



Thomas "Frank" Franklin Gudger

September 5, 1915 - February 6, 2019

Thomas Franklin "Frank" Gudger of Salisbury passed away on February 6, 2019 at the age of 103 years young. Mr. Gudger was born September 5, 1915, the seventh of ten children of Ada Gouger and James Craig Gudger in south Iredell County, between the towns of Mount Mourne and Davidson, NC. Frank graduated from Davidson High School and attended Davidson College before going to work at the Cascade Plant of Burlington Industries in Mooresville, NC. Afterwards he joined Duke Energy and worked in their Personnel and Safety Department for 30 years. He oversaw construction phases of numerous well-known power plants throughout the region. Buck Steam Plant (Salisbury), Marshall Steam Plant (Sherrill's Ford), Oconee, Catawba & McGuire nuclear stations, Cowan's Ford Dam (Lake Norman) and the Jocassee hydroelectric station (Keowee River). During World War II, with all five of his brothers already serving in the war, Frank served his country proudly in the Civil Air Patrol.

At the age of 21, Frank married Mary Neal Cashion. From that 46 year union they had one daughter, Dianne. He married Dellene Lyerly Markey in 1982 and they celebrated their 36th anniversary in 2018.

Frank loved to tell the stories of hiking the Appalachian Trail with his Duke Power friends. He also enjoyed hiking the mountains of NC and VA with his wife Dellene, and they attended numerous Elderhostels and took many extended trips across the USA by car. They cherished memories made on those road trips and cruises to Alaska, Bermuda, and the Bahamas.

He was a very skilled wood worker and crafted nineteen grandfather clocks from scratch during his retirement years. He dreamed of being an eye surgeon as a young man. While he certainly had the hand skills to do so, that was not his future. Instead he hand-carved “monkeys” from peach seeds using a trusted pocketknife and took joy in sharing those treasures with loved ones as he finished them. He created countless woodcrafts that are used and enjoyed by family and friends today. His passion for the outdoors led him to become a master gardener and a lover of Morgan and Saddlebred horses, which he had on his farm. Those skills and passions have transcended through four generations to the great-grandchildren.

He was an active member at Centre Presbyterian Church where he grew up riding to church with his family in a surrey with a fringe on top. He taught Sunday School at Centre and Fairview Methodist Churches in Mount Mourne and was active as a Deacon and Elder at First Presbyterian Church, Salisbury. He also enjoyed singing in the choirs at Centre and Fairview, and for 15 years at First Presbyterian Salisbury. He was awarded an “honorary life membership” in the Presbyterian Women for making 13 banner pole holders for the Mid-Atlantic Synod of the PCUSA.

Having lived well over 100 years, he loved to talk about the “changes” he had seen in the world over his lifetime. There were many times over the years that his immediate family, 14 nieces and nephews, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren were entertained with his historical, vivid, and often humorous stories. He was a patriarch to the family, mentored family, friends, and employees, and behind the scenes blessed many more without them ever knowing.

Mr. Gudger is survived by his wife, Dellene Lyerly Markey Gudger of Salisbury; one daughter, Dianne Gudger Dement of Raleigh; three grandchildren, Cynthia Cook Grantham (David) of Asheboro, Shannon Dement Parham (John) of Raleigh, and Thomas McLaren Dement (Melissa) of Wake Forest; five great-grandchildren, Joseph Cook Grantham (Ashton) of Asheboro, Jordan Caroline Parham and John Eldridge [Rhett] Parham III of

Raleigh, Amelia Grace Dement and Henry Thomas Dement of Wake Forest; and one sister, Elizabeth Gudger Knox of Mooresville. He is also survived by four step-children, Garland Markey Morton (Wes) of Lynchburg VA, Beverly Markey Rodgers (Bobby) of Salisbury, Charles S. Markey of Charlotte, and Paul Andrew Markey (Barbara) of Evergreen CO; and four step grandchildren, Chad Markey and Christina Markey of Charlotte, and Mollie and Sallie Markey of Evergreen CO.

Preceding him in death, in addition to his parents, were six brothers; Dr. James Roby Gudger, Jesse McClaren Gudger, George Craig Gudger, Charles Armour Gudger, Robert Wilson Gudger, and Joseph Patton Gudger; two sisters, Ellis Louisa Norvell, and Ruth Isabelle Howard Sigmon.

Memorial services for Mr. Gudger will be held at First Presbyterian Church, 308 W Fisher Street, Salisbury on Monday, February 11 at 11:00 AM with Dr. Randy Kirby and Reverends Josh & Lara Musser Gritter officiating. Private Interment will be in the Columbarium at First Presbyterian Church following the service. Visitation will be held immediately following the internment in Lewis Hall. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to First Presbyterian Church.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

FEB 11. 11:00 AM (ET)

First Presbyterian Church
308 W. Fisher St.
Salisbury, NC 28144

Tribute Wall



“ *Summersett Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Thomas "Frank" Franklin Gudger*



Summersett Funeral Home and Cremation Center - February 13, 2019 at 02:08 PM

EW

“ *I had the honor of working for and with Frank Gudger at Duke Power. We worked in the Construction Department. At that time we were all a family. We used to have luncheons to celebrate birthdays or just to celebrate. Frank would make homemade ice cream and bring to the luncheons. He hosted several team picnics with employees and families inviting us to his home. Gracious, kind, gentle and generous man. He always looked like a million dollars. Fond memories of Frank sharing stories about Shannon and Thomas and oh did he ever love them. I attended the service for Frank today and the service was indeed a celebration of Frank and how he lived his life and his love for Dellene, his Family, his Church and his Community. Love to his Family.*

Evia Woolard

Evia Woolard - February 11, 2019 at 04:10 PM

FK

“ Having known Frank all my life, I have fond memories of the stories told by my father, Graham Knox, and his brothers. The Gudgers had a baseball field and an airstrip on their property, which entertained all the young guys in the neighborhood! They not only watched them fly their airplanes, but they also got to play baseball with them! My uncle Herbert Knox broke his leg one day playing baseball with them! I'm now 75 years old. I remember Frank looking like a million dollars on his 102nd birthday! I will end with saying that I looked up to him as being one of the nicest men I have ever known! ~~~Frank Knox

Frank Knox - February 08, 2019 at 11:55 AM

JR

“ I was so sorry to hear about frank. John and I are both home bound and unable to attend services for frank. We thought so much of both of you. The family will be in our thoughts and prayers.

John and Marcelle Rogers - February 07, 2019 at 09:50 PM