



Obituary for Donald M. Francisco

7/6/1913 - 3/7/2012

Donald Milan Francisco passed away March 7, 2012, peacefully in his bed at Colonial Villa to be reunited with his wife, Betty, who preceded him in death in September.

Don was born on July 6, 1913, to Laura (Inglis) and Oliver Francisco in their farmhouse in Leighton Township. While Don would tell you that "I'm just a regular guy," his life was remarkable. During a childhood of horse-drawn plow and buggy and one room school, he installed electricity and plumbing in the farmhouse, was the first in the county to drive a gasoline-fueled horseless wagon at age 11, worked at Yellowstone Old Faithful Lodge, and played saxophone in the Western Michigan Marching Band. While completing all coursework for a masters in engineering at University of Michigan, he taught industrial arts in Saline and Ann Arbor, became a crew chief, mechanical engineer, and instructor for the B-24 "Liberator" Bomber at Willow Run during World War II. He and Del Youngs (deceased) wrote and illustrated the service manual for the B-24 bomber, instructing pilots how to maintain their aircraft in warfare.

In 1946, "Doc" Collings hired Don as the first salesman for Dow Corning Corp., with Ollie Blessing as sales manager. His was to "develop some silicone sales accounts." These were the tire industry, the auto industry (all manufacturers), the paper industry, the garment industry, and the government service contracts (Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines). He lived his life quietly, drawing no attention to himself, believing that "loose lips sink ships." With this ethic he kept the trust of corporations and the U.S. government. He provided for his family, cared for his aging parents, maintained the farm, home, and cottage.

After 32 years with Dow Corning, Don retired to travel the world with Betty, his wife, spending winters in Sun City Center, Fla., and summers in Bay View, Mich. He enjoyed 36 wonderful years of retirement. At age 92 he was baptized at First Baptist Church in Midland after 60 years of membership, so his children understood that he's "always believed in Jesus Christ."

Don is survived by his sister, Jean Tinsler and children, Mary Doidge (husband Dave), Don (wife Sue), Pastor Thurman (wife Anne), Randall (wife Kim), and Mark (wife Myrthann). He was truly amazed and grateful for the gift of 15 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren, enjoying great pride and pleasure in them all his days.

A funeral service will be held at the First Baptist Church, Midland, on Saturday, March 17, 2012, at 11 a.m. The family will receive friends at Smith-Miner Funeral Home, 2700 W. Wackerly, Midland, this evening from 4-7 p.m., and on Saturday from 10 a.m. until the time of the service at the church. Burial

service will follow at Midland Memorial Gardens, with a fellowship meal following. Memorials may be given in Don's name to the Bay View Association, The First Baptist Church, or the Daniel Doidge Memorial Fund. Online condolences can be given at smithminer.com.

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