

## Major General Hugh F. Foster, Jr.



**March 2, 1918 to  
December 13, 2004**

Major General Hugh F. Foster, Jr. (U.S. Army, Retired), of Furlong, died Monday, Dec 13, 2004 at his home. He was 86.

Born in Brooklyn, New York, he was the son of the late Hugh F. and Martha (Reiners) Foster, and the older brother of Albert L. Foster.

One of his proudest achievements came early in life, when he became an Eagle Scout in the 1930's.

General Foster graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point in 1941 and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Signal Corps.

His first assignment was as a platoon leader in the 4<sup>th</sup> Signal Company, 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, at Ft. Benning, GA, where he trained 17 Comanche Indian soldiers to be codetalkers.

He was the last surviving non-Native American to have actually participated in the development of American Indian spoken codes for military use. Though he left the division before it deployed overseas, the code system he developed was used by the codetalkers in combat from the beaches of Normandy to war's end in Europe.

A World War II veteran of five North Africa and Italian campaigns, General Foster met his future wife and best friend, then-Lieutenant Mary Jane Schneider, Army Nurse Corps, while stationed at Camp Crowder, MO. They were married on July 21<sup>st</sup>, 1946 at the Cadet Chapel in West Point.

General Foster taught electrical engineering at both the U.S. Military and Naval Academies, commanded the 63<sup>rd</sup> Signal Battalion in Salzburg, Austria, was the Chief of Operations Research at the Army's Communications Electronics Proving Grounds in Fort Huachuca, AZ, served on the Army General Staff in the Pentagon, was the Project Manager for several major military communications systems in Europe, the Far East, and Southeast Asia, was the Chief Signal Officer for all U.S. Forces in Korea, and commanded the Army's 1<sup>st</sup> Signal Brigade in Vietnam. He culminated his 34 years of dedicated military service as the Commanding General of the U.S. Army's Electronics Command and Fort Monmouth, NJ in 1975.

A graduate of the Army Command and General Staff School and the Army War College, General Foster also held a Masters Degree in Engineering from Purdue University. While at Purdue, he was inducted into two engineering honor fraternities: Sigma Xi (Scientific Research) and Eta Kappa Nu (Electrical Engineering). He was also a graduate of the Advanced Management Program at the Harvard University Graduate School of Business Administration.

General Foster was awarded the Army Commendation Medal twice, the Legion of Merit four times, and the Army Distinguished Service Medal for his service in Vietnam, as well as several foreign decorations. In recognition of his work with the codetalkers and his support of the Comanche Nation he was made a Comanche blood-brother.

His service to his country and community did not end with his retirement from the Army. He was a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Disabled American Veterans, the American Legion and the Vietnam Veterans of America – his reason for joining was to continue to support soldiers and veterans. He helped design the unique World War II memorial at the Bucks County Courthouse and was also among the veterans who persuaded the county in 1990 to restore the water flow to the World War I memorial. General Foster was a frequent speaker at local groups on a variety of topics ranging from his experiences with the Comanche codetalkers to the history of Army railway hospital and ambulance trains. He was a consultant for the National Parks Service project to restore an Army ambulance train – he demanded that his payment be limited to “one dollar a year.”

Throughout his life, he dedicated himself to his country, community, and family. He was proud to be a Mason. Living the ideals of West Point – Duty, Honor, Country – in every facet of his life, he epitomized the honorable values of the West Point Corps of Cadets, and left this life with his reputation untarnished and unsullied in all aspects. He was truly a good man.

Though preceded in death by a son, Harry D. Foster, he is survived by his beloved wife of over 58 years, Mary Jane Foster; their two sons Lieutenant Colonel (Ret) Hugh F. Foster III of Carlisle, PA, and Lieutenant Colonel (Ret) Robert J. Foster and his wife JoAnne of Stafford VA; their daughter-in-law Christine Kirk Foster of Ringwood, NJ; his brother, Albert L. Foster of Jenkintown, PA; and three grandchildren: Captain Robert L. Foster, Kate E. Foster, and Brianna C. Foster.

Viewing will be at the Shelly funeral home, 1460 Easton Road in Warrington from 3:00 – 5:00 PM on Jan 2, 2005. The United Veterans Organizations of Doylestown will provide an Honor Guard. A Masonic service will be held at 4:45 PM. Burial with military honors will be conducted at the United States Military Academy with a service at the Cadet Chapel at 1:30 PM on Jan 3, 2005, followed by interment in the West Point cemetery.

His family asks that mourners consider making a donation in his name to a veterans' organization or to one of the organizations dedicated to helping our wounded soldiers, such as The Wounded Warrior Project, or Comfort for America's Uniformed Services Elite – CAUSE.