

FOSTER

El Paso has many legends and legacies. Among those making a lasting impression on the desert landscape was Charles Harding Foster. Many legendary figures who accepted the challenges of the El Paso desert moved into El Paso.



Charles Foster was born in Timber Lake, South Dakota on March 3, 1921, to Frank and Sarah Emily Foster. Charles majored in Electrical Engineering and graduated with the distinction of membership in Gold Key, an engineering school's equivalence to Phi Beta Kappa. Like other young men, he graduated early from South Dakota State University in order to join those serving in World War II. After his tour of duty in the Signal Corp at White Sands Missile Range, he was honorably discharged as a Captain from the United States Army in El Paso, Texas. Years later, he would confound his grandchildren by saying he worked on radar when it was so secretive that the Army spelled it backwards. In 1942, he married Rita O'Leary and with the responsibilities of a new family he responded to an ad in the El Paso Times to demolish two homes near Alameda Street. With his engineering ingenuity, he reasoned that if he could demolish a house, he could build one, too. From this simple endeavor, he founded a small construction company, Foster Homes, and later created Foster Capital Corporation and Foster-Schwartz Development Corporation among other successful enterprises with Mr. I. T. "Mickey" Schwartz and other business associates, such as, Walter Driver and Jonathan Rogers. With a hard working crew and faithful office staff of many years, Mr. Foster built thousands of homes and developed 15 square miles of property to extend the American dream of home ownership to many in the southwest. Through his professional efforts, he leaves a lasting footprint on the desert after creating or expanding such areas as Foster Heights, Loretto Addition, Tejas Addition, Vista Hills, Tierra de Estes, Thomas Manor, and Vista Del Sol. Charles Foster's professional accomplishments and leadership include President of the El Paso Homebuilders Association, a Board

Member of the National Home Builder's Association. He has served on the boards of the State National Bank, MBank, Pan National Group and was a Founder and Director of Bank of the West where he served for years helping advise other businesspersons develop their career dreams. He was Founder and Director of Rocky Mountain Mortgage. For over 45 years, his name has been synonymous with quality construction and forward looking development in El Paso. His handshake was his word. Charles Foster, known as "Chuck" among his friends and Tuesday Nighters, is preceded in death by his brothers, Vernon and Vinton Foster, and his son Timothy Charles Foster. His legacy continues through the lives of his loving wife of 65 years, Rita Foster, their eight children who include Sandra Foster Wilcox and her husband James Wilcox, Carol Foster Ikard and her three children, John Charles Foster and his wife Jan Foster and their four children, Susan Foster and her two sons, Nancie Foster Brown and her three children, Tim Foster and his two children, and Mary Rita Foster and her son. In addition, there are six great grandchildren. He has a nephew, Leonard Foster of Richardson, Texas. The family would like to acknowledge the wonderful care provided by Dr. Branch Craig, Dr. Howard Pease, Pela Cobbs and Joe Torres. Visitation will be held Friday, April 25, 2008 from 5:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. with a Rosary at 7:00 P.M. at Martin Funeral Home West. A Funeral Mass will be held Saturday, April 26, 2008 at 9:00 A.M. at St. Matthew Catholic Church, 400 W. Sunset Dr. with Msgr. David Fierro officiating. Pallbearers are Frank "Trey" N. Ikard, III, Charles Foster Ikard, Benjamin Bohannon, Matthew Bohannon, Ryan Brown, Justin Brown, Michael John Foster, Drew Foster, and Robert Price. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Daughters of Charity's St. Vincent de Paul Store, 6018 Doniphan El Paso, Texas 79932. Interment will follow at Memory Gardens of the Valley in Santa Teresa, NM. Services entrusted to Martin Funeral Home West, 128 N. Resler, El Paso, TX 79912.