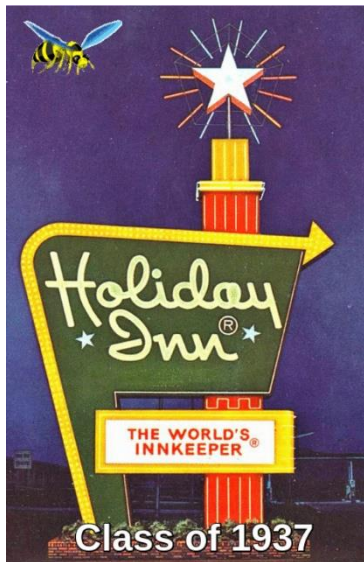


Class of 1937 – William Walton.



Although Kemmons Wilson was the visionary behind the creation of Holiday Inn, credit for much of the success of the chain goes to William Walton IV.

That's the opinion of Spence Wilson, Kemmons Wilson's son. "Bill played a tremendously key role in the development of Holiday Inn," Wilson said. "He came in and really was the guy who helped get the organization together. That was his greatest contribution, and it was an enormous contribution."

Added William Walton, Jr., Mr. Walton's son, "Kemmons Wilson really founded the concept and built three hotels. Then he hired my father to help found the corporation Holiday Inn. My father's responsibility was running the corporation. Their partnership made the system work."

Former Holiday Inn colleague Dick Ashman described Mr. Walton's role in the company this way in a 2003 story in The Commercial Appeal. "Kemmons designed and built the airplane, and Bill Walton flew it." In that same story, Mr. Walton remembered how he first got his job. "Can you do it? Can you do it?" Wilson asked Mr. Walton during an interview. Mr. Walton, who eventually became president of the chain, proclaimed that he could take the organization public, sell the

stock and organize the entire operation. He wasn't so certain in private though, but managed to fulfill his promise.

"In the next 16 years, he had the largest hotel system in the world. We were opening a new hotel every two and a half days," Mr. Walton said.

In addition to his role with the hotel chain, Mr. Walton was also well known for his family home, a 32-acre spread called Glen Echo on Forrest Hill-Irene near Poplar in Germantown. The property which hosted numerous business officials through the years, featured a main home, a 10-acre lake and a large lake house. He loved his land, his property called Glen Echo. Wilson said, "He had a beautiful home, a wonderful lake there."