

## Donald James Petersen, 96

July 1, 1922 - July 2, 2018 ✓

**HARLAN** – Donald James Petersen, son of Charles and Edo Petersen, was born July 1, 1922 in Manning. In 1926 his father bought a battery repair business in Harlan where Don attended school until he graduated in 1940.

Don attended Iowa State until the war broke out. He enlisted into the Army Air Force and fought in the South Pacific as a navigator on a B-24. He accumulated 398 combat hours on 43 combat missions. When the war ended, he was discharged with the rank of first lieutenant. He then went back to Harlan and married Bonnie Petersen on March 23, 1946.

Don went back to college and earned a degree in aeronautical engineering. He spent an extra year in advanced education and then worked in Denver for Gates Rubber Co. for three years.

He and his family returned to Harlan where he joined the family business of Petersen Battery and Electric and remained there until he retired in 1982.

Don and Bonnie then started a business called Glass and Things making and selling glass display cases at various toy shows. They made over 700 glass cases which allowed them to travel over a a quarter million miles in a motor home, especially to see children and grandchildren.

Following his retirement from his second business, Don discovered audio books especially Louis L'Amour. The highlight of his later years was taking the WW II honor flight to Washington, D.C. in 2009 with his life-long friend, Glen French.

Don was a faithful student of the Bible all his adult life and was one of the early members of the Navigators. He was devoted to reading and memorizing Scripture. He also was a man of prayer and profound thankfulness.

Don died July 2, 2018, 1 day after his 96th birthday, at Elm Crest in Harlan.

Don was preceded in death by his parents and one brother, Robert. Don is survived by his wife of 72 years, Bonnie; four children: Rick Petersen (Patty) of Jacksonville, FL; Linda (Ben Post) of Harlan; Lori (Bob Simpson) of Austin, TX; Todd (Mary) of Harlan; nine grandchildren and 25 great grandchildren.

A memorial service was held Tuesday, July 10 at 11 a.m. at Grace Baptist Church in Harlan. Pastor Chad Hol and Pastor Dan Cox officiated. Military rites were given by Harlan American Legion Helmer Reyelt Post #150 and Shelby County VFW Post #941. Interment will be held at a later date in Rose Hill Cemetery, Kirkman.