



Frederick W. Cowan

September 23, 1918 - February 24, 2015

CANAAN, VT – Mr. Frederick W. Cowan, 96, of Canaan, died peacefully at the Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital in Colebrook on Tuesday evening, Feb. 24, 2015, after a long period of failing health.

Fred was born in Lisbon Falls, Me., on Sept. 23, 1918. It was in the midst of the great Spanish flu epidemic of that year, and Helen (Caspar) Cowan left Portland to have her second child at the home of her parents. The son of Frank I. Cowan, a prominent attorney, Fred grew up in Portland and graduated from Deering High School.

Fred often recalled hiking in Maine and New Hampshire, with tales of wilderness camping in Pinkham Notch and skiing Tuckerman Ravine with a group from Deering High School. He knew Mount Katahdin well enough to once guide Maine's Governor Baxter, who preserved the area as a state park.

At University of Maine, Fred entered the School of Forestry, and prepared for his long career in the woodlands of New England and Québec. He joined the National Ski Patrol there also, beginning an interest he pursued into his 80s. Skiing continued to be his sport, but he also managed the university's track & field team.

Graduating in 1941, Fred was declared exempt from military duty, so he went

to work for the St. Regis Paper Company. He began his lifetime love of the northern forests when he was assigned to travel to Pittsburg, NH. There his lodging was often a tent, and his board whatever he could carry, as he cruised the forest.

After Pearl Harbor, Fred's military status suddenly changed, and he was assigned to the 87th Mountain Light Infantry Battalion. This predecessor to the 10th Mountain Division was sent to drive the Japanese out of Alaska's Aleutian Islands. Fred was later transferred back to the Colorado.

It may have saved Fred's life when he was reassigned to the 656th Topographical Engineers, since so many of his 10th Mountain unit perished in an Italian campaign. Fred was sent to Europe for surveying and mapping duties, often behind enemy lines. He also was a member of a small group that would climb mountains in Germany and Austria at night to set up radio beacons to guide British bombers on missions to Germany. Like many World War II veterans, these stories of his military experiences were suppressed for many years after he returned to his civilian occupations.

After the war Fred returned to work at the St. Regis office in West Stewartstown, NH. Getting involved with the local people, Fred met Joan Locklin, whom he married on April 1, 1950, beginning a marriage that lasted for nearly 65 years. Moving to Canaan, VT, Fred and Joan raised four children, and Fred became involved in local concerns, and served, at various times, as a Selectman, School Board Director, Water Commissioner and Town Moderator.

He was also actively involved in the Society of American Foresters, Canadian Pulp and Paper Association, the NH-VT Timberland Owners, and served as on Vermont's Fish & Wildlife Commission.

When the Wilderness Ski Area opened in Dixville Notch, Fred resumed activity in the National Ski Patrol and as a ski instructor there.

In 1973 he was asked to take over as Timberlands Manager for St. Regis, based in Bucksport, Me., where he remained for three years.

Early retirement from St. Regis brought him back to Canaan where he started a land-surveying business, eventually employing two of his sons.

Travel and learning about the history and cultures of foreign countries had always been a keen interest in common for Fred and Joan, so in semi-retirement and with the family grown, they began making frequent trips to more than thirty countries.

In later years Fred wrote weekly columns for the News & SENTINEL. He never seemed to run out of ideas for topics of interest to his readers and only gave up his writing when a long period of declining health made it easier to stop.

Survivors include his wife, Joan (Locklin) Cowan of Canaan; a son, Dr. Frank L. Cowan of Canaan; a daughter, Dr. Stephanie (Cowan) and husband Anthony Bellomo of Jericho, Vt.; son Jonathan Cowan and wife Dr. Julie Schubert Cowan of Bethel, Me.; and son Timothy Cowan and wife Sarah (Pollard) Cowan of Vergennes, Vt.; and his sister Cynthia Dunlap of Orono, Me. Fred took great pride in his five grandchildren: Brit Cowan of New York City; Seth Cowan of New York City; Hannah Cowan of Salt Lake City; Helen Cowan of Vergennes; and Peter Cowan, also of New York City.

Fred was predeceased by brothers Caspar and Douglas Cowan.

There are no public calling hours. A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, March 21, 2015, at the Grace Community Church in Canaan, Vt., with The Rev. Brendan Whittaker and Pastor Frank Sawicki co-officiating. An interment service with military honors will occur in the spring at the Canaan Village Cemetery, of which notice will be given.

Expressions of sympathy in memory of Mr. Cowan may be made to the 45th Parallel EMS, 46 Ramsey Rd., Colebrook, NH 03576.

Funeral arrangements in NH are under the direction of Jenkins & Newman Funeral Home in Colebrook.

Cemetery Details

Canaan Village Cemetery

Christian Hill Road, VT Route 253
Canaan, VT

Previous Events

Service

MAR 21. 11:00 AM (ET)

Grace United Methodist Church
Gale Street, VT Route 114
Canaan, VT

Tribute Wall

EP

“ *What a wonderful life and what wonderful memories you have of a remarkable man. Joan and family, my thoughts and prayers are with you. Elaine (Fauteux) Pinckney*

Elaine Pinckney - March 09, 2015 at 01:33 PM

SV

“ *I am sorry for your loss. I remember Mr. Cowan as was part of the Canaan landscape growing up and someone my whole family respected and considered a friend and an asset to our community. My thoughts are with you.*

Susan Fautex Verchot - March 09, 2015 at 11:38 AM

SC

“ *Please accept our deepest sympathies, Suzanne & David Cook*

Suzanne & David Cook - March 07, 2015 at 07:15 PM

SN

“ *Our deepest condolences to you Joan and all your family.*

Suzelle & Walter Noyes - March 02, 2015 at 06:07 PM

EW

“ *Our deepest sympathy to Joan and family. Fred will be sincerely missed.*

Ernest and Sharon Wiswell

Ernest Wiswell - March 02, 2015 at 03:34 PM

JF

“ His stories in the papers were and are to be preserved as they are a great look into the past. Enjoyed Fred when ever I was in the survey office, he had a lot of experience but also common sense! To the family -- you had him to share for many years and memories are something that have a value that cannot be measured. The deepest of thoughts at this time to all the family.

John A. Forbes - March 02, 2015 at 01:15 PM

AG

“ Joan and family, please accept our condolences at the time of your loss. May the good Lord provide you with the comfort that you need, and may you rejoice in happy memories of Fred. Lindsey and Ann Gray

Ann Gray - March 01, 2015 at 10:14 AM

JM

“ So sorry to hear this Mr Cowan was a nice man and I am sure he will be missed. My sympathies to the family RIP Mr Cowan...

Joanne Mathieu - February 27, 2015 at 12:16 PM

JM

“ The North Country has lost another great icon. Our sincerest condolences to the Cowan family.
Rest in Peace Fred.
John and Sue Morrissey

John and Sue Morrissey - February 27, 2015 at 08:08 AM

KB

“ Keith And Billie Brockney lit a candle in memory of Frederick W. Cowan



Keith and Billie Brockney - February 26, 2015 at 05:33 PM

KB

Our deepest sympathy to Joan and all the family.. X O

Keith and Billie Brockney - February 26, 2015 at 05:36 PM

EB

“ Prayers to Joan and her family in this time of sorrow. Fred was a staple in Canaan and will sadly be missed.

Edward Brousseau - February 26, 2015 at 11:02 AM

PH

“ My condolences to you, Joan, and to your family. Fred was a remarkable man and will be sorely missed by all. With prayers and sympathy, God bless

Patty Hart - February 26, 2015 at 08:37 AM

HH

“ Our deepest condolences to the family on your loss and our prayers are with you.

Haven & Peggy Haynes - February 26, 2015 at 05:29 AM

PD

“ Thinking of you, Joan...so sorry to hear about Fred's passing...

Peter and Deborah Dimmitt - February 26, 2015 at 05:11 AM