

Edward Gudmundson – BS 1940 Pharmacy

Eddie Gudmundson was the kind of man anyone would want as their son, husband, dad, father-in-law, uncle, grandpa, friend or neighbor.

Edward Arinbjorn Gudmundson was born at home in Mountain, ND, the first child of Chris and Christina (Sigurdsdottir) Gudmundson. He grew up with his two sisters, May and Rose, and attended school in Mountain until he was 13 years old. Afterwards, he lived with his uncle Ed and aunt Alma Sigurdsson in Fargo, ND, where he attended Agassiz Junior High School and Fargo Central High School. Later, Eddie enrolled at Agricultural College, Fargo, (North Dakota State University) where he graduated with a pharmacy degree in 1940.

Eddie's first job was at Strelow Drug in Casselton, ND, where he worked until he enlisted in the US Navy. He was stationed first in Minneapolis, MN. He then moved to the hospital training school in the Great Lakes area, and finally transferred to the Naval Hospital in Oakland, CA.

On December 30, 1942, he was assigned to the USS Rixey, a hospital evacuation ship which made several voyages to New Zealand and Guadalcanal. The USS Rixey was involved in the invasion of Guam, taking in troops and evacuating casualties by boat. It also took part in the landing at Leyte and Lingayen Gulf in the Philippine Islands. After applying for a commission, Eddie studied at the University of Pennsylvania and the Midshipman School at Notre Dame. He received an honorable discharge as a Hospital Apprentice 1st Class Pharmacist Mate, Petty Officer. He had fond memories of his experiences in the navy, which he freely shared with others.

In 1945, Eddie married Opal Lebakken, and together they lived and worked in Bottineau, McVille, and Abercrombie, ND, and eventually Moorhead, MN, where Eddie was a partner, along with Sandy Borlaug and Joel Nelson, running Moorhead Drug. It was in Moorhead he and Opal raised their two sons, Curtis and Wayne. At the same time they became founding members of Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Moorhead, a community that was an important part of their lives.

Eddie was a multi-talented person with diverse interests beyond pharmacy. He learned to play the trombone in high school and continued to play in various bands until he was 96 years old. His basement wood shop was a testament to his woodworking skills. A sign on the wall read "this mess is a place" and indeed it was very messy, but it was also a place in which he created amazing wooden objects varying from a full-size replica of an oxcart to miniature wooden goblets. He made grandmother clocks and cedar chests, assorted pieces of furniture, toys and ornaments. He even restored thirty-seven pump organs.

Generous with his time, Eddie volunteered for the Helping Hands group at his church and assisted family, friends and neighbors with projects that needed his expertise. His unique sense of humor and amazing snippets of information on historical facts surprised and entertained those who knew him. He will be greatly missed.

Eddie was preceded in death by his wife, Opal; his brother and sister-in-law, Marvin and Virginia Lebakken; his brother-in-law, Stony Hermann; his sisters, May Hermann and Rose Gudmundson; and a niece, Sharon Orcutt. He is survived by his two sons, Curt (Pamela) and Wayne (Jane) Gudmundson; seven nieces; four grandchildren, Lisa, Hayley, Pete and Liv; and eight great-grandchildren.

Eddie died peacefully on Monday, March 6, 2017, at Eventide on Eighth, at ninety-nine years of age.

The family wishes to thank the dedicated staff at Eventide on Eighth for their care of Eddie and his faithful dog, Sparky.

In lieu of flowers please make donations in Eddie's name to The Helping Hands group at Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd.

Visitation will begin at 9:30 AM, followed by a Celebration of Life Service at 10:30 AM, Saturday, April 1, 2017, in Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd. Burial will take place in Riverside Cemetery, Moorhead.