

## **Garman Kimmell**

Garman O. Kimmell, Jr. was born on October 7, 1913, and passed away November 8, 2008. He lived for ninety-five years, and he spent those years investing his genius, his creativity and his deep, abiding faith into every sector of his life.

Garman received his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Petroleum Engineering from the University of Oklahoma, then married Vera Pauline Setzer, on July 10, 1938. They settled in Oklahoma City; and after working for Black, Sivalls, & Bryson as Chief Researcher for 11 years, he founded Kimray, Inc. in 1948, a manufacturer of oil and gas equipment and controls.

Kimmell applied his love of problem-solving to products used in the petroleum industry. Over the course of his career, he received 28 patents for his products and inventions. His first product at Kimray, the three-inch SGT-BP (a pilot operated gas back-pressure regulator) revolutionized gas pressure regulation. It was soon followed by many others – glycol pumps, treater valves, oil dump valves, and pilots – which are all recognized for their quality within the industry and worldwide.

Kimmell's creativity and "out of the box" thinking also extended well beyond the oil and natural gas products he created.

He designed and manufactured medical devices, including the equipment used to perform the first open-heart surgery in Oklahoma by Doctors Greer, Carey, Zuhdi, Holly and Hartsuck, at Mercy Hospital, where he also served with them as the Technical Physicist. The Vena-Cava Filter he invented has been used in over a half million patients.

For over 30 years, Kimmell recorded the Oklahoma City Philharmonic Orchestra free of charge, often using recording devices he designed himself. These recordings were aired on local radio station KCSC as a public service.

Kimmell was involved in educating, lecturing, and teaching at high schools, colleges, civic organizations, and Christian groups. He served as a mentor for Junior Achievement and on numerous boards. He was instrumental in the promotion and funding of the Character Training Institute in downtown Oklahoma City, a worldwide organization promoting character development in families, businesses, schools, governments, prisons, and churches.

Garman Kimmell was a committed philanthropist and generously contributed to the needy, education, the arts, and the spreading of the gospel of Jesus Christ. He was an active member of First Lutheran Church, serving on the vestry and teaching Sunday School for 60 years.

## **Garman Kimmell Innovations and Contributions**

- Founded Kimray, Inc. in 1948. He invented and designed most of the products manufactured by Kimray and served as President and Chief Developer for 57 years, seeing the company grow from 4 employees to over 550.
- In 1948, created innovative solution for the three-inch SGT-BP (a pilot operated gas back-pressure regulator), patented. It was piloted rather than weight-loaded, an enormous improvement over other regulators of the day.
- In 1957, invented an energy exchange glycol pump which eliminated the pollution of land around oil fields caused by leaking glycol, patented. Now in use all over the world.
- In the 1960's, developed a heart-lung machine to aid in Oklahoma's first open heart surgery. The de-bubblers and oxygenators for the blood that passed through the machine enabled much longer surgeries.
- From 1963-1974, developed and refined a portable blood pressure recorder.
- From 1968-74, developed and improved the Vena Cava filter along with Dr. Lazar Greenfield. The tiny cone-shaped filter with six legs is placed in the interior vena cava artery. The legs hook into the blood vessel walls and trap any blood clots headed towards the lungs in the center of the cone, where they harmlessly dissolve with time. Never patented, which allows greater access of the product to those in need.
- In 1985, despite the oil slump, refused to lay off employees. Instead, arranged to "loan" employees out to charities and Oklahoma City municipal offices where employees provided free labor at Kimray's expense. This philanthropic effort (and loyalty to employees) was featured in national television and print news coverage.
- Designed a tape recording machine along with A.P. Van Meter which produced high quality recordings of the Oklahoma City Philharmonic Orchestra.
- In 1990, invented a prototype stretching machine to relieve back pain
- In 1994, developed a prototype "Body Bouncer" for multiple sclerosis patients.
- Taught Bible class for 40 years and served as a member of First Lutheran Church, Oklahoma City, for 50 years.
- Philanthropist who donated millions to dozens and dozens of missionaries and church organizations.