



David John Kumpe

January 31, 2024

Donald John Kumpe, 79, of McAllen, Texas, passed on January 31, 2024. Founder of K's Beads and a respected archaeologist, Don leaves a legacy of artifacts and scholarly work. An army veteran and avid reader, he is survived by daughters Lily and Dorothy Kumpe, and a grandson.

Tribute Wall

JB

“ *Rest In Peace, Don. It was my pleasure and a distinct privilege to work with you on a number of archaeological endeavors. You were truly a devoted scientist and researcher. The archaeology community has lost a giant. I will miss our lengthy telephone sessions, and although you leave many archaeological projects unfinished, you have left a legacy of dedication and perseverance. I am lucky to have been a friend of yours.*

James B. Boyd - February 05, 2024 at 02:49 AM

“ I lost my father. I cannot express the deep void I feel. How do people go on with so much grief? He wasn't ready. He still had so much work to do, so much to give.

My dad and I shared a love of natural history, family genealogy, and a shared taste in the books we read. Our phone conversations would span hours and because he never joined the online world, we corresponded via letters. He loved hearing about my life in Australia.

I'll share some photos of him. The last photo of us together is from the last day I saw him (He died that same night). My sweet sister, Dorothy, took the photo. I was showing him the Gobi Desert landscape and a photo of where I found a microblade core. He was sharp to the end and he said he would love to get straight to walking all of that land in search of artifacts.

Don was a highly respected expert in Rio Grande Valley archaeology and he leaves behind over a half-century of artifacts, extensive diary-style logbooks, and published articles. Though he didn't study officially beyond high school, his work was meticulous and scientific. He was an autodidact who never stopped learning. For over 60 years he worked tirelessly to understand and add new knowledge to the field of archeology in South Texas and Northern Tamaulipas.

The first email I received after his death was from the editor of an archeology journal who articulated how much my father meant to their community. He expressed that Don was a tremendous source of information on the Valley, Falcon Lake, and Tamaulipas.

The editor wrote, "he was clearly one of the most productive, in his research and publications... He talked all the time about certain research he was doing, and the article(s) he planned to write. All I had to say was "go to it, Don!" and shortly, a draft would appear."

There will be an In Memoriam in Vol. 46 of this year's La Tierra.

I am so proud of him.

5 months before he died, his first grandson was born and Don was instantly smitten. He said his intent was to live long enough to take his grandson fishing. We would joke that his old baby photos resemble the baby to such a degree that we're calling his grandson, 'Baby Don'. I am sure he loved this. (Baby Don's real name is Elijah Wolfgang Kumpe-Rios.)

Don, along side our mom, also started a beloved business (K's Beads on South Padre Island) over 40 years ago. When they divorced he left the store entirely to his ex-wife so that it would be able to support his daughters, most specifically Dorothy, who was only 12 when they divorced. I was 24. He then spent many years amassing high-quality, valuable inventory which he left to us. One day the shop will belong to Dorothy. In this way, his support will always continue.

Though he had his flaws (as we all do) and was sometimes difficult to have as a father, I look back now and can see how much he loved us.”

John M. Kreidler - February 02, 2024 at 04:32 PM

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“ 6 files added to the tribute wall



The son says he wants to see his father's photo of his mother and son. They both say they want to see the photo because they were together in the hospital.



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John M. Kreidler - February 02, 2024 at 04:25 PM