

Hugh F. Wilkins

June 25, 1921 - June 25, 2020

Hugh Francis Wilkins was the eldest son of Earl H. and Grace W. Wilkins. He was born at their home in Geneva, Nebraska June 25, 1921. He left us the day of his 99th birthday, June 25, 2020. He was one of four children in the family. He met his wife Barbara A. Noyes (deceased) in New York City, New York in 1946 while attending the Riverside Guild young persons group at Riverside Church. He showed up at Barb's workplace the day after they met and in his typically bold way asked her out for lunch. Although she was slightly taken aback by his approach, they were married at Riverside Church June 7, 1947. In 1948, after the birth of their son Cam, they moved back to Nebraska, settling in Geneva. Hugh and Barbara were the parents of five children, Hugh C. (Cam) (deceased), Susan E., Beth M., Alice F., (deceased) and Katherine G. Wilkins.

Hugh attended Geneva Public School, graduating in 1938. He was a member of the National Honor Society and excelled in debate. He attended University of Nebraska, Lincoln, graduating with honors in 1942. He was a member of ROTC, Delta Upsilon fraternity, the Innocents Society and Phi Beta Kappa. Harvard Business School accepted him in 1943 where he studied Industrial Administration and continued in ROTC. His education was interrupted by World War II. Hugh served as a 2nd Lieutenant with the 3810 Quartermaster Corps Truck Company. Service locations included Wales, France, Belgium and Germany. After leaving the army, he returned to Harvard Business School

receiving his MBA in 1948.

Hugh was curious about everything and never stopped asking questions. He played the piano and spoke French (badly). He couldn't hold a note but loved to dance in college and attended USO dances. Vegetable gardens were always a summer project from childhood on. His favorite book was the New Testament and he studied the bible and other religions his entire life. Hugh and his brothers were encouraged by their father to become Boy Scouts. As an adult he continued that tradition and became a troop leader in Geneva. Many young men, including his son Cam, became Eagle Scouts under his guidance. He was extremely proud of all of them. He encouraged Barb's participation in Girl Scouts and his daughters were in local troops.

Hugh also took care of horses, occasional cows, sheep, a goat, a gaggle of geese and multiple dogs. He loved to camp out and occasionally led fishing expeditions to the back pond. Although he couldn't swim well, he was the one who always tested the ice in the pond before skating parties. Rides in the country were frequent and much enjoyed despite all the kids hanging out the rear windows of the car.

Hugh was a deacon at the Congregational Church in Geneva and remembered sitting in the back row of the balcony in 1926 at the dedication of the new brick building. He was a member of the church for over 80 years and influenced many 7th and 8th graders in his sometimes non-traditional Sunday School classes. One of the ways he exhibited his unending faith in the goodness of people, was to encourage positive growth with the girls at YRTC, sharing bibles and meals with many. He had a huge and giving heart.

Hugh was a founding member of the local Rotary Club, participated in the PTA and the Chamber of Commerce. The Fillmore County Foundation and the Fillmore County Development Corporation owe their origins to Hugh. He was

in many banking, business and church associations too numerous to mention here.

He is survived by his brothers William W. (Nancy) and Robert E Wilkins (Gladys, deceased) and his sister Beth M. Wilkins; children Susan E., Beth M., and Katherine G. (George Pond), daughter-in-law Pam Wilkins and grandchildren, Nate W. Wilkins, Cavan W. (Samantha) and Emlyn G. Short, David M. and Hugh R. Pond as well as nieces and nephews and numerous cousins.

A Celebration Of Life Service for the public will be held at a later date and a more complete obituary will follow.

A private family Funeral Service for Hugh was held on Tuesday, June 30, 2020 at 10:30 a.m. at the 1st Congregational United Church Of Christ in Geneva with Pastor Stuart Davis officiating. Karen Kohler played instrumental versions of "God Of Grace & God Of Glory" and "In The Midst Of New Dimensions." A recorded selection of Benny Goodman's "Memories Of You" was played as the recessional song.

Pallbearers for the service included Cavan Short, Nate Wilkins, John Wilkins, Frank Heinisch, Kent Myers, and Kurt Myers. Honorary Bearers included David Pond, Hugh Pond, Emlyn Short, Robert Wilkins, William Wilkins and Beth Wilkins I.

A private family Graveside Service with Military Honors was held in the Geneva Public Cemetery following the Memorial Service.

Memorials are suggested to Fillmore County Ministerial Association or the Fillmore County Foundation.

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN **29**. 1:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Farmer & Son Funeral Home
242 N 10th Street
Geneva, NE 68361
(402) 759-3617
<https://farmerandsonfuneralhome.com>

Tribute Wall

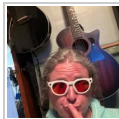


Beth
Wilkins

“ Thank you to everyone for your condolences and shared memories of dad. It warms my heart how many people cared for him.

Beth

Beth Wilkins - July 04, 2020 at 04:18 PM



Beth, I think it's sweet how you chose to recognize the words of others. But if you read this, I want you to know that your telling of the story is always one I look forward to the most, in an hour well spent. I hope you'll write more :)

Nate Wilkins - March 20, 2024 at 10:18 AM



DB

“ As a lifelong resident of Geneva, I found Hugh's name to be nearly synonymous with the name, "Geneva." He was a staunch supporter of Geneva and all that could improve the lives of it's residents and the town itself. He certainly lived a full life and left his mark on the town and all who call Geneva home. May his family be consoled by the memories they share as a family and the legacy he leaves in the community.

Deb Bixby - July 03, 2020 at 09:46 PM



“ As a friend of his daughter Susan. I was honored to be in Hugh's light when he came to visit in Marin, California. He was loved by many of Susan's friends and touch us deeply in the heart space. He always was reading and sharing his perspective on books or a story about his community. I will miss his champion spirit, and I bow to the extended love he passed on to his community. Like all good novels, he was on loan for us for a short time, now he returns home to heaven!

Cristina Chanteloup - June 30, 2020 at 04:49 PM

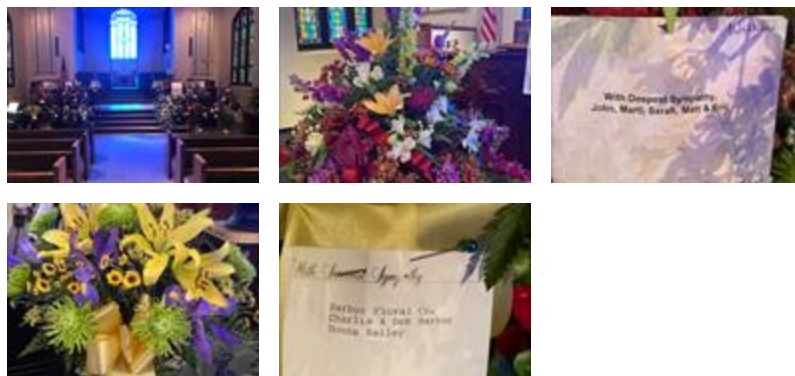


“ I met Susan at the center of attitudinal healing about 20 years ago. I then had the privilege of meeting Susan's father Hugh. He was so kind , gentle and very much in the know. I could see why Susan was so close to him. Blessing to the family. Don and kathy Walterscheid

kathy walterscheid - June 30, 2020 at 03:44 PM



“ 42 files added to the album Flower Pictures



Farmer & Son Funeral Home - June 30, 2020 at 01:36 PM

GR

“ *Hugh was a great person!!!*



Garry Ruliffson - June 29, 2020 at 04:19 PM

BP

Bruce Price

I knew him as a teenager and later as a post war veteran. He always treated me well.

Truely a good man.

Bruce Price - June 30, 2020 at 08:03 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Hugh F. Wilkins.*



June 29, 2020 at 02:55 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Hugh F. Wilkins.*



June 28, 2020 at 06:33 PM

TM

“ It was my privilege and honor to be associated with Hugh since 1981 at the Geneva State Bank/Heartland Bank. Of course, paramount to Hugh was his faith. This along with his impeccable integrity made doing the right things for the right reasons a constant. His kindness, intellect, analytical skills, work ethic, selfless nature and sharp wit contributed to make Hugh a most interesting force. He had unfailing commitment to his faith, family, community and the Bank. Until a little over two years ago he was at his second floor Bank office every day. This was after first circling through the first floor being supportive as always. Hugh was a unique individual who lived a wonderful live. He greatly helped his community and improved countless lives in many ways. My deepest sympathy to his family.

Ted Marek

Ted Marek - June 27, 2020 at 09:30 PM

TB

“ Leader of the pack! Involved in everything. A true nerd with so much wisdom and kindness and generosity. A huge asset to Geneva and Fillmore County. May he Rest In Peace, knowing he always did the right things. God bless him. 🙏🙏🙏

terry brumbaugh - June 27, 2020 at 06:53 PM

NM

“ Hugh was a founding member of the Geneva Rotary Club when chartered in 1958. He attended the weekly Tuesday noon meetings regularly until 2018 when his health prevented him from regular attendance. He then became an Honorary Member, at which time Rotary came to him during the annual Rotary banquets of 2018 & 2019 which were held at Heritage, so that Hugh could attend. One could really see that he was very happy to be among his Rotary family on those occasions. Hugh served the club as Secretary-Treasurer 1958-1962 and as President 1969-1970, plus many terms on the board and committees over his 60 years of membership. Back when Rotary performed highway clean-up on south Highway 81, Hugh was always there picking up trash with the others. For many years Hugh would present a summary of the monthly "The Rotarian" magazine to members during the meetings. He was a strong believer in the the club's sponsorship of Boy Scout Troop #175. If Rotary had a project to do, Hugh would most likely be involved. He was generous financially with our local club and club sponsored projects, as well as making contributions to The Rotary Foundation which sponsors aid & assistance for world-wide programs. Hugh will definitely be missed in Rotary!

-- Norman Marks, club historian

Norman Marks - June 27, 2020 at 03:07 PM

JC

“ Janene Collins lit a candle in memory of Hugh F. Wilkins



Janene Collins - June 26, 2020 at 11:18 PM

MB

“*Hugh was a very kind man. He will be deeply missed by all who loved & knew him. Our condolences to his family.*

Sincerely,

Marvin & Bridgette Brummer



Marv & Bridgette Brummer - June 26, 2020 at 08:23 PM

DO

“*Some recollections of Hugh and his family. When I came to Geneva in 1998. Hugh came to my office in my first days. He said, " Let's go for a ride. You're driving". We drove all around Geneva, pointing out things that were and once were, even the Cemetery. The Sloan mosuleum, his family plot and others. As I recall, he told me in his senior year in high school (1937?) his dad, Earl, built the colonial home, known as the Wilkins home. Hugh said that Earl wanted to send a message that the Great Depression was over and it was time to get on to setting an example to build Geneva. Big home for a then small bank. I always admired his knowledge of quality banking. Work hard but work smarter. One time I was in the bank on a Sunday afternoon. He was in too. He stopped by my office and said "Go home and be with your family. The bank will be here Monday." I said,, "but you're here". He said "Yes, but they are grown. Your's won't be there long." RIP Hugh.*

David Ochsner - June 26, 2020 at 07:19 PM

RM

“ I met Hugh shortly after I moved to Geneva in 1987. It was a pleasure years later to work with him at Geneva State Bank. I respected Hugh for his knowledge about so many different things and I enjoyed our visits. There are many things I will always remember about Hugh, but one thing that made me smile was on his birthday he would bring a large pan of chocolate covered peanuts to share with his Geneva State Bank employees. I always enjoyed his daily visits, even if it was just to say hi. He will be missed. My deepest sympathy to his family.

Renae Marks - June 26, 2020 at 07:13 PM

VJ

“ Such a loss for the community!



Virgini a Johnson - June 26, 2020 at 06:04 PM

SM

“ My thoughts and prayers goes out to the family. It was a privilege to have him as an employer. He was kind and generous and much more. He will be missed.

My deepest sympathy.

Sandi Mason Mewhirter

Sandi Mewhirter - June 26, 2020 at 01:53 PM

DL

Deloris Lukes - June 26, 2020 at 02:30 PM

GL

“ Beth, I'm sorry to read about the death of your father. Sending sympathy and hugs. Thinking of you, Gail Littrell

gail littrell - June 26, 2020 at 01:26 PM

CH

“ We were lucky to be a part of the Geneva State Bank for many years..Hugh was always a wonderful person to know. He always made time to stop and say a few words to me when I would be in the bank. Clyde and Rita Haskins

Clyde and Rita Haskins - June 26, 2020 at 09:04 AM

AT

“ Hugh has been in my life, my entire life. He taught my eighth grade Sunday School Class. Hugh made such a difference in my life personally and professionally. I thank the Lord that he saw something in me that I didn't even know I had. He gave me the opportunity to grow as a person. I was lucky enough to be part of fulfilling his dream of having a club for seniors and the Ambassador Club became a reality. I could add so much more , but I guess you could say, he was my hero.

Alice Tatro - June 25, 2020 at 09:38 PM

RG

“ Robin Galusha lit a candle in memory of Hugh F. Wilkins



Robin Galusha - June 25, 2020 at 08:55 PM

BM

“ *Brenda Motis lit a candle in memory of Hugh F. Wilkins*



Brenda Motis - June 25, 2020 at 08:03 PM

SW

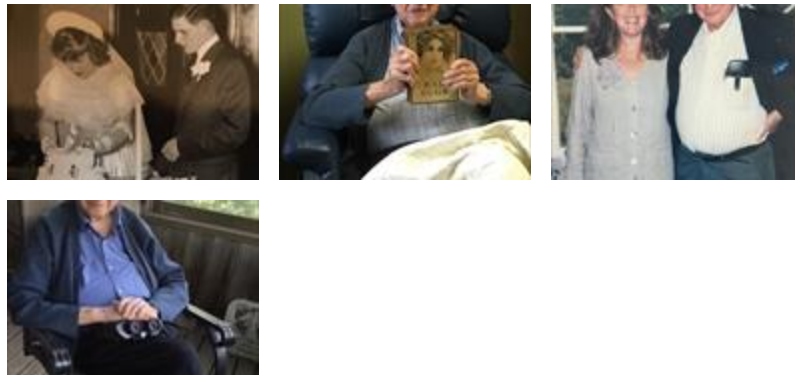
“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



susie w - June 25, 2020 at 06:44 PM

SW

“ *4 files added to the album Memories of Hugh*



susie wilkins - June 25, 2020 at 06:38 PM

BB

“ *Hugh Wilkins was an amazing man I will never forget u*



Barbara baumann - June 25, 2020 at 06:37 PM

 Sherrie Matthies

“ *Sherrie Matthies lit a candle in memory of Hugh F. Wilkins*



Sherrie Matthies - June 25, 2020 at 06:11 PM

RS

“ *Rhonda & Randy Schlick lit a candle in memory of Hugh F. Wilkins*



Rhonda & Randy Schlick - June 25, 2020 at 02:30 PM