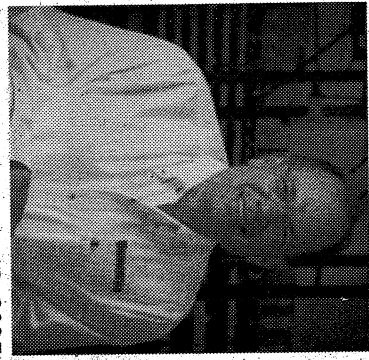


Frank Royce Brownell III



June 24, 1940-June 18, 2025

A native Iowan and lifelong resident of Montezuma, Frank Royce Brownell III passed away on June 18, 2025, after a lengthy illness. He was a week short of 86 years old. Funeral services will begin at 10:30 a.m., Saturday, July 12, at Community Hope Church in Montezuma. Visitation will begin after 12 p.m., Friday, July 11, at Community Hope Church, with the family present from 4-8 p.m., to greet friends and relatives. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Brownells Foundation or DMO (Des Moines Metro Opera), Holland-Cole Funeral Home of Montezuma is in charge of arrangements.

During his active career spanning almost 60 years, Frank became a well-known, beloved figure in the gun industry. He frequently welcomed long lines of friends at the Brownells booth during annual industry gatherings like SHOT Show and

Board, a position he remained in until his passing.

Frank Brownell was a Navy veteran, a business leader, and a stalwart supporter of our unique American rights guaranteed by the Second Amendment. An industry innovator, he helped establish Brownells as a nationwide legacy retailer in the gunsmithing, gun parts, and firearms space. He helped advance the best model for working with and developing endemic industry media. He advocated for elevating gunsmithing to a respected profession and created new ways to support and develop the growth of gunsmithing, gun ownership, and gun culture.

Above all else, Frank Brownell was a devoted husband, father, and grandfather. He is survived by his sons and their spouses: Bob and Braedi, Pete and Helen, and Matt and Jodi. He is also survived by six grandchildren: Alex, Mairead, Aidan, Ruari, Jake, and Kyle. Frank's sister, Lynne and her husband Andy Boysen also survive him, along with several nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Nancy, his parents, Bob and Lois, and his sister, Diana.

only son of Brownells founder Bob and wife Lois, Frank grew up in Iowa and became involved in both the family business and the American gun industry at an early age. In 1957, Frank appeared on the cover of the February issue of American Rifleman, photographed hunting mule deer near Devils Tower in Wyoming.

Frank graduated from the University of Iowa in 1961 with a degree in advertising in the School of Journalism, Magna Cum Laude, and married his college sweetheart Nancy Denton. Shortly after the wedding, Frank reported to his Navy duty station aboard the USS Caliente AO-53, a fleet oiler based out of Long Beach, CA.

One of Frank's first jobs for Brownells was shortly before he left the Navy in 1964. With the USS Caliente in port for overhaul in Portland, OR, Frank took leave and drove with wife Nancy to Los Angeles, CA, to work in the Brownells booth at the NRA Annual Convention and Meetings. One of the products he helped market at the show was the new Latigo Sling, a rifle sling Brownells still sells to this day.

Upon completing his military service, Frank joined Brownells full time in 1965, with his first major project laying out Big Book Catalog #18. Frank was active in all parts of the business, and helped publish the first of the Gunsmith Kinks series of books in 1969 under the name F.