



Frank Jarvis Meyer Jr
1920 - 2014

Dear Friends,

December 31, 2014

Our family was deeply saddened this Christmas by the passing of our father on November 1st. Frank was 94 years old. Dad was a brilliant man, but also a gracious and remarkably selfless and caring man who never had an unkind word to say about anyone. In his last years, he developed a propensity for giving everyone he came in contact with an affectionate kiss on the forehead or cheek; his way of welcoming and thanking everyone who cared for him. Even after talking on the phone, he would end the call by giving the phone a kiss.

At the age of 94, it hardly matters what one dies of; dad lived a remarkably healthy, full and happy life; his passing was painless, and the time spent caring for him these last several years were especially memorable. Nonetheless, he had been suffering from CHF, the result of a heart attack he suffered in April 2013, and the complications of dementia that had worsened after he cracked his hip in 2011. Up to that point, he had never suffered a broken bone or serious illness. Incredibly, he could still conquer a cold in a day, and miraculously, he recovered from his hip injury, and a year later, a fracture to his neck, each in only a month.

After a year in assisted living, and yet another fall, in July of 2012, he moved back to his home of 49 years where he thrived under the care of his children and two loving aids who alternated shifts and remained with him for another 2-1/2 years.

Slow and deliberately quiet, he remained coherent to the end, never losing his ability to reason or crack a clever joke. Taking what seemed like forever to organize his thoughts, he never mangled his words or gave a wrong answer; and he could still remember his birthday and the names of his parents, sisters and children; and Virginia (Ginny), his wife of 57 years. Ginny died in 1999.

Dad was fortunate to have two doctors (a husband and wife team), who visited him weekly at his home, and who also took calls and answered text messages any hour of the day. At the time of his passing, he was surrounded by his family, his two aides, both doctors, and the minister who would eulogize him

at his funeral. He had a week earlier, for the third time in a year, lost his ability to swallow (a condition known as dysphagia), only this time, he would not recover. Despite this fatal setback, he refused to throw in the towel. He celebrated his 94th birthday on October 23; and had for the past year been mostly running on all cylinders, even playing catch with us, which he was amazingly good at. His doctors thought his stamina extraordinary, and despite his weight loss, he remained strong and could still squeeze a good hand shake.

Finally, on the day before he died, weak and weighing only 100-lbs, he insisted on getting up on his own and spent an hour rolling around the house, getting his morning shave, and joking with me and his aid, Lois. By noon, however, he had gone back to bed. He slept the rest of the day with the two of us hovering over his bed throughout the night and the following morning. At 10am he awoke and tried to muster his strength; but he could barely open his eyes. He whispered "good morning" and said "I'm okay". He then fell back to sleep, his heart worn out, and by noon he had slipped into a deep sleep from which he never awoke.

On November 17, a formal lunch and reception followed by a wonderful funeral was had to honor him. Scripted by the family, the funeral took place at First United Methodist Church in downtown Tulsa, and included a military honor guard, bagpipes; a soloist, pianist, and of course, the church's magnificent pipe organ. Although a devout Presbyterian, First United Methodist, a 1500's style gothic cathedral, was chosen for its superb acoustics and picturesque venue. The eulogy by Reverend Randy Thorman was based on dad's biography and a letter dad had written in 1944 to his new born son, Mike, before heading off to war. In addition to the family's obit, the Tulsa World also wrote an outstanding story about Frank under the headline "Former PSO Executive had the power to inspire".

This website has been produced in dad's honor so you can view the funeral and dad's video tribute. Dad's obit, the newspaper story, and the wonderful photos taken at the church and mausoleum are also posted here. Commercially printed copies of his biography were handed out to those who attended the funeral. The biography is not accessible here, but if you would like to read it online, send me an email and I'll forward you the link.

About the 294th Field Artillery Observation Battalion...

Dad was the headquarters commander and the last surviving officer of the 294th Field Artillery Observation Battalion during WW2. At the bottom of the website is a link to a wealth of information related to the 460-man battalion.

I originally purchased the domain, *frankjmeyerjr.com*, for the purpose of publishing a memorial website in anticipation of dad's pending demise, but dad decided to rally and lived another 19-months. I had been in contact with the battalion's historian years earlier, and so after collecting some additional information, the site was dedicated for the purpose of sharing information with the men of the 294th. After dad's passing in November, the site was rededicated to dad's passing, and the original site having to do with dad's war time experience is now a link at the bottom of the main page.

Dad's WW2 page contains an extensive amount of information, and includes his photo/diary, clickable maps of France and Germany, and a detailed forward that have become a source of research and enjoyment for the remaining members and families of the 294th. In their nineties now, and not counting their descendants, there are only about twelve of the 460-man battalion still living today.

Dad's WW2 page is password-protected, so email me if you would like to visit this portion of the site. I am an honorary member of the unit and along with two or three others have been invited to Kansas City in February to look through the unit's archives for the purpose of helping determine the disposition and posterity of the unit's remaining records.

On behalf of the Meyer Family, thank you for visiting the site. We have an email address, family@frankjmeyerjr.com, and we would love to hear from our friends and anyone with an interest in dad's memorial or the battalion.

Steve

December 29, 2014