

Don Stanley Anderson

Don Stanley Anderson, 84, of N Ft Myers, FL, died Friday October 22nd, 2010. He died at Lee Memorial Hospital, in Ft Myers following a stroke on Sept 26th. He was born Oct. 24th, 1925 in Pontiac, MI to Don H. Anderson and Beatrice (Stanley) Anderson. Betty, his younger sister, was his only sibling.

They lived on a farm, so he grew up among lots of animals. His family loved English Setters, and there were always two or three dogs around. Well liked, he was sought out as a leader; and he was active in the Boy Scouts. In his Junior year in HS, he was the Class President. Don graduated in July 1943. The summer before that, he started working part-time at Pontiac's Kirkby Funeral Home, as an Apprentice Embalmer. After graduating, he continued working up until mid November.

He enlisted in the Navy on Nov 15th, 1943 and received his training at Great Lakes Naval Training Station, in Great Lakes, IL. On Jan. 21st, 1945 he began his service on The USS Muliphen, as a Pharmacist's Mate, boarding in Honolulu. The ship participated in attacks on Iwo Jima, and Okinawa. Don left "The Mule" Feb. 13th, 1946, after she had arrived in Everett, WA. On May 4th, 1946 he received an honorable discharge, with the rate of Pharmacist's Mate 2/class.

Following the war Don continued to work in the funeral business. He married in May 1948 to Wanda Thompson, also of Pontiac. After a year of study at Wayne State Mortuary School in Detroit, he earned his Funeral Director's License. His son, Jack was born in May 1949; and two daughters, Jill born in 1952, and Judy born in 1957. There were several other marriages and divorces, but no other children.

Don was presented with an award by The Genessee County Funeral Directors Association, in recognition of his Distinguished Service during the period following the Flint Tornado, June 8, 1953. The devastating Flint-Beecher tornado, equivalent to an F5, killed 116, injured 844, and demolished 307 homes. Many families had multiple losses.

His favorite charity was The Disabled American Veterans, and he also supported the Democratic Party. He had many interests and hobbies. He loved boating, and most of his adult life, he had a boat. After moving to Florida in the early 1980's, most of his leisure time continued to be on his boat. He learned to play the Ukelele, and taught his kids a few chords. And he made his own label of home-made beer and pop, with the kids helping out. Other interests included reading, politics, aviation, and travel. In recent years he visited NYC, San Francisco, and Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Don started to research his genealogy, and with the help of his kids, uncovered some interesting history.

He collected die casts of cars he grew up with (Fords). Going to local car shows was also a treat. During the last 10 years Don started restoring old cars; Model T's, Mustangs from the mid 60's, and other Fords he drove as a young adult. He loved NASCAR and watched most of the races on TV. He also went to many races in person, including Daytona International Speedway, Charlotte Motor Speedway, Michigan International Speedway, and many small tracks around FL and MI. Most November's since 2005, he took several of his kids to Homestead-Miami Speedway for the Championship weekend races; with behind the scenes garage passes!

Don kept working as a Funeral Director, working part-time until June 17th, 2009, when he was laid off. He suffered a major stroke on Sept. 26th, 2010. After being cared for at a rehabilitation center for a few weeks, he returned to the hospital. Hospice arrangements were being made, but he died suddenly the morning of Friday, October 22nd, 2010. Two days later he would've turned 85!

He is survived by his sister Betty Anderson of Winter Park, FL; son Jack Anderson, whom he lived with in N Ft Myers; daughter Jill Anderson of Ann Arbor, MI; and daughter Judith Marrero of Juana Diaz, Puerto Rico. He is also survived by 4 grandchildren, and 4 great-grandchildren.

Don was a quiet, kind man. He was well respected among those he worked with, and loved by his friends. He lived his life to the fullest, and accomplished many things from his "Bucket List"! For his children, he reserved the most precious love of all, Unconditional Love. If three words could sum up his life, they'd be:

Lived Helping Others!

"There are no
goodbyes for us.
Wherever you are,
You will always be
In my heart".

- Gandhi

