



Willis D. Griffith

September 7, 1922 - January 31, 2013

Willis Griffith passed away January 31, 2013 from complications of pneumonia in IU Health Bloomington Hospital. Willis had spent the last 6 years of his life at Garden Villa, suffering from dementia. Willis was preceded in death by his mother and father Sam and Leota Griffith and 8 siblings, Carl Griffith of Bloomfield, Louise Williams of Middleton, Theodore Griffith of Worthington, Annabel Graf of Bloomfield, Lewis Griffith of Worthington, Claude "Jock" Griffith of Worthington, Gertrude McClintock of Worthington, and Leroy Griffith of Clay City.

Willis is survived by his wife of 67 years, Betty Griffith of Bloomfield, Three sons Mike and wife Judy Griffith of Bloomington, Patrick Griffith of Bloomfield, and Lance Griffith of Greencastle. Also he is survived by two grandchildren Brooks Griffith of Tucson, AZ and Brittany Griffith of Bloomfield and three great-grandchildren, Cameron Griffith, Leanna Robertson, and Jason Robertson all of Bloomfield.

Willis was born in Owen County and grew up on the outskirts of Worthington, Indiana and graduated from Worthington High School. Soon after the onset of World War II, Willis volunteered for the United States Army-Air Force and was the main gunner in a B-29 with a rank of Staff Sergeant. Willis was shot down three times during WWII while stationed in Burma, the Philippine Islands and finishing up on the island of Tinian in the Pacific Ocean. Tinian is the island that the two B-29's (The Enola Gay and Boxcar) took off from that dropped both atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, that ended WWII.

Willis and Elmer Kirby co-owned and operated the Bloomfield Mill and Elevator Co. from 1946 to 1959. Mr. Kirby died in 1959 and Willis bought Mr. Kirby's share from his widow Ann Kirby (later Ann Graf) and Willis' sister.

Willis continued to operate the Bloomfield Mill and Elevator until 1979.

Willis was very active in the Lion's Club of Bloomfield and at the time of his death was the only living charter member of the club. Willis also donated his time and efforts after his retirement to the Bloomfield Municipal Pool and raised donations for the pool in excess of \$25,000 twice in the 80's and the 90's to facilitate repairs and to keep the pool open.

Willis was a member of the Bloomfield United Methodist Church for over 60 years and was Chairman of the Administrative Board and/or Chairman of the Trustees for over 30 years.

Funeral services will be conducted at 11:00 a.m. Tuesday, February 5, 2013 at the Bloomfield United Methodist Church, with Rev. Kevin Wrigley officiating. Interment will follow in Grandview cemetery in Bloomfield.

Public visitation will be held from 4 to 8 p.m. on Monday at Jenkins & Sons Funeral home in Bloomfield and from 10:00 a.m. until the hour of services Tuesday at the church.

In lieu of flowers, please send donations to the Greene County Humane Society.

Online condolences to the family are available at www.jenkinsfuneralhomes.com.

Tribute Wall

DD

“ Betty, Mike, Pat, Lance...so sorry to hear about Bill's passing. I had just talked to Pat in Walmart a few days before and he told me of his dad's condition, but it didn't sound like he would be passing any time soon. I guess the Lord had other plans. I pray Bill is in Heaven now talking with Jesus.

Bill never pulled any punches, he always told it like it was. I wish I could have been there to hear the line he told a waitress on one trip to Traverse City..."I know I've had worse (whatever the food was), but I can't remember when." I think it was Stuart who told me that story. Classic Willis Griffith.

Sorry I didn't make it down for the visitation or funeral. Time and circumstances didn't cooperate with me. God bless you all. You are in our prayers.

Dan Dowden - February 11, 2013 at 04:29 PM

JF

“ What a wonderful man to have given so much to his country and his community. He was no doubt a very strong willed man to have been shot down three times. Thank you Mr. Griffith for the freedom's that we enjoy today. I pray that your family may continue his great legacy.

JAY FOREMAN - February 08, 2013 at 07:37 PM

RA

“ Mike,
I was sorry to read about lossing your father. You and your family are in my prayers.

Roger Axe - February 04, 2013 at 08:47 PM

SY

“ I am so sorry for the loss of your dad/husband. I can see his life was full of doing important and interesting things. I know you all have lots of memories to cherish always. Sincerely, Shirley Yates

Shirley Yates - February 04, 2013 at 03:34 PM

AR

“ Mike and Family, So sorry to read about your dad passing. May your future hold many sweet memories of your life with him. He always wore a smile.

Ally Moore Ross - February 03, 2013 at 05:13 PM

JM

“ Thinking of all of you at this difficult time my thoughts and prayers to each and everyone of you.

Jane Meyer - February 01, 2013 at 09:44 PM