

Ben Eiseman, MD

November 2, 1917 – November 19, 2012

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The family and friends of Ben Eiseman congratulate him on a long, productive, and adventurous life, well-lived.

Born on November 2, 1917 in St. Louis, MO, his formal education was marked by degrees from John Burroughs School (1935), Yale University (1939), and Harvard University Medical School (1943). Self-education never ceased.

He first served his country as a Lieutenant JG in the US Navy in 1943, on landing crafts as a beach battalion doctor and surgeon. He participated in the Anzio, Normandy, Peleliu, Philippines, and Okinawa actions.

In the days before the Invasion of Normandy, he met a young Englishwoman, Mary Georgina Harding, in Falmouth, England. They were married December 22, 1945. He also served in Viet Nam, and Operation Desert Storm. He retired from the Naval Reserves as a Rear Admiral in 1974.

As a surgeon, teacher, researcher, and mentor to generations of physicians, he led many and inspired others. He was the author or co-author of over 450 scientific papers and was principal editor of seven books on general surgery. He facilitated the training of medical students from many nations in American institutions, leading to the proliferation of medical knowledge throughout the world. For these efforts, he received numerous awards and honors, at home and abroad.

Professional leadership positions included many with the American College of Surgeons, the American Surgical Association, and the Society of University Surgeons, in addition to being the founding Chairman of the Department of Surgery of the University of Kentucky. Honoraria included fellowships of the Royal College of Surgeons of Thailand and the Royal College of Surgeons of England.

As a dedicated outdoorsman and community leader, his non-professional achievements included chairmanship of the Colorado Outward Bound School, the Kent School, and cofounding the Tenth Mountain Trail Association. The Ben Eiseman Hut outside of Vail was built in honor of his contributions to the Association.