



Harold Wadlow Jr. had a love that endured for his big brother - Robert

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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ALTON - It was a warm August day in 2000 and Harold Wadlow Jr., the last surviving brother of the Alton Giant Robert Wadlow, was headed to his statue for an interview for the book, "Boy Giant."

As the norm, several people had congregated at the statue. When Harold Jr. arrived, two nuns were giving about 15 people a tour of the statue. For a few moments Harold Jr. sat back in his 1993 Ford Escort and listened as the woman gave the tour. It seemed Harold was fascinated to hear nuns telling the story of his big brother.

Harold Jr. was shy around the media after some misquotes and what he described as wrong interpretations of his thoughts about Robert. It took some convincing to consent to interviews, but once he did, he seemed warm and gentle just like his brother, Robert was always described.

"I was a quiet person," Harold Jr. said that day. "There was always Robert, then after that my father, Harold Wadlow, Sr., was in politics. I preferred to stay in the background and just be quiet and observe."

Often, Harold Wadlow Jr. said he reflected and in many ways mourned his brother for leaving the world so soon at age 22.

"Robert was quiet and gentle," Harold Jr. said. "He loved people. He was too young to die. There was a lot more life ahead for him."

Harold Jr. said Robert "always treated me like a king."

"I was his baby brother," Harold Jr. said of Robert Wadlow. "He didn't want me to put up with all the stuff that he did. He was always gentle with me. My memories of him will always be the best."

When Robert traveled, every time he brought home presents for his beloved baby brother.

When Harold Jr. told the stories about Robert, he said he was gradually getting weaker. "It is probably time I told these stories now," he said at the time.

In his last public interview only a few weeks from his death, Harold Jr. went to Robert's graveside area.

He looked up to the heavens while sitting with Robert's grave at Upper Alton Cemetery, sighed and said: "I hope I get to see him in heaven one day. I'd love to tell him how things turned out for me and my family. I'll tell him about my life and my kids Lisa and

Kim. I would love to tell how people would ask my girls about him when they were in school and when they talked about him. I think he would be proud.”

Harold Jr. died just before the New Year on Dec. 31, 2000. He was buried as promised alongside his beloved big brother, Robert.

One of Harold Jr.’s last comments in his last public interview was lasting: “I was the apple of his eye. What he didn’t know was he was the apple of mine.”