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Main Street. Franklin NC 28734, 828-524-2411

William Grahl Davidson

William Grahl Davidson, of Country Club Drive, Franklin, NC, died on April 5, 2011 at Angel Medical Center. His age was 82. He was born on March 29, 1929, in Chicago, IL, and was the son of Dr. William Arthur Davidson and Myrtle Mary Grahl Davidson. He was predeceased by his wife of 49 years, Gayle Reed Draper Davidson, and brother, Paul Gorrell Davidson.

He is survived by a daughter, Deborah Lynne Davidson, and a son, Mark William Davidson.

Mr. Davidson comes from a medical family. His father was a medical doctor and his mother was a registered nurse and superintendent at several Chicago hospitals. His mother always regretted that she was unable to become a medical doctor because of lack of funding. During World War II Mr. Davidson, while still in grade school, worked summers in hospital emergency rooms cleaning instruments.

Mr. Davidson was a member of the United States Army during the Korean War. He volunteered to serve in a special security unit as part of "Operation Grable," now declassified. "Operation Grable" was one of our early nuclear deterrent programs. All members of this group required high government clearances. If either parent was born outside of the United States applicants were disqualified. This continued a long family history of civilian military service.

Mr. Davidson earned a BA degree in Economics and Business Administration from Cornell College and an MBA degree in Finance from The University of Chicago's Graduate School of Business. In addition to his education, he learned banking from the Harris Trust & Savings Bank in Chicago, insurance from Allstate Insurance Company where he was Regional Controller in Roanoke, Virginia, and computerized financial planning from IBM. He was hired by IBM as a financial professional. Mr. Davidson spent much of his thirty years at IBM in financial management and as a Senior Financial Analyst in several headquarters' locations in New York. He represented IBM around the nation and world traveling to many countries with special interest in Asia and the Americas.

Mr. Davidson was a lifelong member of the Methodist Church and belonged to many local churches around the country. Virtually all of Mr. Davidson's paternal ancestors were local preachers or circuit-riders in the Methodist Church in addition to their regular jobs as potters, farmers, medical doctors, sheriffs, etc. He carried on this tradition of dedication to the Methodist Church where he held offices such as Lay Leader, Sunday school teacher, Chairman of the Administrative Board, Finance Chairman, Trustee President, and many other offices. Many of these same offices were held in Chicago, IL: Northbrook, IL; Roanoke, VA; Ridgefield, CT; Port Chester, NY; and Franklin, NC. Mr. Davidson's non-church activities included elected leadership roles in the Chicago Jaycees and the YMCA in Westchester Co., NY. He and his son, together, in the same ceremony, both received their black belts in Taekwondo at Taekwondo national headquarters in New York City. Locally, he served as President of the Franklin Lions, Treasurer of the Sons of the American Revolution, President of the Mill Creek Men's Golf Association and Treasurer of the Mill Creek Homeowner's Association.

Upon retiring from IBM, Mr. Davidson moved to the Franklin area where he discovered that his North Carolina roots on his father's side go back prior to the American Revolution. Both his paternal and maternal genealogy traces to what was then known as Buncombe County. His great-great-grandfather, Frederick Davidson, was a Revolutionary soldier and his thrice great-grandfather, Augustus A. Grahl, was educated as a university professor in Europe and his son, Augustus A. Grahl, Jr., resided in Buncombe County, now Haywood County, in the early 1800's.

All male Davidson antecedents, of age, fought in the army of the Confederate States of America in the Civil war. All known Grahl antecedents also fought for the south in the Civil war. Woodford S. Grahl fought in Thomas' Legion for the CSA from Haywood, NC, Company E, 69th Regiment. According to family records, John Lafayette Grahl fought for the CSA on the battleship CSS Tennessee which fought the Union fleet at Mobile Bay on 5 August, 1864. The CSS Tennessee was built to protect the important port of Mobile and was one of the best armed and armored ironclads that the Confederacy was able to build.

Memorial services will be held Saturday, April 30 at 11 a.m., at the First United Methodist Church with Rev. John Fowler officiating. The family will receive friends Saturday from 10 to 11 a.m., one hour prior to the service at the First United Methodist Church.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the First United Methodist Church, 66 Harrison Ave., Franklin, NC 28734, in his memory.

Mr. Davidson's final resting place will be in Franklin, NC, next to his wife.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements. Online condolences available at www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com.