



Thomas Ridgway Coe

May 3, 1921 - March 15, 2013

Thomas Ridgway Coe, 91 of Tallahassee passed away at his home on Friday, March 15, 2013. He was born on May 3, 1921, and was the son of former Tallahassee Fire Chief Thomas Pinkney Coe and Maude Atkinson Coe Harvey. His name, Thomas Ridgway, came from a family friend and highly respected military officer, Colonel Thomas Ridgway. He was a descendant of a pioneer family that settled Coe's Mill which is now named Hosford in Liberty County and Coe's Landing located on the Leon County side of Lake Talquin. He attended Leon High School and was an outstanding football player and track star. In 1937, he played on Leon's first State Championship Football Team and was co-captain of the 1940 Northeastern Conference Championship Team which had an undefeated regular season under Coach Amos Godby. He lettered four times before graduating in 1941. In 1997, he was honored by the Leon High School Alumni Association and was inducted into the Leon High School Football Hall of Fame.

Ridgway fulfilled his dream and joined the Tallahassee Fire Department late 1941. He served over 42 years, and retired as an Assistant Chief in 1983. During his tenure, he attended the Ocala State Fire College and served on the committee that developed the Florida Fire Training Manual, commonly referred to as the "Red Books". He served as a Fire Training Officer and was highly respected as a leader in the Fire Department. Other firemen serving with him knew he would be there to lead them through any dangerous situation. He was instrumental in helping to establish the first pension plan for

Tallahassee firefighters which is still in existence today. He was dedicated to the Tallahassee Fire Department and always did his best to improve the department. After his retirement, he was consulted many times for his historical knowledge of the Department. He was Tallahassee's oldest living firefighter at the time of his death.

Ridgway was an avid outdoorsman. He loved to hunt and fish with his wife Dot, family members, and his many friends. He was recognized as one of the best rifle shots in the Southeast. He also enjoyed water sports, football, and golfing.

In his younger years, he was a member of the Boy Scouts. He played baseball for the Tallahassee Capitals at Centennial Field and umpired softball games for men and women at Ben Bridges Park. He served in the Florida National Guard and was a member of the Trot Away Club, the Jackson Masonic Lodge, the Seminole Boosters, the Florida State Dog Hunters' Association, and the National Rifle Association. He attended First Baptist Church from infancy and became a member of the "Golden Age" group. He is survived by his wife of seventy years, Dorothy Griffin Coe. Three children: Ann Coe Abbott (Buddy), Thomas (Tom) Ridgway Coe, Jr. (Patty), and Ruth Coe Baggett; six grandchildren: Lewis (Bud) Abbott, Jr. (Hope) and Michele Abbott Norman (Darrell), Matthew (Matt) Coe (Kristen), Michael (Mike) Coe (Heather), Brandon Ridgway Baggett (Jessica), and Nicole (Niki) Baggett; and fifteen great-grandchildren. He is also survived by a brother-in-law, William (Bill) Stanley of Tallahassee, a sister-in-law, Sara Griffin Brem of San Antonio, Texas, and many nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his parents and step-father, John B. Harvey, both of his sisters: Lucile Coe Branch Webb and Fay Coe Stanley, and a great-grandchild, Amira.

A Memorial Service will be held on Tuesday, March 19th at 2:00 p.m. at the First Baptist Church located at 108 W. College Avenue, Tallahassee, FL 32301. The family will receive friends after the service in the church Welcome Center. Interment at Oakland Cemetery will be private. Arrangements will be handled by Bevis Funeral Home.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the First Baptist Church at the above address, or Covenant Hospice, 1921 Capital Circle NE, Tallahassee, FL 32308.

Previous Events

Service

MAR 19. 2:00 PM (ET)

First Baptist Church of Tallahassee
108 West College Avenue
Tallahassee, FL 32301