

Concord Monitor Obituary for Russell F. Elwell

Russell F. Elwell, 92, of Pembroke Hill Road, died of congestive heart failure Saturday, July 4, 2015 at the Concord Hospital.

Born in Portland, ME on February 6, 1923, Rusty was the son of Edwin and Bethelyn (Hodkins) Elwell. After graduating from Pembroke Academy in 1942, Russ joined the Army Air Corps and saw duty in India, Burma, Sumatra and participated in the air offensive against Japan as a left gunner on the super fortress B-29. He flew on 22 missions to Japan, including the first, the last and the longest mission in the history of the B-29. On October 25, 1944 his plane was hit, forcing the crew to bail out over China. When the treaty to end WWII was being signed on the USS Missouri, August 15th, 1945, he was on one of the many B-29's overhead.

Russ was one of twelve New Hampshire WWII Veterans featured in the book "We Went to War" written by Mike Pride and Meg Heckman in 2008. On May 16th of this year, accompanied by his grandson, Adam Painchaud, attended his 58th Bomb Wing, 40th Bombardment Group reunion at the New England Air Museum in Connecticut.

Following his discharge in October 1945, Rusty went to work at Sawyer Studio on Pleasant Street in Concord for Charles Sawyer's son, Harold, making frames and developing photographs that were later hand-colored and painted.

He built over 30 houses in the Pembroke and Concord area before starting his company, Milruss Boats that was located in the China Mills in Allenstown.

Later Russ worked as a production manager for Pembroke Boats, owned by his brother Jed Elwell, and then as plant manager for Penn Yan Boats in NY. After a couple of years, Russ and his family missed New Hampshire so much that they moved back to Pembroke where he built the home that he lived in and maintained until the end of this May.

Rusty ran his own construction company and was also a master plumber and electrician. He later was superintendent of buildings and grounds for the former Mt. St. Mary College in Hooksett and New Hampshire College before retiring.

He served on the Pembroke Library building committee and was a community aid for the Pembroke Police Department. He was a past member of the Canterbury Sno-Shakers snowmobile club, the NH Audubon Society and the YMCA Outing Club.

Rusty was predeceased by his wife of nearly 65 years, Millie (Hiscock) Elwell and his brother Gerald Elwell.

He is survived by his son David Elwell and his wife Elizabeth of Andover and his daughter, Dale Cheney and her husband Wayne of Gilford. He also leaves behind his grandchildren, Adam Painchaud and his wife Christy of Alton, Jason Cheney of Pembroke, and Jasmine and Daisy Elwell of Andover; his great grandsons, Wyatt Elwell of Andover, Addison Allbee and Abel Elwell Painchaud of Alton; his 101 year-old sister, Helen Callahan and her husband Robert of Concord; and many nieces and nephews.

Graveside services and burial with military honors will be held Friday, July 10th at 2:30 PM at the NH State Veterans Cemetery in Boscawen.