



## Mr. Melvin Sigurd Hougen

August 8, 1918 - July 16, 2020

Hougen, Melvin Sigurd August 8, 1918 July 16, 2020 Mel was born in Fertile, MN to parents who emigrated from Norway and Sweden in the early 1900's. He grew up loving the outdoors and used to cut cordwood to make money as a youth. His youthful activities include skiing, fishing, hunting and golf. Mel's family moved to Crookston when he was a young man and Mel got into the lumber business like his father. At age 18, Mel was given the opportunity to manage a lumberyard in Edmore, ND which is where he met his future wife, Alta. Mel joined the Army in WWII and was assigned to the 90th Infantry Division. He was serving on the ship Calvin Coolidge when it was sunk in the south Pacific. Mel became an officer and was redeployed to England for the European campaign. He landed on Utah Beach on D-Day plus 2 and fought in many battles including Normandy and the Battle of the Bulge. He was awarded the Bronze Star for Valor and left the Army as a 1st Lieutenant in 1946. Returning from the war, Mel attended the University of Minnesota and earned his degree in Forestry Management. Mel reconnected with Alta, a teacher, and married her in 1946. They were happily married for 72 years while raising their family in Northeast Minneapolis. When the family was grown, Mel and Alta moved to Edina. Mel worked at Champion International in the wood products business for 37 years before retiring from the company in 1983. At that point Mel started working with a friend as a manufacturer's rep selling exotic woods and manufactured wood products. Mel loved this job and worked until he was 73 before moving to the golf course to spend more time in

recreation. Mel played a lot of golf at Gross Golf Course and later at Braemar. He was a good golfer who first shot his age at 80. In 2000, Mel and Alta moved to 7500 York, a retirement cooperative in Edina. At 7500 York, Mel spent many happy hours in the woodshop making beautiful things with his friends. While Mel lived an interesting life, it does not really describe the man who inspired so many people through his love, character and caring. He had a wonderful depth of character and moral fiber that impressed everyone in his life. Mel cared deeply about his family, friends and community and was always there for them. He was continually active in his churches, both Gustavus Adolphus in Northeast Minneapolis and then later at Good Shepherd in Edina. He and Alta delivered Meals on Wheels well into their 90's. Mel's family: wife Alta (Reynolds) who passed away in 2019 at age 100. Daughters: Merideth Hale and husband Jack in Rio Verde, AZ.; Melanie Langenfeld and husband Fred, who passed respectively in 2007 and 1998; and Marcy Engstrom and husband Jay in Amery WI. Sons: Mark Hougen (passed away in May 2020), wife Terry in Mounds View; Myles Hougen and wife Karen Lemley in Sandpoint, ID; and Murray Hougen and wife Beth in San Diego, CA. Mel is also survived by his sister, Elsie Cameron (Don, passed away in 1998), who has lived in the same retirement home with Mel and Alta for 20 years. Mel is also survived by 8 grandchildren, 6 great grandchildren and many nieces and nephews. Mel's family was his pride and joy. Mel will be buried at Ft. Snelling next to Alta.