down at Hood Chemical in 1947, Kenneth was over six feet tall but weighed only 132 pounds. After moving the family from Pittsburgh to Conneaut Lake, PA, in 1947, he purchased a small hotel, which his family ran with limited success.

In 1959, Kenneth started a small lumber business with some partners, which would later become Dietrich Industries, a steel distribution and steel products company. The original plant was situated atop Penn View Mountain near Blairsville, PA. His son, Bill, took over the day-to-day business operations in mid-1960s. During the 1970s, Dietrich Industries added facilities in Western Ohio and in Birmingham, Alabama and later operated 19 facilities in 17 states. After navigating through some very difficult periods and successfully focusing on construction products, the company grew significantly and was later sold to Worthington Industries in 1997. Kenneth died March 4, 1984.

His son described Kenneth as a good man who loved life and who possessed a great sense of humor. He was a good golfer and a very good card player. He liked to dance, played the ukulele, and appeared in some amateur theatricals. He was born to be a salesman and he turned out to be a very good one. As Willy Loman in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* put it: "He was liked. He was well liked."

For more, visit www.cmu.edu/dietrich.