

Date
Section(s)
Byline

February 15, 2005
Obituary

Brigadier General (Ret) Fred Wilbur Collins, 88, of St. Simons Island, Georgia, died February 10th at the Hospice of the Golden Isles.

He was a native of Baxley, Georgia, and was a son of Frank Walker and Lena Hall Collins. He had been a resident of St. Simons for 33 years.

He graduated from North Georgia Military College in 1936 and from the University of Georgia in 1938, after which he was commissioned as 2nd Lieutenant in the United States Army Reserve. He began his career with the 8th Infantry Regiment at Fort Screven, Georgia. As Executive Officer of the 3rd Battalion, 8th Infantry, 4th Division, he landed with initial assault forces on D-Day June 6th at Utah Beach. He assumed command of the Battalion in August. From Utah Beach, they drove into Sainte-Mere-Eglise and continued on in the Normandy Campaign. They were the first to enter Cherbourg and first to enter Paris. Other campaigns included the drive across Europe from St. Lo and the liberation of Bastogne in the Battle of the Bulge. In 1946, he was assigned to the Allied Commission for Austria and administered the Marshall Plan for the city of Vienna.

It was in Vienna he met his wife of 57 years, Patricia Henry. They were married Dec. 18, 1946.

His duty assignments included Chief, National Security Agency Europe in Paris; Chief, Army Security Agency Europe in Frankfurt, Germany; Deputy Commander Army Security Agency in Arlington, Va.; the Pentagon; and European Command, Paris. He commanded the 16th Infantry Regiment at Fort Riley, Kansas, and the 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division in Korea.

He served as Deputy Commander of the U.S. Training Center in Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri.

He was a graduate of the Command and General Staff College United Kingdom, the Joint Services Staff College and the National War College.

He was promoted to the Rank of Brigadier General in August of 1963 at the age of 46 at Fort Monroe, Virginia. Awards and Commendations include: Distinguished Service Cross, Silver Star, Bronze Star, First Oak Leaf Cluster, Second Oak Leaf Cluster, Legion of Merit, Joint Service Commendation, Army Commendation Medal, Combat Infantry Badge, General Staff Badge, Croix de Guerre avec Etoile de Vermeil and Purple Heart.

Upon retirement in 1971, he pursued his lifelong dream of cruising. He bought a yacht and cruised with his family from the Pentagon Lagoon to southern waters, returning to St. Simons in 1972. He subsequently became manager of the Golden Isles Marina until 1982.

He was a member of Christ Church, serving as Usher and Vestryman, the American

Legion, St. Simons Rotary Club, Attitude Adjustment Group and the Literary Society and Inside Draw Club.

He is survived by his wife, Patricia Collins of St. Simons Island; his daughter, Patricia McCormick and husband Ric and grandsons Christopher and Alex McCormick, all of Mountain View, Calif.; and his son, **Fred Collins Jr.** of St. Simons Island; and nephews, Charles Andrew Jr., his wife, Truett, and son Charles III, all of Vidalia, Ga., Walker Andrew, his wife, Jenny, son Neal and daughter Lindsey of Perry, Ga., William Andrew and his wife, Lena, of Perry, Ga., and Dr. Braswell Collins and his daughters, Faith, Jane, Mary and Betty, all of Macon Ga.

A memorial service will be held at 2:30 p.m. Friday, February 18, 2005, at Christ Church, St. Simons Island, Georgia, with the Rev. Curtis Mears and the Rev. William Littleton officiating. Interment, with full military honors, will be later at Arlington National Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Christ Church, St. Simons Island, Georgia or Hospice of the Golden Isles, 1692 Glynco Parkway, Brunswick, Georgia 31525.

Edo Miller and Sons Funeral Home, Brunswick, Georgia, is in charge of arrangements.