Gottlieb Christian Friesinger II died July 28, 2012, at age 83 in Nashville after a brief illness. He was born in 1929 in Zanesville, Ohio, where he graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Muskingum College in 1951 before attending the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. After graduating Alpha Omega Alpha in 1955, he spent 16 more years in Baltimore (with 2 years off for service in the US Marines) as resident, chief resident, fellow, and faculty member in the newly constituted Cardiovascular Division led by Richard Ross. He was recruited to head the Division of Cardiology at Vanderbilt in 1971 where he served as Chief until 1990, continued as a full-time member of the faculty until 2002, and then spent 40 hours a week as a volunteer to mentor the faculty and fellows until a few weeks before his death.

I had the good fortune of a 56-year friendship that began on July 1, 1956, when Bud Friesinger was my resident on Osler 2 on my first day of internship. He had immeasurable patience and maturity and was fond of quoting philosophy, invariably appropriate to the situation at hand, and a consummate and caring clinician. During that month he diagnosed bacterial endarteritis complicating patent ductus arteriosus in a febrile young woman with a heart murmur, and with infinite patience he convinced me that the murmur was indeed continuous. I doubt that many cardiologists could make that astute diagnosis today without the help of echocardiographic imaging.
While an Osler Resident in January 1960, Bud was called to the Johns Hopkins Accident Room (precursor of the Emergency Room) to treat a man with chest pain who had collapsed while removing his shirt. An electrocardiogram (ECG) revealed ventricular fibrillation. Osler Intern Victor Marder performed “closed-chest cardiac massage” while Bud retrieved a defibrillator with which he restored a life-sustaining cardiac rhythm after delivering 2 counter shocks. The post-resuscitation ECG revealed an acute anterior myocardial infarction, from which the patient recovered and lived for 2 additional years.

Before that time and for many months afterward in many institutions, emergency (and unsterile) thoracotomy, manual cardiac massage, and application of paddles on the heart to deliver countershock were performed on victims of cardiac arrest, and there were few survivors. The case cited above required more than 20 minutes of external chest compressions while Bud “borrowed” a 200-pound defibrillator from Professor William Kouwenhoven’s 11th floor animal research laboratory after obtaining a key from the security police. Closed-chest cardiac massage and the external defibrillator had been developed in Kouwenhoven’s laboratory and this episode was documented in his landmark article titled “closed-chest cardiac massage” in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (July 1960).

Bud was the founding director of the Coronary Care Unit at Johns Hopkins Hospital in 1967 and participated in the National Institutes of Health Myocardial Infarction Research Unit; the Hopkins MIRU was one of the first 5 units funded by the NIH.

After moving to Nashville in 1971, he expanded the Cardiovascular Division from 4 to more than 20 members and helped develop programs to foster recruitment of minority faculty and women in academic medicine. After stepping down as Chief in 1990, his successor as Chief of Cardiology at Vanderbilt was Rose Marie Robertson, who at that time was one of the very few women directing academic cardiovascular programs.

In 1979 Bud spent a sabbatical year in Baltimore, in Kiichi Sagawa’s laboratory studying left ventricular function and the interaction between cardiac contractility and the myocardial pressure-volume curve. During that year he stayed with Richard Johns whose wife Carol was serving as Acting President of Wellesley College. The two temporary bachelors involuntarily re-enacted many of the episodes featured in Neil Simon’s *The Odd Couple*. Bud was banished from kitchen duties after volunteering to load the dishwasher after dinner when it was noted the next morning that the cups and glasses were upright and full of soapy water. Dick Johns had assumed that Bud would have had at
least some experience loading dishwashers after 27 years of married life, but was sadly mistaken.

While in Nashville, Bud served on the Board of Trustees at Johns Hopkins University, and he was a consultant to the NIH, the Rand Corporation, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. He was a Master in the American College of Physicians and the American College of Cardiology. He was honored in 2000 by his Vanderbilt trainees who founded the Gottlieb C. Friesinger II Society that continues to meet yearly with a mission to promote medical education and encourage interchange between current and former fellows and faculty. The Society endowed a Gottlieb C. Friesinger chair in 2005.

Bud’s Midwestern roots were deeply planted in Zanesville, Ohio. When I drove through Zanesville on Route 40 in 1967 on my way from Baltimore to my new position in California I was startled by a large sign over a roadside building proclaiming “Gottlieb C. Friesinger and Sons, Blacksmiths.”

The shop had opened in 1891 and is still operated by a 4th-generation Friesinger. However, the last horse was shod in 1938 and the last wagon was repaired in 1964. The shop is now called Friesingers, Inc., and Bud’s nephew utilizes some of the same tools and techniques used by his ancestors to fabricate award-winning decorative metalwork.

Bud grew up with and married Janet Anderson Moorehead in Zanesville in 1952, and they produced three daughters, Gretchen, Allison, and Kristin, and son Gottlieb Christian Friesinger III (a Cardiologist in Nashville); there are 6 grandchildren.

The two pictures of Bud shown above were taken during my first and last meetings with Bud, 55 years apart; the lack of visible ageing is remarkable and emblematic of his maintained mental alacrity. He was my lifelong friend and role model, and godfather to two of my sons.

John Michael Criley, MD