Richard Lewis Stimson

October 15, 1925 ~ July 5, 2014

With rows of American flags "waving goodbye" on July 4, Richard L. Stimson,Äîa true WWII hero,Äîmarked a final Independence Day with his dearest friends ... and then passed away peacefully with them by his side the next morning, July 5, 2014, at the Salt Lake Veterans Home, at the age of 88.

Dick was born on October 15, 1925, in Salt Lake City, Utah, to William H. and Edna D. Stimson. Raised in humble circumstances during the Depression, he excelled at both Roosevelt Jr. High and East High School, graduating in 1943. He immediately began his college career at the University of Utah (U), where the admittedly "timid freshman" enrolled in the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP), which promised to fund his pursuit of an engineering degree in return for military service. Shortly after transferring him to Stanford's engineering school, the Army cancelled its ASTP program ,Ä¶sending the 19-year-old, who had expected to be in a university classroom, instead into the 100th Infantry Division foxholes of France! Private First Class Stimson, as a member of Fox Company, 398th Regiment, sustained severe injuries in battle in the freezing conditions of France's Vosges Mountains. He was awarded both the Purple Heart and Bronze Star for his meritorious service. He never complained about his wounds' lifelong effects, knowing he was one of only four boys from his platoon to even survive.

Returning to the U after the war, Dick graduated in 1949 with a degree in business marketing instead of engineering, as he was toldcolleges were producing too many civil engineers. He went on to successful careers in the insurance industry and sales, and as an astute, independent investor. Once retired,Äîwith his parents deceased and no immediately family,ÄîDick was encouraged by close friends Millie Hagen and Art Swindle to volunteer his time at University Hospital and the U's Health Sciences Center. There, serving weekly for more than 20 years, he developed treasured friendships with those who truly became his "family."

A quiet and unassuming man, Dick was happy to go unnoticed in a crowd and wanted few worldly possessions. Instead, he valued the "riches" of times spent with friends, including those he made at the SL Veterans Home, where he lived during the past five years. Dick loved golf, horses, travel, chocolates, a "Bull Market" (yes, Dick, you waited ,Äòtil it reached an all-time high!), Hires burgers, free coffee for seniors, and his Cadillac, the one thing he finally splurged on for himself (purchased used, of course!).

Dick was a Mason for many years, and a member of the 100th Infantry Division's "Sons of Bitche," recognizing a town they saved during the war. He was a member of the U's Health Sciences Council, President's Club (Benefactors), and John R. Park Society. He was recognized for his countless hours of volunteer service at U Hospital, and was honored by the U on Veterans Day 2005 for his WWII heroism. He received the U.S. President's Volunteer Service Award in 2002, and was honored by the VFW in 2010. His portrait, unveiled in 2000, hangs in University Hospital in recognition of his service and generosity.

Dick's frugality, foresight and concern for others ensured that upon his passing, the tremendous financial holding she built and saved throughout his life (which his low-key demeanor and modest appearance belied) will now beused as he wished: helping others! His bequest,ÄîamÂong the largest from an individual ever given to the U's Health Sciences,Äîwill create numerous Stimson Presidential Endowed Chairs, including those honoring his beloved parents. The permanent endowments will support faculty, education, research and patient care in the School of Medicine, Dept. of Orthopaedics and College of Pharmacy.

Dick will be deeply missed by his "family" of dearest friends,ÄîArt Swindle, Suzanne Pisciotta and Cathleen Frome,Äîwhose years of loving care, support and camaraderie enriched his life in countless ways, as well as many otherfriends and admirers. Warm appreciation is extended to the staff, volunteers and residentsof the SL Veterans Home, Dr. Thomas H. Caine and Brighton Hospice.

A graveside service with military honors will be held Thurs., July 10, at 11 am at Larkin Sunset Lawn, 2350 E. 1300 S., SLC, with prior visitation there at 10:15 am.