

# Maj. Gen. Edwin Warfield III dies at 75

## Scion of Md. family commanded Guard, served as delegate

By **FREDERICK RASMUSSEN**  
SUN STAFF

Maj. Gen. Edwin Warfield III — a retired adjutant general and commander of the Maryland National Guard whose family's military tradition dates to the American Revolution — died yesterday morning of congestive heart failure at St. Agnes Health-Care. He was 75.

General Warfield's military career spanned nearly

four decades and included surviving four days on a life raft after the P-51 Mustang warplane he was piloting was shot down over Japan during World War II.

In civilian life, he had been board chairman and chief executive of the *Daily Record*, which was founded by his grandfather, Edwin Warfield, who was governor of Maryland from 1904 to 1908. From 1963 to 1970, General Warfield served as a Howard County Democrat in the House of Delegates.

The scion of an old and powerful family in Maryland, General Warfield was "born to  
[See Warfield, 7A]



1974 PHOTO

**Fighter pilot:** Maj. Gen. Edwin Warfield III was shot down in World War II.

# Ex-adjutant general, Edwin Warfield III, dies

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wealth, bred for responsibility and geared for excitement," according to an unofficial biographer. The son of Edwin Warfield Jr., a banker and publisher of the *Daily Record*, General Warfield was reared at Oakdale, the 20-room Warfield mansion in the rolling countryside of western Howard County.

He remembered visits to Oakdale by his cousin, Wallis Warfield Simpson, with whom he later danced at the Belvedere Hotel in the 1950s, when she and her husband, the Duke of Windsor, visited Baltimore.

After graduating in 1942 from Kent School in Connecticut, he dropped out of Cornell University at age 18 and enlisted in the Army Air Corps.

In a mission over Japan in July 1945, in the closing days of World War II, General Warfield's P-51 Mustang fighter was hit by ground fire. He managed to keep the plane in the air about 50 minutes before ditching in the Pacific.

He spent four days in an open life raft existing on rations of water and candy bars, of which he limited himself to three bites a day.

He later attracted the attention of a Navy patrol plane with a hand-held signal mirror.

"I focused it on the setting sun and pointed it toward the plane," he told *The Sun* in a 1980 interview. "The plane banked, turned and flew directly over me. A crewman waved. I cheered. I waved. I even saluted."

The Navy submarine *Haddock*, alerted by the patrol plane, rose from the depths and later rescued him.

"I was always intrigued by airplanes and the military gave me a tremendous opportunity to fly everything from propeller planes to jet fighters," he said. "My affection for the military started with my experience with aviation."

General Warfield's penchant for flying earned him the nickname of "Wings," and until two years ago he was still flying a Cessna 182 to his winter home in Naples, Fla.

He kept the plane on the grounds of Oakdale, where he had a smaller home built after the historic mansion was sold in the early 1970s. Earlier this year, he moved to Waverly Woods Condominiums in Sykesville.

General Warfield earned a bachelor's degree in agriculture from the University of Maryland in 1950. Also in 1950, he joined the 104th Tactical Squadron, which he went on to command. He was later promoted to brigadier general before commanding the Maryland Air National Guard. After receiving a second star, he was named adjutant general of Maryland in 1970, by Gov. Marvin Mandel.

Within months of his promotion, General Warfield was confronted with demonstrations against the Vietnam War that swept the University of Maryland at College Park. Maryland National Guard troopers were sent to the university and stayed until 1972.

General Warfield said that the local unrest did not result in deaths of protesters at the hands of Guardsmen as it did at Kent

State University in Ohio because Maryland's National Guard observed military discipline and did not load their rifles.

"I always admired his courage. He'd go in alone to talk with the students and always tried to reason with them at the same time maintaining a sense of calm," said Maj. Gen. James F. Fretterd, who served as General Warfield's chief of staff and is the state adjutant general. "When the troops were later withdrawn, not a shot had been fired, property damage was minimal and not a life was lost."

In 1972, when the unrest subsided, General Warfield told reporters: "This riot has interfered with my corn-planting. The kids are through, and I am through. I think the trouble is over for this year and possibly for good."

In 1971, he described the Maryland National Guard as a "white man's army" and made minority recruitment a priority. By 1979, the Guard's enlistment of minority members had risen to 44 percent.

With his gray hair, deep blue eyes and wide dimpled smile, General Warfield was an imposing figure who stood 6 feet 3 inches tall.

"He could be large and intimidating at first, if you didn't know him," said General Fretterd. "We've lost a great leader, friend and American."

Said Mr. Mandel: "He was a very friendly, fun-loving man who was always a pleasure to be around. He was the kind of man who knew how to make friends and keep them."

In 1982, the National Guard base at Martin State Airport in Middle River was named for General Warfield.

He remained chairman emeritus of The Daily Record Co. until the family business was sold in 1994 to Dolan Media.

He was a member of the Warfield Commission that studied higher education in Maryland and the Governor's World War II Memorial Commission.

An avid golfer, General Warfield was a member of the Maryland Club, South River Club, Sons of the American Revolution, Howard County Hunt Club and the Bachelors Cotillion.

His 1947 marriage to the former Carol Horton ended in divorce. In 1967, he married the former Ellen "Niki" Owens.

He was a communicant of St. Andrew Episcopal Church in Glenwood, Howard County.

He was also a communicant of St. John Episcopal Church, 9120 Frederick Road, Ellicott City, where services will be held at 10 a.m. tomorrow.

In addition to his wife, General Warfield is survived by two sons, Edwin Warfield IV of Palm Beach, Fla., and John W. Warfield of Boulder, Colo.; three daughters, Elizabeth W. Harding of Accokeek, Diana W. Daly of Baltimore and Karen Tuxill of Ellicott City; two sisters, Louise Warfield Stump of Cockeysville and Katherine Warfield Merryman of Butler; and nine grandchildren.

Memorial donations may be made to St. Andrew Episcopal Church, Glenwood 21738.

Library researcher Paul McCardell assisted with this article.