

## **The Executive and Fixer Upper**

### **Philip Gardner Buffinton (ACAS 1962)**

**1923-2016**

If something was broken or did not work correctly, Philip Gardner Buffinton could fix it. Graduating with a mechanical engineering degree from Massachusetts's Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI), Buffinton would eventually retire in 1987 as State Farm Fire and Casualty Company's executive vice president and chief operating officer.

Buffinton was born on October 18, 1923, in North Adams, Massachusetts, to Arthur, a history professor at Williams College, and Mary (Edwards) Buffinton. In 1942, he enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps, piloted B-24 bombers and was lead pilot for 19 missions during World War II. He married Rita Gagnier in 1945 before graduating in 1949 from WPI.

His career began as a fire protection officer for the Factory Mutual Insurance Companies in Boston. In 1961, he became vice president at State Farm Fire and Casualty Company in Bloomington, Illinois. After retirement, he was a consultant for the General Reinsurance Corporation.

Buffinton died August 25, 2016, in Bloomington. He is survived by his wife of 71 years and three daughters, one grandson, two great grandchildren and siblings.