

## **The Dehn Collection Auction Adventures of Love and Collecting, Starting Across the Sea**

There are many events that have changed history and lives. On December 7<sup>th</sup>, 1941, the United States entered WWII with the bombing of Pearl Harbor. World War II raged across the globe and there was not a life in the world that was not touched by this momentous event in history. Ken Dehn entered the United States Air Force as a Master Sergeant. Brigitte Dehn, she was a young girl during War Time in Europe in the countryside of Western Germany. For Brigitte, it was a scary time and remembers seeing soldiers and was constantly reminded that the war was just a gunshot away. The Allies were victorious and the world celebrated as WWII was over. Brigitte remembers that they flew a white flag at their farm in the German countryside to show the occupying soldiers they were not a threat. Ken Dehn was stationed in Germany after the War was over to assist with peace keeping operations. Brigitte was walking to town and accustomed to seeing U.S. soldiers. It was raining and a U.S. soldier pulled up by her in a jeep and asked her if she needed help. "No," Brigitte said and kept walking. This chance meeting would be fate and change their lives. Ken would keep asking if Brigitte for a dinner date or coffee, but the answer was the same, "No." Ken did not give up and found out where Brigitte lived. Ken went to their farm to ask her parents if Brigitte could have dinner with him. The Dinner date eventually led to Ken Proposing and they were married in Germany. Ken and Brigitte spend 4 years living in Germany and then went to England for 4 years.

Ken was ordered back stateside with his wartime bride. This was a big change for Brigitte becoming an American housewife. Everything was new. Learning a new language, new customs, and raising their son, Ken Dehn, Jr. Ken, and Brigitte moved from Missouri to ND and eventually Ellsworth, SD and Rapid City, South Dakota. Ken was a mechanic at a Ford Dealer in 1972. The Dehn family went on a camping trip in the Black Hills that would save their lives. The fish were biting and it delayed their return to Rapid City. When the Dehn family came back to Rapid city, SD was a different place from when they had left. The city had been devastated by a Flood. Ken's work was gone and many people were killed. After the flood, Ken and Brigitte built a new home by themselves.

Ken now was working for Texaco as a Distributor. Ken Dehn would service Ellsworth Air Force base with oil and surrounding Rapid City Area. The Texaco business was good and helped Brigitte and Ken start collecting cars and invest in real estate. The Dehn's would go on trips and tours with their cars including a 1913 Cadillac being sold on the auction. The Dehn's collection got bigger including Texaco and other Gas and Oil Brands. The collection is full of hundreds of signs, Gas Pumps, Oil Cans, Toys and of course all their Classic Car collection. Ken would go through magazines and papers to find an auction that had just that right sign, can, or pump he was looking for. It was always an adventure for the Dehns. Ken built a museum at their home and enjoyed showing off their collection.

Ken Dehn passed away around Christmas time in 2025 at 94 years old, with his Brigitte at his side. So many adventures starting from across the sea and a chance

meeting during WWII. Now there was a big question, what to do with the collection. Brigitte Dehn has decided to sell their collection acquired over years of collecting adventures at auction. There is something for everyone and you will not want to miss this auction.

VanDerBrink Auctions will sell the collection at Live auction with online bidding on July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026, 9:30 at the Central States Fairgrounds in Rapid City, South Dakota. There are hundreds of pieces of Gas and Oil Memorabilia including Texaco, Mobil, and other Brands. The Dehn collection has many Signs, restored Upright Visible Gas Pumps, Oil Cans, and memorabilia. The collection has an assortment of vintage toys including Keystone, Buddy L, Texaco, and more. The Dehn's Classic Car collection will also be sold including a 1964 Chevrolet Corvette, 1968 Ford Mustang, Model A Coupe, 1913 Cadillac, Model A Pickup, and even Brigitte's 2003 Ford Thunderbird with less than 5000 miles. Come and celebrate Dehn's love of the adventure of collecting and this fabulous collection. Spend the day in the beautiful Black Hills of South Dakota and buy a piece of the fabulous Dehn Collection. For Catalog, Inventory, Online bidding, and more auctions [www.vanderbrinkauctions.com](http://www.vanderbrinkauctions.com)