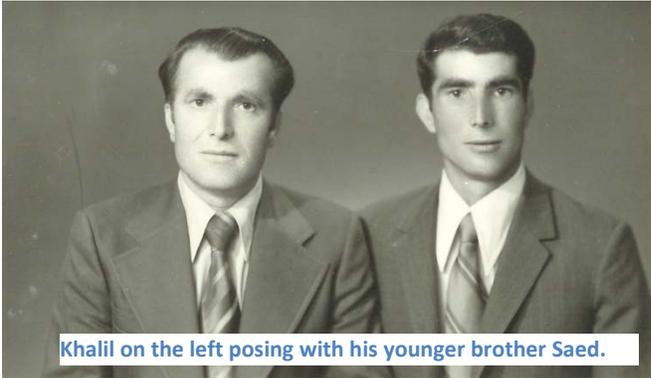


Biography of Khalil Mohamed Abougouche

Khalil Mohamed Abougouche (Kelly) is the eldest son of eight children born to Mohamed Khalil and Ghazalei Abougouche on September 19th, 1929.



Alex Hamilton was in Lebanon and boasted about the land of opportunity to Khalil. Mr. Hamilton then decided to sponsor Khalil to come to Canada. As a young man he left his homeland in January of 1952 to venture for a better life not only for himself but especially for his hard working parents. After many tiring weeks aboard a ship, that was bringing many other young immigrants from all over the world, he finally arrived in Halifax. From there, Mr. Hamilton arranged to bring Khalil to travel by railway to Lac La

Biche, at the time a prosperous community.

Khalil lived with the Hamilton family for about a year, often referring them as his family away from home. During this time, he worked endless hours on Willie Hamilton's mink ranch.

A year later Khalil decided to move to Edmonton for the purpose that Edmonton was then booming and there were many opportunities for employment. There he worked many different jobs, including working with CN, the Ice House, operated a back hoe and bought a truck and sold fruit and vegetables to farmers around Edmonton, all this time he was trying to make a living and trying to save money to bring his brothers and sisters over to Canada.

During this time, Khalil saved enough money to bring over family members to Canada. Also, in 1959 he brought over and married a beautiful, young sixteen year old from Lebanon named Aiche Slaim. During their stay in Edmonton they owned two homes and had four children named Mariam, Mohamed (Moe), Lila and Willie.

A construction company from California ventured into Edmonton; Khalil at the time was employed by them as the foreman back hoe operator. When their contract was finished in Edmonton, they decided to return to their home state and attempted to take Khalil and his family with them. He had a difficult decision to make, stay in Canada or go to California! Khalil was in a crossroad, he wanted to settle his family somewhere different than Edmonton but didn't really want to go to the states. Finally, he decided with the support of his wife and family to move back to Lac La Biche and away they went in 1966 (the year Willie was born).

He bought a building (where Sobeys' stands today) and with his brother opened a business named Lakeview Shopping. Later, throughout the years the family renovated, expanded and changed the business name to M&M, Mayfair Foods, IGA, Garden Market IGA and finally Sobeys. Even though Khalil has retired from the business, leaving his two sons (Moe and Willie) to manage it and a daughter (Lila) helping them, it is not unusual that you will see Kelly walking around, visiting with customers, or even lending a helping hand.

Along with other people migrating from different countries, he had challenges such as having a language barrier, leaving his family in Lebanon, working many different jobs trying to make a living and finally starting a business. However, his faith in his religion, his loving family, his value of integrity, his sense of commitment to the community and the love for the people of Lac La Biche, Khalil worked hard and achieved all of his goals!

In 1999, at the turn of a new millennium Khalil was announced as the Citizen of the Year, a first for the Lebanese community in LLB. He proudly carries the title and continues to earn the respect of others and of himself. Throughout his years in the community he served as a volunteer at numerous organizations such as the Lions, Chamber of Commerce and with the Lac La Biche Muslim Men's Organization. In fact, the mosque today stands due to many volunteers such as Kelly who strive to ensure that the young have a place of worship.



Even a deer sensed his calmness and came over for a visit!

Today, Khalil is the proud father of four children as previously mentioned, but a prouder grandfather of Jamal, Madina, Nadine, Lila, Khalil, Mariam, Emad, Ameenie, Rakia, Jalal, Dalyla, Yasmeen and Adam.