



## William C. Norman

September 12, 1924 - November 30, 2015

WILLIAM CHESTER NORMAN was born in Stigler, Oklahoma, on September 12, 1924 to C.F. Norman and Fannie [Dalton] Norman. As an only child, Billy Chet enjoyed growing up in Stigler. Since his father was the owner of a men's clothing store, Billy Chet was a "well dressed", handsome fellow. At age 17, Billy Chet graduated from Stigler High School, and on May 31, 1942, eloped with his high school sweetheart, Colleen Rose Cluen. Bill enrolled in summer school at Oklahoma University but dropped out before his second full semester of classes to enlist in the Army. In April of 1943, Bill left for Fort Sill, Oklahoma, for induction into the Army. Bill was assigned to the 286th Field Artillery Observation Battalion. After some time at Fort Bragg, Bill's unit went to the Tennessee Maneuvers for three months. After completing maneuvers, Bill spent time at Camp Forrest located in the extreme south central part of Tennessee before moving on to Camp Shelby in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. At the end of their time at Camp Shelby, the 286th headed for New York where they embarked on the Queen Elizabeth to sail to Glasgow, Scotland. His unit road the train to Bournemouth, England, about 450 miles to the south. Here, Bill boarded an LST (Landing Ship Tank), crossed the English Channel, and landed at Omaha Beach about 2 months after D-Day. His unit moved inland to Metz, France, to the 33rd Brigade's headquarters where they remained for several months. The 286th spent a lot of time with the XII CORPS Artillery acting as forward observers helping identify enemy locations. Bill drove a jeep chauffeuring Officers back and forth from the front relaying information gathered by the forward observers. Bill received a citation for his ability to successfully navigate the countryside without the use of maps. (Surprisingly years later Bill was known to be directionally challenged when driving around the streets of Tulsa!) Bill's unit went on to Regensburg, Germany on the Danube River, close to the eastern border of Germany. They stayed at a former German Army base before receiving orders to go to Camp Philadelphia, a repatriation camp where they were reorganized for return to the United States. They boarded a Liberty Ship and sailed to Newport News, Virginia. Bill spent eighteen months overseas and was awarded a Bronze Star during his service. Bill took a train to Camp Chaffey in Fort Smith, Arkansas where he received his honorable discharge. Bill left the Army as a Corporal with his \$120 stipend in hand. His father drove to Fort Smith to pick up his son who he hadn't seen since his son since entered the service. His

father arranged for Bill to fly on a DC3 to Phoenix, Arizona, to reunite with his wife. Colleen's side of the family tried to get Bill to go to pharmacy school at USC, but his heart was intent on returning to Oklahoma. Bill and Colleen returned to Norman, Oklahoma, in 1945. He restarted his college education in the summer and attended OU's pharmacy school for the next 3 years. Bill graduated in August 1948. Bill first job was at Moore's Pharmacy in Arkansas City, Kansas. He also worked in Pawhuska at Irby Drug and in Muskogee for the Veteran's Administration. Bill ended up going back to Arkansas City two more times before interviewing with the Glass Nelson Clinic in Tulsa located at 21st Street and Xanthus. In 1954, Bill accepted their job offer and worked there for the next 32 years before retiring in 1986 at the age of 62. Once established in Tulsa, Bill and Colleen adopted their daughter, Nancy. They began attending Memorial Baptist Church. Colleen joined the church and Bill, who was raised in the Methodist church, made the decision at age 40 to be baptized and joined Memorial at that time. Both remained as members of the church until their deaths. Throughout the years, there was one consistent theme in Bill's life; his devotion to his family. For many years, once a month on a Saturday morning, Bill, Colleen and Nancy would travel to Stigler to visit Bill's mother, Fannie. They would take care of anything Fannie needed, watch the Lawrence Welk Show on the big console TV in the front room, spend the night and return home to Tulsa on Sunday. Bill's responsibilities to his mother, who was widowed by his father's unexpected passing in 1950, were carried out faithfully until Fannie's death in November 1981. Bill was a wonderful son, but also he was a great father. Bill and Colleen raised Nancy, meeting all of her needs and, often, many of her "wants". Bill was the one who had the dubious pleasure of teaching his daughter how to drive. In later years when Nancy became his chauffeur, he knew that he had done a good job. A good education was provided including sending Nancy to Oklahoma State University (and for an OU grad this was amazing!) where she obtained her bachelor's degree in education. The most important thing that Bill and Colleen did for Nancy was to take her to church. They opened the door for her to know the love of the Lord. Bill found his place teaching and taking attendance in one of the children's classes. Later in life, he joined a men's Sunday School class and attended whenever he could. Nancy says that Bill was the best example of a loving, faithful father here on Earth. He helped Nancy to know just how amazing our Heavenly Father must be! Bill and Colleen were married for 61 years. Once again, Bill loved and cared for his family as he ministered to Colleen when her health declined. Never one to complain, Bill took care of Colleen for several years until her death in August 2003. Undoubtedly one of Bill's greatest joys were his two grandsons, Nate and Noah. Bill's love for the boys was unquestioned, and he enjoyed participating in many of their life events while they were growing up. It was a special blessing for him to see both grandsons marry wonderful young women. In 2010, Bill was finally convinced to quit living alone and he moved in with Nancy and Neil. He spent most of his time reading Louie L'Amour books, watching old westerns and talking

OU sports with Neil. Bill always enjoyed Wednesday family dinner nights sitting at the table hearing about the latest events in the lives of his grandsons and their wives. Bill passed away peacefully from his earthly life to his heavenly home on the evening of Monday, November 30, 2015. He will be missed, but we look forward to reuniting with him one day. Graveside service Thursday, December 3rd, 2015-3:00 pm-Floral Haven Memorial Gardens.

# Comments

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“ Mr. Norman was the most kind and most gentle man I have ever had the privilege of knowing. I don't believe he ever lost his patience with us, though I'm sure Nancy and I gave him plenty of reason to get irritated while we were in high school and college. His sweet spirit shined through in everything I ever experienced with him. I always enjoyed having him laugh with/at us while we sat around the kitchen table discussing some of our latest adventures. I'm sorry that Allen didn't get the chance to get to know him as I had. It is so wonderful to know he is healed and basking in the glorious light of our Lord and Savior in Heaven. Thank you, Nancy, for letting me share in your family. Nancy and Neil and your dear family, our love and our prayers are with you always! Christa and Allen Robinson

**Christa Robinson** - December 02, 2015 at 11:32 AM