



Thomas Edward Downey, Jr.

June 20, 1922 - May 3, 2016

Thomas Edward Downey Jr. of McKinney, TX, a shining example of our nation's Greatest Generation, peacefully broke the bonds of earth to join his Savior on Tuesday, May 3, 2016. Thomas is survived by his beloved wife Ruth Esther Kohler Shainline Downey of 35 years, and his legacy is honored by children and grandchildren residing in all regions of this great country.

Growing up on the family farm in Tennessee, at a young age this future entrepreneur witnessed first-hand the relationship between hard work and success. While augmenting this "hands-on" experience at Wheaton College in Illinois, world events intervened and required his generation's sacrifice. This citizen-soldier answered the call like so many others, and immediately volunteered for pilot training--earning his wings in San Antonio. A 1st Lieutenant in the 9th Air Force, he was given command of a C-47 Skytrain cargo aircraft, and deployed to fortress Europe. There, often flying low and slow at the mercy of German guns to ensure the safety of paratroopers or towed gliders, Thomas flew dozens of missions in support of the Allied cause. These included fueling General Patton's tanks and flying in Operation Market Garden, one of the most ambitious and dangerous campaigns of WWII. His exploits are memorialized at the National Air and Space Museum's Wall of Honor in Chantilly, VA.

Upon returning stateside and finishing his degree at Purdue University, Thomas embarked on a multi-faceted career. Initially returning to manage his father's farm while raising a family, he eventually created several successful

ventures including an import/export business, distributorships, and a chain of Christian bookstores. Chief among these was the Grace Book Store on Chestnut Street, a fixture in downtown Philadelphia managed by Thomas and wife Ruth. Grace continued to spread The Gospel to all while other outlets followed the migration to the suburbs.

Thomas Downey's almost century-long journey reflects an energetic man always in the arena, employing his God given gifts to provide for his family while serving others; he will be missed by everyone who knew him. The Lord's newest copilot made sure he was ready for his next eternal mission—Thomas aced his last flight test manning the controls of a C-47 at the tender age of seventy.

At his request there will be no funeral service and the burial will be private. Memorial contributions may be made in his memory to Sunday Breakfast Rescue Mission, 302 North 13th Street, P.O. Box 297, Philadelphia, PA, 19105-0297.

Tribute Wall

JD

“ *Our condolences to the Shainline Family--Ruth and her kids--
Debbie, Steve, Darrell, and Melody.*

*Rest in peace, Dad. Your 93-year journey is over. See you in
heaven.*

Love Always, Debbie, Janet, Jill, and Dan Downey

Janet Downey - July 30, 2016 at 12:22 PM

BB

I am sorry for your loss, Jan, Debbie, Jill and Dan.

brenda bielke - July 31, 2016 at 10:23 PM