



George T.. Matthews

November 7, 1921 - November 28, 2018

George T. Matthews, 97, of Cornwall, passed away on Tuesday, November 27, 2018, at Cornwall Manor Retirement Community. He was the husband of Betty Dieffenbach Swope Matthews.

Born in Myerstown on November 7, 1921, he was the son of the late George and Ida Heffelfinger Matthews. George was a member of the St. John's Lutheran Church in Fredericksburg, PA; life member of the Grand Lodge, F.A.A.M., District of Columbia; the Benjamin B. French Lodge #15; Shriners International; Aleppo Shriners; the Fraternity of the A.A.O.N.M.S., Wilmington, MA; the Montgomery Commandery #13; Knights Templar, Rockville, MD; and the Harry Stover American Legion Post #915, Fredericksburg, PA.

George T. Matthews was an authentic and self-made American success story. His humble beginnings as a youngster on a small rural farm also included weekly trips to the Broad Street Market in Harrisburg, PA where he dutifully assisted his mother by preparing and selling fresh chickens to the public. George became accustomed to those learning experiences, a natural progression of hard work, sacrifice, and more hard work. Family values, morals, reverence for God, and respect for others created a solid foundation for everything thereafter in his life.

George served his country during WWII as an Army Combat Engineer. He was repeatedly one of the first to land onshore during campaigns in the Pacific Theater, more specifically the Philippines and Solomon Islands, which included Guadalcanal, the scene of some of the most bitter battles between

the American and Japanese troops. George was a bulldozer operator who cleared the islands' terrain in order to facilitate the building of landing strips for Air Force, Navy, and Allied flyers. His decorations and awards include the Asiatic Pacific Theater Ribbon (2 Bronze Stars), Philippine Liberation Ribbon (2 Bronze Stars), World War II Victory Medal, Honorable Service Lapel Button WWII, and Good Conduct Medal.

After returning to the U.S., George received his honorable discharge and place in our nation's history as part of the "Greatest Generation." In Tom Brokaw's book, *The Greatest Generation*, he wrote, "It is, I believe, the greatest generation any society has ever produced." He argued that these men and women fought not for fame or recognition but because it was the "right thing to do."

Soon after George's return from the military, he pursued his ambitions to become a businessman and focused his interests and abilities on the poultry industry. One of his major successes will not be found in any history book but is entirely factual. George was the first person to successfully introduce and market a product that most everyone is totally familiar with today, the boneless, skinless chicken breast.

He created his first business, G & H Poultry, during 1961 and prospered as the first distributor of poultry products in Boston, MA with sales in excess of \$50-\$60 million per year. George also launched another successful business in Boston called Matthews Sales, a company that represented many poultry commodities throughout the North-Eastern United States.

George's reputation as an industry leader led to many accolades and awards. One of the most notable was the Merchandiser of the Year award during 1980, when he was honored by Poultry and Egg Marketing of Atlanta, Georgia. The following year he received another prestigious award from the National Independent Poultry & Food Distributors Association (N.I.P.F.D.A.) proclaiming him Merchandising Man of the Year.

In addition, George was extremely proud of his lengthy service as the only poultry distributor to serve on the National Broiler Council.

During his professional career George became friends with some of the most prominent and successful innovators within the poultry industry including Bo Pilgrim, Don Tyson, and Frank Perdue. One of George's favorite recollections was how he personally advised chicken magnate Frank Perdue regarding the essentials required to strategically locate a succession of new poultry stores that he wanted to establish throughout NYC.

All of George's successes and good fortune in business will never surpass his primary devotion and love for his late wife June, his second wife Betty J. Matthews, and all immediate and extended family members. Moreover, his abundant philanthropic nature resulted in the creation of The Matthews Library, located in Fredericksburg, PA and his generous endowment to Cornwall Manor Retirement Community, which resulted in the establishment of the Betty and George Matthews Therapy Center.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by his brothers Arthur Mahaffey (Carrie) of Gretna Springs and Irwin Mahaffey (Mary Ellen) of Myerstown; step-sons Barry P. Swope and Randy L. Swope (Andrea) of Mt. Gretna; several nieces and nephews; three step-grandchildren; and six step-great grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his first wife June Richard Matthews and his sister Marilyn Marshall.

Memorial services will be held on December 14, 2018, at 11:00 a.m. at the St. John's Lutheran Church, 3050 S. Pine Grove St., Fredericksburg, PA. There will be no viewing, but a visitation will be held one hour prior to the service. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to his church at P.O. Box 173, Fredericksburg, PA 17026 or to the Matthews Library, 102 W. Main St., Fredericksburg, PA.

Kreamer & Lum Funeral Home & Crematory, Jonestown, is honored to serve the family.

Cemetery Details

Zion's Evangelical Lutheran Cemetery

103 E. Market Street
Jonestown, PA 17038

Previous Events

Memorial Service

DEC **14**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

St. John's Lutheran Church
3050 S. Pine Grove St.
Fredericksburg, PA

Tribute Wall



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of George T.. Matthews.*



December 12, 2018 at 02:55 PM



“ *Uncle George you are and will be greatly missed. Your interest in business, politics, family and friends continued to your final days. The tender love of June and Betty was evidenced by all who knew you. I am most appreciative of the time we spent together and your interest in my life. It saddens me to say " good bye" yet I know we will meet again in heaven. and for now I know you are in the " victory garden with our loved ones. You're a true gentleman, an example for all young people to believe in a dream, work hard and that determination are never lost. Rest in him. Mary Anne & Charlie*

Mary Anne and Charlie Morris - December 03, 2018 at 08:13 PM



You were a special uncle to me and a kind and generous man to our family and many others. Your name will continue on because of your hard work and generosity. You will be greatly missed by our family. Love and peace to you. James Mahaffey and Family.

James Mahaffey - December 05, 2018 at 10:31 PM