

Biography:

David Goldberg's father Harry Goldberg immigrated to Cleveland from Poland at the age of about 10, with his family in the late 19th century. He eventually moved up across the border to Hamilton, and established himself in the hotel industry, ultimately owning the King George Hotel on the corner of McNab and Market Streets. At one point Harry was in business with Frank Gerstein, who fixed him up with his younger sister, Sophia. The Gersteins had also immigrated to the U.S. when Frank and Sophia were young children. Harry and Sophia married and had four children born and bred in the Kent and Stanley area of Hamilton. David was the oldest, born in March 1917; Irwin followed fifteen months later; then a sister Ruth and finally William (Dr. Bill Goldberg - the now retired Chief of Medicine of St. Joseph's Healthcare).

After graduating Westdale High School, Dave went on to earn a degree in Business Administration at Boston University in 1939. When war broke out in Europe, he returned home and immediately went to enlist in the Canadian Army. After being refused, Dave joined the Royal Canadian Air Force a year later. He earned his wings at the Service Flying Training School in Saskatoon and the RCAF flight training base in Dunville, flying vintage style World War I era bi-planes. Dave quickly proved himself to be a talented and instinctive pilot. As his skills were recognized by his superiors he graduated to the newer fighters. Although Dave was anxious to go overseas, he was assigned to be a testing officer for other pilot trainees.

Finally in December 1942, Dave got his wish. He was sent overseas for advanced Spitfire fighter training in England. In the summer of 1943 he was attached to 416 Squadron and deployed to France.

Over the next eight months, Dave flew 79 missions with his comrades of the 416th and later the 403rd Squadrons.

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After a month's leave, he coincidentally met up with a friend of his from Hamilton who asked if Dave would be willing to accept a posting in Italy. In late 1944, the RCAF only had one squadron in Italy - the 417 "Windsors" of 244 Wing of the Desert Air Force - which was severely lacking in experienced pilots. Dave accepted, and with his effervescent personality and ever-present enthusiasm, the 417 under his leadership was transformed into a top performing unit in the final months of the war.

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Upon his return from Europe, Dave studied law at Osgoode Hall in Toronto, where he was called to the bar in June 1949. He then embarked on a fifty-year career practising commercial and corporate law, the last twenty of which was spent at Ross & McBride in Hamilton. David served as President of The Hamilton Law Association in 1973.

Even while practising law, Dave was not finished with flying or the Air Force. He joined the Air Reserves Squadron 424 flying out of RCAF Station Hamilton. There, Dave had the opportunity to maintain his piloting skills flying Vampires and American P51 Mustang fighters

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His flying and aerial marksmanship skills were further exemplified in 1953 when Dave was part of the 424's five man team in the Air Force's annual gunnery competition. The squadron defeated Canada's best regular-force pilots to win the prestigious MacBrien trophy. Upon the retirement of Group Captain Murray Marshall, Dave stepped in as the Commanding Officer of 16 Wing, 424 Squadron until his final retirement from the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1958.

Dave continued to practice law until he retired from Ross & McBride in 1999. Sadly, his health began to deteriorate. He peacefully passed away on September 17, 2006 at the age of 89."

Source: "Every Stone Has a Story," Steven Brock, Hamilton Jewish News <https://hamiltonjewishnews.com/community/every-stone-has-a-story>