



# Donald Cote

AUG 6, 2009



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FUNERAL HOME AND CREMATORY

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## **Donald Cote**

AUG 6, 2009

**D**onald Roger Joseph Cote, age 90 of Pearland, peacefully passed away on August 6, 2009. He is preceded in death by his wife Opal, son, Roger Cote, stepchildren Marie Tholen Wolfe and Bernie Tholen. Parents Alfred and Williamina, brothers Roland Cote , Maurice Cote, Raymond Cote all of Livermore Falls ME; his sisters Irene Guiardini and Erma Campana, both of Haverhill MA. He is survived by his daughter, Virginia Lou Cote McKendree & her husband, Jim; grandsons, Lester C Harlow & his wife Debbie and Lt. James Cote McKendree, USMC; granddaughter, Janelle McKendree Hart & her husband Franklin; great-grandchildren, Andra Harlow, Theresa Poole and Franklin James Hart; sister, Vivian Dyer, brother Ted Cote both of Lisban ME. Many loving nieces, & nephews and a host of other family & friends.

Don was born on November 30, 1918 in Jay, Maine to Alfred and Wilhemina Neadeau Cote. He grew up in Livermore Falls, Maine until joining the service. Don proudly served his country during World War II from 1941-1945 in the US Army Air Corp. He served in the Battle of the Bulge, Normandy, St. Mere-Iglese, landing on D-Day invasion at Utah beach losing numerous friends along the way. Because Don was a talented linguist, he was dropped behind enemy lines and given a week to learn a foreign language before allied forces occupied the area. As an aerial photographer, he sat in the front glass portion of the war planes and took photos of cities after bombings. His pictorial works depicting the war can be found in museums throughout the country. He served as interpreter and was in the first group as the liberation of Buchenwald Concentration camp began. He never got over the horror of what one human being could bestow upon another. In recent years, Don was interviewed at the Holocaust Museum in Houston to speak about his experience as a liberator. He traveled back to France during the 50th year anniversary and was honored with a plaque from the city of St. Mere-Iglese.

In 1947, working as carpenter and millwright, he moved to Texas to help rebuild Texas City after the explosion. He worked at the Atomic Energy Plant and in the early years of NASA, he worked



as a contractor developing the weightlessness chamber. Don and Opal Haskins were married on September 13, 1953. In 1973, he established Don's Windmills; he and Opal worked the windmill business side by side and enjoyed many years of gardening together. They most enjoyed the family gatherings around the windmill pond catching catfish. Don was extremely proud of his family and especially enjoyed his grandchildren. He had many hobbies including reading, fishing, dancing, traveling, gardening, and the outdoors. Throughout the years, he and Opal had many friends and enjoyed playing dominoes or cards with them. Don took many trips through the years but especially enjoyed his travel with his faithful friends Doyle, Johnny, John, Jane and the Gibson and Brown families. He was self-educated and took the smallest amount of formal education he had and increased it a thousand fold. He could speak intelligently on many subjects and once taught about the early possibilities of wind power at the University of Houston. His windmills stand all across Texas and as far away as Africa.

Don lived in many different states including Alaska but always yearned for his home state of Maine. His French roots ran deep and in his last days spoke his birth language. The ones closest to Don saw his many years of struggle on the loss of his son Roger, but his family is especially blessed to have witnessed him give that up and acknowledge Christ. A special thanks to Mike Kolaski for listening to God and being the instrument to share Christ with Don, teach him to pray and lead him to acceptance. Don especially enjoyed his visits with Mike and Trish, Rev. Bob Joiner and Sam Granberry. Thanks to his loving care-giver Sylvia and to St Francis, Donnie, Betty, Judy, Bill, Sean, Joe, Barbara, Phyllis, Marty, Carolyn, Susie, Carla, Lynn, and Frank for your care-giving during these last months. To his loving sister Vivian, and other family Geoff, Bernice, Carol, Mo, Lori, Sue and Joe for making his last trip to Maine possible.

Visitation for Don will be on Sunday, August 9, 2009 from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm at Clayton Funeral Home. The Funeral Service will be held on Monday, August 10, 2009 at 10:00 am in the Clayton Chapel with full Military Honors. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to Opal Cote Memorial Youth Fund at First United Methodist Church Pearland.



## Tribute Wall

Donald Cote

LF

**Lisa Freudenburg** posted:

Don Cote was the most interesting man that I have ever met. Even though I considered him to be so wordly and out of my league...he always had time to spend challenging me to use my mind to ponder..."what if...have you ever thought of...do you think..."??? What an incredible gift he was. He was also a funny man and loved to make people laugh. I will never forget this man and will celebrate his life each and everytime I see a windmill beside a beautiful pond...for that is the memory that I feel he would like for us all to enjoy. God Bless Don Cote and his wonderful family. The world is a better place because of him.

August 8 at 7:00 PM

LS

**Lynn Shigekawa** posted:

Mr. Cote was a wonderful windmill expert who helped me during the time that I was development director at Armand Bayou Nature Center. When I called him in the 90's about working on an old windmill at the nature center farm site, he said that he was the one who had installed it in the 70's and he instantly recalled the windmill and its correct height and span. Thankfully he brought a slighter younger helper out to climb the tower and follow his instructions in the repair.He gave me a wonderful windmill model with an inscription on it to me that I still have and treasure.I never knew all these other wonderful things about him except that he dearly loved his wife and family.He was a very special person and a joy to know.

August 8 at 7:00 PM

PK

**Philip (Pepper) Kretzschmar** posted:

Don was a good friend and mentor to me starting in 1975 when he helped me with my first mill and advised me when I started my windmill business. So long Don... Pepper

August 8 at 7:00 PM

BK

**Bruce Koger** posted:

Don was a faithful friend to my dad, Bob Koger. We will miss him. Bruce Koger and family

August 8 at 7:00 PM



## Tribute Wall

Donald Cote



**Bill Knoph** posted:

Lou and Family,I offer my sincerest condolences for the loss of your family patriarch and WWII Hero. May your faith provide you with comfort during this difficult time.

August 7 at 7:00 PM



**Ed And Mattia Maldonado** posted:

Lou, Jim, Janelle, and James,We are so very sad to hear of the loss of your father and grandfather. May God's peace be with you as you go through these days. Our prayers are with you. Much love from all of us.

August 6 at 7:00 PM



## **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Donald by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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