

Don Bowles

Don Bowles, 87, Encinitas, Calif., and formerly of Groton, died September 9, 2001. A memorial service was held on Saturday, Sept. 22, at the United Methodist Church, Groton, with the Rev. Richard Collman officiating. Burial followed in the Groton Union Cemetery under the direction of Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton. Military rites were provided by the Groton American Legion Post #39.

Donald E. Bowles was born on June 25, 1914, in Groton, S.D., to Fred C. and Edythe (Hubbard) Bowles. He attended school in Groton and graduated in 1932 from Groton High School where he played basketball, football and saxophone in the band. He attended South Dakota State University



in Brookings and graduated in 1936 with a degree in mechanical engineering. He was a four year member of the ROTC and received a 2nd Lt. Commission in the Infantry Branch of the Army Reserves of the U.S. On May 28, 1937, Don married Edna McLoughlin in Sioux Falls. They lived in Groton, where Don was a salesman in his father's Ford dealership. In February of 1941, Don was called to active duty as a 1st Lt. in the Quarter Master Corps of the U.S. Army. He was promoted to Captain in 1942 and Lt. Col. in 1943. On December 10, 1944, the 70th Infantry Division arrived in Marsailles, France. He was director of the Quartermaster Corps. for his division. His division engaged the German 6th Mountain Division of S.S. Troops in the Battle of the Little Bulge on Christmas Eve 1944. Don received the Bronze Star. He was honorably discharged in 1945. When he returned home, he and his brother-in-law, Dale Sour, purchased the Ford Dealership in Groton from Don's father. Don moved to Webster and operated Best Motors, Inc., from 1947 to 1981. He married La Verne Fairfield in Huron in 1973. Following his retirement in 1981, the couple moved to Aberdeen and wintered in Hawaii and Arizona. After his wife's death in 1977, Don moved to San Diego where he resided until his death.

Don was a devoted member of the United Methodist Church. He enjoyed traveling, hunting and fishing. He was a life member of the American Legion, a 40-year member of the Yelduz Shrine Temple in Aberdeen. He was president and district governor of Kiwanis. During the rural physician crisis, he recruited four physicians to Webster. He served as president of the S.D. Automobile Dealers Association and served on the Ford Motor Company Dealer Advisory Council.

Don is survived by his two daughters, Carolyn Fields of La Jolla, Calif., and Jane Ann Knecht of Wenatchee, Wash.; two grandchildren, Janelle Knecht Barrett, Issaquah, Wash.; and John Knecht, San Francisco, Calif.; two sons-in-law, Ben H. Knecht, MD.; and M.S. Fields, DDS; one brother, Lynn Bowles and his wife, Jerry, Salem, Ore.; three stepchildren, Wallace (Jan) Fairfield, Overland Park, Kan.; Virginia (Lee) Jost, Alexandria, Va.; and Sheryl (Bill) Ischen, Artesian, S.D., and their families.

Preceding him in death were his parents and two sisters, Janet Sour and Virginia Tjomsland.