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Major General William Edgar Read

May 17, 1927 - March 4, 2009

Major General William Edgar Read, retired U. S. Army, 81, died Wednesday, March 4, 2009, following a period of declining health. He was born in Charlotte, NC on May 17, 1927 and was the son of the late William Edgar Read and Virginia Clark Read. He graduated from Morganton High School in 1944 where he played tailback on the football team. Edgar enlisted in the service the day after his graduation and served for two years before he received an appointment to West Point from Rep. Sam Ervin. He graduated from West Point in 1950 with a Bachelor of Science degree, and in later years he received a Masters degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Illinois and Business Administration degree from Webster College in St. Louis, Missouri. He continued his education with the Advanced Management Program at Harvard, Command and General Staff College at Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, and the Army War College at Carlisle Barracks in Pennsylvania.During his career Maj. Gen. Read served in the Korean War and had three commands in the Vietnam War. Following his war service, he served as the Assistant Military AttachÃ© of the U. S. Embassy in Tel Aviv, Israel, was the District Engineer in Tulsa, Oklahoma; was the Assistant Chief of Engineers in Washington, DC; and was President of the Mississippi River Commission in Vicksburg, MS. His military decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal, the Legion of Merit with one Oak Leaf Cluster, the Bronze Star with two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Army Commendation Medal, the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Gold Star, and the Air Medal.Bill also served as the staff officer in the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Army Operations and with the

Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington, DC and was the Deputy Commanding General of the U. S. Army Aviation Systems Command in St. Louis. During his thirty-three years of active duty, Maj. Gen. Read was stationed in nine different states and four different overseas assignments along with his wife of fifty-five years, Mary Ann, and their three daughters. His last duty assignment in the military was a Presidential

appointment with Congressional approval as Division Engineer of the Lower Mississippi Valley Division and President of the Lower Mississippi Valley Flood Control Association.Upon his retirement from the U. S. Army, Bill and Mary Ann moved to Gulfport, MS where he worked for Walk, Haydel & Associates. In 2002, they again retired and moved home to Morganton to reside at Grace Ridge.Surviving are his wife, Mary Ann Gregory Read, of the home; daughters and their husbands, Mary Virginia "Ginger" and Gerard T. Hopkins, of New Windsor, NY, Ann Kirby and Andrew H. Weber of Pipersville, PA, and Sarah Correll "Sallie" and Hunter Fordice, of Vicksburg, MS; grandsons, Gerard Thomas Hopkins, Jr. and his wife, Dolores, William Read Hopkins, Stephen Michael Hopkins, Andrew Joseph Weber, and Robert Read Weber and his wife, Danielle; granddaughters, Hilary Ann Weber, Georgina Roxanne Weber, Lauren Virginia Fordice, Emily Louise Fordice, Helen Frances Fordice, and Sarah Hunter Fordice; and cousins, Sarah Florence Gilbert and Hal V. Brown, Jr.The family will receive friends from 10:30 until 12 noon Monday, March 9, 2009, in the First United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall. The funeral will be follow at noon in the Sanctuary with Rev. Dr. Syndor Thompson, III officiating. Burial will follow at Forest Hill Cemetery with military honors conducted by the Ft. Bragg Honor Guard. Memorial contributions may be made to First United Methodist Church, 200 N. King St., Morganton, NC 28655 or to Grace Ridge Scholarship Fund, 500 Lenoir Rd., Morganton, NC 28655.

Tribute Wall

No tributes added yet.