

FRIDAY, AUGUST 8, 2008



**Birger Rasmussen**

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WENDELL — Birger K.W. Rasmussen, 91, died on Tuesday, Aug. 5, at Rex Hospital in Raleigh. A native of Bergen, Norway, he immigrated to America in 1940 and was married for 33 years to the late Mittie Talton of Raleigh. He lived 69 years in North Carolina. Upon completion of his education, he served in the Norwegian Merchant Marine until his arrival in the United States. During World War II, he enlisted in the U.S. Army's 270th Division and was cited with the Bronze Star for his participation at the Battle of Wingen and during the subsequent Rhineland Campaign and the drive into Germany. He had circumnavigated the world several times before his 22nd birthday and spoke six languages. During the later months of WWII, he served as an interpreter in Europe. He was responsible for helping his mother and siblings become naturalized citizens of the USA in the 1950s.

He was a member of the Masonic Lodge, the Sudan Temple Shrine Club and the Rotary Club. He was a lifelong Lutheran and a founder of Ascension Church in Wilson. He also served as Commander of the Raleigh Flotilla of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary. He was a mechanical engineer by trade and taught that course of study at Wilson, Fayetteville, and Beaufort County Community Colleges. He was an avid ham radio operator and skilled craftsman in wood working. One of his favorite quotes to the 85 or so family members at all gatherings was, "If it wasn't for me, none of you would be here."

He is survived by his wife of 32 years, Mae; one daughter, Julie Johnson, of Wendell; three sons, Birger of Beaufort, S.C., John of Pensacola, Fla., and Erik of High Point. He also leaves 17 grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild. His sister, Ruth Karlsen, resides in Naples, Fla.

A memorial service will be held at Hope Lutheran Church in Wake Forest at 1 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 9. Visitation will be at the church beginning at noon.

In lieu of flowers the family has requested that contributions be directed to the Memorial Building Fund, Hope Lutheran Church, 3525 Rogers Road, Wake Forest, NC 27587.

Arrangements by L. Harold Poole Funeral Service and Crematory, Knightdale.

Condolences to the family may be made at [www.poolefuneral.com](http://www.poolefuneral.com) under Obituaries.