



Benjamin Franklin Donaldson Jr.

May 12, 1923 - October 24, 2009

Benjamin F. Donaldson, Jr., 86, of Royalton Township, left this life peacefully, albeit reluctantly, passing into God's tender care on Saturday, October 24, 2009 while in the comfort of his home and loving family.

Services celebrating his life will be held at 10:30 A.M. on Wednesday, October 28, at St. Augustine's Episcopal Church in Benton Harbor. Burial will follow in Spring Run Cemetery in Royalton Township. The family will receive friends and relatives to share memories of Ben from 6:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. on Tuesday at the Dey-Florin Chapel of Florin Funeral Service in St. Joseph. The family suggests that the most suitable memorials to Ben be in the form of fond memories.

Ben was born on May 12, 1923 in Waukegan, Illinois, to Benjamin Franklin Donaldson and Martha Hughes Donaldson. Upon graduation from Waukegan Township High School, he attended Ripon College (Wisconsin) on a military scholarship, Lake Forest College (Illinois) and University of Illinois at Champaign (Alpha Sigma Phi fraternity), and, later, the Chicago Institute of Design. In 1943, Ben enlisted in the U.S. Army and was assigned to the 1874th Engineer Aviation Battalion which was based in the South Pacific. He had a lifetime affiliation with his fellow veterans of the WWII 1874th Aviation Engineer Battalion Group. Upon his discharge from the Army in 1946, Ben joined Deepfreeze Corporation, a division of Motor Products Corporation.

In 1947, Ben was united in marriage with Alice Crowder, with subsequent births of their daughters, Laura Ruth and Lisa Grace and son Benjamin Franklin III.

In 1956, Ben took employment with Whirlpool Corporation where he was employed for over 30 years. At the time of his retirement he was Product Manager of Refrigeration. Ben was also a past president of the Whirlpool Management Club. In 1971, he and his wife joined in the establishment of the Hobby Horse, Inc., which for 17 years operated a retail store in downtown St. Joseph, offering a wide variety of games, toys, and hobby items. Upon his retirement from Whirlpool after 30 years in 1986, he founded the firm of Parren-Donaldson, Inc., to pursue the manufacture and marketing of an innovative medical device and remained Chairman and CEO.

Throughout his life, Ben was a contributor, actively applying his talents, energies and enthusiasm to many community, cultural and political arenas. Ben was very active in serving the Episcopal Church as Vestryman in three parishes, receiving the Bishop's Cross for service as Senior Warden of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, St. Joseph, and as an Cathedral Commissioner of the Diocese of Western Michigan. Among accomplishments in which he also took special pride were: initiating the first St. Joseph Lake Bluff Easter Egg Hunt; his leadership of record-setting fund drives for the Salvation Army, the American Cancer Society, and the American Heart Association and his involvement in the local Carousel Society, retrieving the original Silver Beach Amusement Park carousel band organ, which he donated to the community's Carousel Society.

Ben was an avid hobbyist, with extensive collections of model railroading and scale model cars, both of which he shared with the community in exhibitions at the Heritage Center, Krasl Art Center and Lakeland Hospital. He also

collected stamps, coins, antique firearms and steins. Music continued to add to his life's enjoyment, especially Dixieland, swing and bagpipes.

A loving, supportive father and a devoted husband, Ben is survived by his loving wife of 62 years Alice, daughters Laura (Tim Nyhof) Donaldson and Lisa (Donald) Dowling and son Benjamin Franklin (Angela) Donaldson III; grandchildren Sarah Swerbinsky (Brian) Clark, Lindsay Tuhacek, Allison Tuhacek, Hunter Allen Johnston and Joseph Benjamin Donaldson; step-grandchildren DreAnna and Dayton Dowling; great grandchildren Keira, Caeden, and Braylen Kurtz, Maia Basel, and Trace and Avery Clark; his brother James Hughes Donaldson and sister-in-law Barbara Greene Donaldson, and well-loved nieces Diane Winslow and Debra Donaldson and nephews James, Jr. and Jeffrey Donaldson.

Cemetery Details

Spring Run Cemetery

Royalton Twp., on M-139/US-33
St. Joseph, MI 49085

Previous Events

Visitation

OCT **27**. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Dey-Florin Chapel of Florin Funeral Service - Closed 2013
2506 Niles Avenue
St. Joseph, MI 49085
(269) 983-1514
staff@florin.net

Service

OCT **28**. 10:30 AM (ET)

St. Augustine of Canterbury Episcopal Church
1753 Union St
Benton Harbor, MI 49022
staugustinesbh@yahoo.com
<http://www.staugustinesbh.com>

Tribute Wall



“ *Miss you Grandpa* ❤️

Braylen Kurtz - January 12, 2019 at 03:39 PM