



Harry G. Rogers, Jr.



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Harry G. Rogers, Jr.

Big Rapids Long-time local businessman Harry G. Rogers, Jr., 93, of Big Rapids, passed away Friday, July 24, 2009, at Munson Hospice House in Traverse City. Harry was born June 10, 1916, in Alberta, Canada, the son of Harry G. and Mattie (Westbrook) Rogers, and came to the U.S. on Christmas Day in 1923 at the age of 7 with his family. They settled on a farm near Okemos, and Harry attended country school in Ingham County through 8th grade, and graduated from Okemos High School in 1935. He then attended Michigan State College in the Veterinary Medicine Program, and after 2 years he transferred to the Gupton-Jones Mortuary College in Nashville, TN, graduating in 1939 with his degree in Mortuary Science. Harry passed his state boards, and then worked for the Gorsline-Runciman Company in Lansing for three years until moving to Big Rapids in 1942 and becoming a partner with I.E. Wagner, the local funeral director. Shortly thereafter, Harry joined the U.S. Navy, and as a Pharmacist 1st Class, he was assigned as a Medic in the Navy to the First Division Marine Corps, Amphibious Forces. For 3 years, he served in the South Pacific, and went ashore with the Marines at Saipan, Palamar, Luzon in the Phillipines, and also took part in the battle of Leyte Gulf. On Easter Sunday morning in 1945, Harry went ashore with the amphibious forces in the battle of Okinawa. On December 7, 1945, Harry was honorable discharged from service. On the day of his return to Big Rapids, his partner Mr. Wagner was killed in an accident with his funeral coach on U.S. 131, and Harry immediately took charge of the business. For 30 years, he served the area as one of the foremost funeral homes in West Michigan, and simultaneously furnished the area with the only ambulance service until the formation of Mecosta County EMS. He also owned funeral homes in Howard City and Reed City during that time, and served as Mecosta County Coroner for several years. For 17 years, Harry served as a board member of the First United Methodist Church in Big Rapids. He also was a member of the board of directors at the Citizens State Bank, the Permanent Savings & Loan, Central Michigan Bank & Trust, where he served as



board president for a short time, and the Old Kent Bank & Trust. He was a longtime member and former club champion of Meceola Country Club, and was a member of the BPO Elks #974, the Oddfellows, Masonic Lodge, American Legion, VFW, Big Rapids Lions Club, the DeWitt-Clinton Conservatory, the Michigan Farm Bureau, the Big Rapids and Morley Chamber of Commerces; was a Salvation Army Ambassador, and also helped with Cub Scouting. Harry was preceded in death by his first wife, Nedra Kiebler in 1938. In 1940, he married Mabel (Modrow), who preceded him in death in 2000. Surviving are his children, James D. (Linda) Rogers, MD, of Grand Blanc, John W. (Dorothy Jean) Rogers of St. Joseph, and Jane A. (John) Johansen of Big Rapids; 9 grandchildren, Kathryn (Michael) Mihalevich, Taylor Rogers, 1st Lt. Harry Rogers, Dana Rogers, Millie (George) Tansill, John Rogers Jr., Jamie Johansen PhD, Jacqueline (Matthew) Suckow, and Jillian Johansen; 2 great-grandchildren, William Tansill and Jadyn Suckow; his brother Frank Rogers of Leslie; and several nieces and nephews. Harry was also preceded in death by a three-year-old daughter Judith in 1941, his parents, 4 sisters and 1 brother. Funeral services will be 11:00 a.m. Tuesday, July 28, 2009, at the Mohnke Funeral Home in Big Rapids, with Rev. John Bookshaw officiating. Burial will be in the Highland View Cemetery. Memorial contributions for the VFW or the Mecosta County Community Foundation may be left at the funeral home, where Harrys family will greet friends today (Monday) from 2-4 and 6-8 p.m., and prior to services on Tuesday. Share a memory or express condolences at www.mohnkefuneralhome.com.



Tribute Wall

Harry G. Rogers, Jr.



Lucia posted:

Dear Jim, I am sorry that I was not aware of this site until now and that was because our mother was called home this week and I was checking the site for her obituary. I would have liked to have paid my respects at the time of your loss but was unable to

September 23 at 8:00 PM



Sr. Kathy Lange posted:

Dear Jim and family-- I am so sorry about the loss of your dad. I remember knowing him as a good friend of my dad, Don Lange. It is always so difficult to lose a parent. You are in my thoughts and prayers.

July 28 at 8:00 PM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Harry by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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