



## Mr Donald George Rypka Sr.

September 4, 1922 - May 22, 2019

Donald G. Rypka Sr. passed away peacefully on May 22, 2019 at the age of 96. He was predeceased by his wife Marie Rypka. Born in Owatonna, Minnesota in 1922 to Walter F. Rypka and Francis Jasinski Rypka, Don volunteered for and served in the U.S. Army during World War II. He entered the Army in 1942 as a 20-year-old and was assigned to the 60th Engineer Combat Battalion, 35th Infantry Division of General George Patton's Third Army. Known as "Santa Fe" Division, they traveled some 1,600 miles in 10 months of almost continuous action, building bridges and repairing roads as allied troops moved forward. Arriving in Normandy shortly after D-Day, he participated in the major campaigns to liberate France, Belgium, the Battle of the Bulge and then into Germany. As a recognition of his service and in gratitude of his contribution to the liberation of France, the French government named him a "Chevalier" of the Legion of Honor, France's highest distinction, at a ceremony at the French Embassy in Washington in 2015. After the war he worked for a time at Josten's in Owatonna, then opened an antique shop in Middleburg, Va. His clients were numerous and varied, including Chief Justice Warren Burger. He later moved to Medford and Mount Laurel New Jersey where he eventually retired from AAA South Jersey. After retirement, he and Marie relocated to Chestertown 1989. Don served as a Eucharistic minister, lector, and intercessor at Emmanuel Episcopal Church for many years. Before that he did the same at St. Paul's Kent where he also made pastoral visits to the local nursing homes with a team of volunteers from St. Paul's, Kent.

Additionally, he was an active supporter and volunteer for the many Emmanuel parish ministries until his health prevented him from doing so. He was also active in the Kent County Historical Society for many years.

He is survived by his sisters Donna Mobley and Shirley Gaulke, his children, Ginny Lyn Gartrell, Donald G. Rypka Jr., LCDR William H. Rypka, USCG, Ret., four grandchildren, Michael, Sofia, Laura and Liam and one great grandchild, Michael.

A memorial service for Don will be held at a later date at Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Chestertown.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Meals on Wheels 200 Schaubert Road Chestertown, MD 21620, Homeports P.O. Box 114 Chestertown, MD 21620 or the Music Fund at Emmanuel Episcopal Church 101 N. Cross St. Chestertown, MD 21620.

Arrangements by Fellows Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home 130 Speer Rd Chestertown, Maryland 21620

Online condolences may be sent to the family at [www.fhnfuneralhome.com](http://www.fhnfuneralhome.com)

# Cemetery Details

## **St. Pauls Cemetery (Kent County)**

7600 Sandy Bottom Road  
Chestertown, MD

# Tribute Wall



“ *Mr Donald George Rypka Sr.*

October 26, 2023 at 06:42 PM



“ *Mr Donald George Rypka Sr.*

January 28, 2023 at 12:44 PM



“ *Mr Donald George Rypka Sr.*

January 28, 2023 at 08:03 AM



“ *Autumn Lake Healthcare At Chestertown lit a candle in memory of Mr Donald George Rypka Sr.*



**Autumn Lake Healthcare at Chestertown** - May 28, 2019 at 01:54 PM



“ *Chester River Health Foundation lit a candle in memory of Mr Donald George Rypka Sr.*



**Chester River Health Foundation** - May 23, 2019 at 08:38 AM