

## DOUGLASS

Victor H. Douglass, 97, father to Dorothy Carol Osborne (Bob), Buddy (Carol Ann), Bob (Jane) and Paul (Carolyn) Douglass, died peacefully in his home July 17, 2009.

Born "on a dark and stormy night" in Blanket, Texas on December 28, 1911, he was raised in Ft. Stockton. His parents, Samuel and Emma Douglass, his brothers Ed and Sam Douglass, his sister Virginia Riordan and his wife of 59 years, Wayman "Robbie" Douglass, predeceased him. He and Sam co-founded Douglass Brothers Electrical Contractors and Malco, Inc. Vic was a Fellow in the Academy of Electrical Engineering. A member of Desert View United Church of Christ, he transferred his nearly life-long membership from Valley Congregational Church after its closure. He was a member of the Masonic Fraternity Lodge Number 1111 and rose to the position of Worshipful Master. On two occasions he ran as the Republican Candidate for the Texas House of Representatives against Malcolm MacGregor. He loved learning, graduating from Schreiner Institute in 1932 and briefly attending The University of Texas. He returned to academics to receive from UTEP his BA in English at the age of 79, and his MA in Independent Studies at 81. Until his death, he was the Manager of

the El Paso Chapter of NECA, faithfully reporting to work each week. He is survived by sisters Roberta Ten Eyck of Georgetown, Texas and Mary Carol Bair of Nashville, Tennessee, his 4 children and 8 grandchildren- Larry Douglass (Debbie) of Schertz, Texas, Chris Douglass (Mary) of Seguin, Texas, Laura Doolittle (Chuck) of Bedford, Texas, Lisa Brock (Jeff) of El Paso, Emily Douglass of Buckeye, Arizona, Kara Thom (Mark) of Savage Minnesota, Erin Bies (Thomas) of Coppell, Texas, and John David Douglass of Austin, Texas. He was blessed with 10 great-grandchildren and many treasured nieces and nephews. Gifts may be made to the Robbie Douglass Memorial Scholarship in Nursing, UTEP Office of Institutional Advancement, 500, W. University Ave., El Paso, Texas 79968-0524. Visitation - Wednesday, July 22, 2009 from 5:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m. Funeral Service - Thursday, July 23, 2009 at 9:30 a.m. Both at Kaster-Maxon Futrell, 8817 Dyer. Burial will be at Restlawn on Dyer.



Douglass

# Contractor who earned UTEP degree at 82 dies

By Sarah Tenorio

El Paso Times

EL PASO — Victor Douglass, a contractor who belatedly went to college and received a master's degree from UTEP at age 82, died Friday.

His family said it was old age. He was 97.

Douglass and his wife moved to El Paso in 1940. Upon his arrival, he worked for a contracting business. Five years later, he and his brother, Sam, started their own business, Douglass Brothers Electrical Contractors.

The business boomed for more than 40 years, during which time Victor Douglass tested himself in myriad ways.

He ran unsuccessfully for state representative in the early 1960s as a Republican. At age 58, he learned how to fly his own airplane, which he and his brother bought for their business. But family members said education was his true passion.

The brothers sold their business in 1989, and Victor Douglass enrolled at the University of Texas at El Paso. He received his bachelor's degree in English in 1992 at age 80. He went on to get a master's degree in interdisciplinary studies two years later.

Barthy Bird, associate professor of communication at UTEP, was his adviser. She said he walked into her office interested in a master's program, but he did not want to study just one subject. Byrd said she asked Douglass why he didn't just take whichever classes he wanted.

"He said, 'Because I want on my tombstone to say: Victor Douglass, B.A., M.A.' So he got it, with a couple of extra letters thrown in (M.A.I.S.)," for the interdisciplinary studies program.

His youngest son, Paul Douglass, said his father embraced college life. He recalled his father's phoning him at work to propose a trip to Belize.

"I said, 'Belize? Why?' And he goes, 'Spring break.'"

Paul Douglass, 64, an attorney, said his father instilled that same passion for education in his children, always subtly pushing them. He said his father persuaded him to attend law school.

Victor Douglass' daughter, Dorothy Osborne, 70, said that because he loved learning, he wanted everyone to go to school. He paid for his children's education, but didn't stop there.

She said he also helped put nieces, nephews and even neighbors through school.

Douglass is survived by three sons, Victor Jr., James and Paul; a daughter, Dorothy Carol Osborne; sisters Roberta Teneyck, Mary Carol Casner Bair; eight grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

Visitation will be from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. today at Funeraria Del Angel Kaster-Maxon and Futrell Funeral Home, 8817 Dyer.

The funeral will be at 9:30 a.m. Thursday at the same place. Burial will be at the Jardines Del Angel Restlawn Memorial Park Cemetery.