



Mr. Bernard Lee "Bernie" Allen Ph.D.

July 19, 1937 - July 20, 2020

A passionate educator, historian and loving husband and father, Bernard "Bernie" Lee Allen, Ph.D., age 83, passed away at his home on July 20, 2020. Dr. Allen was born on July 19, 1937, in Kincheloe, Harrison County, West Virginia. He was the son of the late Forest Reger Allen and the late Christine Virginia (Davis) Allen.

Dr. Bernie Allen graduated from Weston High School, Weston, WV, in 1955 where he played football, basketball, and baseball and was awarded the American Legion Citizenship Award as a senior. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration at West Virginia University (WVU) in 1959 and served WVU student body treasurer. He also earned a Master of Arts degree in Philosophy at Southern Illinois University in 1964 and a Doctor of Philosophy degree in History at WVU in 1971.

In August 1963, Dr. Bernie Allen began a career in teaching which spanned fifty years, and began at Weston High School. Forty-eight of those years were teaching at institutions of higher education, including West Virginia University at Parkersburg (WVU-P), Horry Georgetown Technical College, and Coastal Carolina University. As an author, he wrote four books, including Parkersburg: A Bicentennial History; The Wood County Poor Farm Property: A Brief History, 1798-1986; Compassion: A History of the Henry Logan Children's Home (Established 1884); and Where It All Began: The Story of the People and

Places Where the Oil and Gas Industry Began - West Virginia and Southeastern Ohio (co-authored with David L. McKain). He contributed to numerous periodical articles about the history of West Virginia and the Mid-Ohio Valley.

In 1996, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching selected Dr. Allen as the state of West Virginia's Professor of the Year while he was serving as a Professor of History and Philosophy at WVU-P. Upon his retirement in 1999, WVU-P dedicated a classroom in his honor. During Dr. Allen's last 13 years of teaching, he taught as a Teaching Associate at Coast Carolina University and at Horry Georgetown Technical College. He was a member of St. Anne's Episcopal Church in Conway, SC, West Virginia Army National Guard veteran, and a member of the Sons of the American Revolution.

Dr. Allen is survived by his wife of 56 years, Forrest (Potts) Allen; his son, Dr. Benjamin Allen of Sacramento, CA; his daughter, Asheley Allen Hayes and her spouse, Reid Hayes of Charlotte, NC; his two granddaughters: Caroline and Olivia Hayes of Charlotte, NC; his sister Shirley A. Eskew of Pittsburgh, PA; his brother-in-law, Charles K. Potts of Adelaide, Australia; and six nieces and two nephews.

Funeral services will be privately held at the funeral home. Anyone who wishes to view the service via Webcasting, please contact the funeral home at 843-248-4211 for the link.

The family asks that donations be made to St. Anne's Episcopal Church, PO Box 752, Conway, SC 29528.

Please sign the online guestbook at www.goldfinchfuneralhome.com

Goldfinch Funeral Home, Conway Chapel is serving the family.

Cemetery Details

Greenlawn Memorial Park

Columbia

Tribute Wall

JM

“ Dr. Allen! What can I say!! You never needed to buy the textbook in his classes. You had to be there for his presentation. He would sometimes dress up in character, pretty sure he had an Army uniform. He made intelligence cool. Bachelor's in Business, Masters in Philosophy, and a Doctorate in History. What did he want to be when he grew up? A CF for the NY Yankees! God speed Dr. Allen

Jay Morgan - December 05, 2023 at 10:01 PM

BD

“ Bermie and I have been friends since 1956 when I enrolled at WVU. Over these many years we have kept in touch. I enjoyed his friendship very much. Bill Douglas-Dean Emeritus- CPASS- West Virginia University.

Bill Douglas - July 19, 2021 at 10:38 AM

DC

“ Bernie was such a sweet, gentle person. I always enjoyed seeing him and Forrest at church. Bernie was the type of fellow who would ask how you are and then actually listen and reply to what you said. A conversation with Bernie, and with Forrest, was always a delight. He had a lovely sense of humor. I will miss him. God bless Forrest and all the family.

Donna Catton-Johnson

Donna Catton-Johnson - November 04, 2020 at 09:34 AM

RN

“ I still remember my father (Bob Nutter) and I hanging out with Dr. Allen and Ben. It doesn't seem like it was that long ago. I still have the copy of his Parkersburg Bicentennial book he gave me. You have my deepest condolences.

— Robert Nutter

Robert Nutter - September 13, 2020 at 02:37 PM



“ Dr. Bernie will be missed. Thanks for touching so many lives.

Gregory Johnson - August 03, 2020 at 10:44 PM

DJ

“ Dear Forrest and Family,
Our lives are so much richer by knowing Bernie! What a legend he lived! We enjoyed playing bocce with him! Love, Diane and Horace Jones

Diane Jones - August 02, 2020 at 08:28 PM

RA

“ My sincerest condolences for your all's loss. Dr. Allen taught me the (2) survey American History courses from PCC @ Parkersburg South High School 1983-1984. I still remember some of the "historical trivia" that he passed on to us. I recall him as a true gentleman and scholar that inspired me to pursue a degree in History, and to always be mindful of the joy and privilege of learning. I have been a Lawyer now for 26 years, and I count Dr. Allen as a critical foundation piece in whatever success I now enjoy.

God Bless you and your family.

Ryan N. Armstrong

Ryan N. Armstrong - July 31, 2020 at 05:39 PM

JH

“ My wife joins me in sending the family our sympathy in Bernie's passing. When I joined the WVU history department in 1968, Bernie was one of the graduate students I encountered, either that year or soon thereafter. I believe I was a reader on his dissertation on John Dewey, and although I didn't see him often after he left Morgantown, I was pleased to follow his very successful and productive career. Again, I was so sorry to learn of his passing yesterday. Jack Hammersmith

Jack Hammersmith - July 31, 2020 at 12:46 PM

CH

“ Dr. Allen was my professor for two history classes as well as a philosophy class at WVU-P. I think of him every time I pass by a little cemetery in Vienna where he had our whole class out one afternoon 30 years ago searching for the rumored grave of Horatio Gates. I adored Dr. Allen and was in awe of his historical knowledge of the Parkersburg area. I still chuckle when I think about his pronunciation of the Rio Grand (or the 'Rye-o Grand' as he called it). Dr. Allen was adored and revered by so many people in the Parkersburg area. He was an absolute gem.

Thank you Dr. Allen for making the world a better place and for igniting a love of US history in so many of your students. We are blessed to have known you. You will be missed.

My deepest, most heartfelt condolences goes out to his wife and children.

Christina F., Houston, TX

Christina - July 29, 2020 at 11:44 AM

JL

“ *Bernie was an inspired teacher and historian. He taught college credit classes at Parkersburg South High School when our children were there and all of the students that had him came away from his classes excited by history the way he taught it. At that age that was a remarkable achievement.*

He was a member of our church, The Memorial Church of the Good Shepherd and Bernie, Forrest, Benjamin and Ashley were greatly missed when they moved to North Carolina. We were lucky to have had their family in our parish.

While we are glad for his life, we are grieving with the family at his passing and will get some comfort in knowing he is healed and whole now.

John and Carol Lathrop

John & Carol Lathrop - July 27, 2020 at 04:43 PM

AB

“ *Several years ago Bernie taught classes at Coastal in the Ollie program. He was fun and had lively discussions and sometimes wore costumes, I remember something like a Daniel Boone hat. He always worked a mention of West Virginia into the discussion. He was a nice man.*

ANN M BONIFACE - July 26, 2020 at 04:17 PM

MK

“ *I will miss talking history and football with Bermie after church. He was a very kind and interesting man.*

Michael Krug - July 25, 2020 at 11:47 AM

NM

“ Bernie was such a delightful colleague at Coastal and fellow parishioner of St. Anne’s. I will remember his warmth and wit for a long, long time.

Nelljean McConeghey - July 25, 2020 at 10:53 AM

MG

“ Dr. Allen was the Dean of Instruction at the then Parkersburg Community College (later West Virginia University at Parkersburg). I always found him to be a kind person who was always ready to offer advice and moral support. I have missed him since his retirement. Dr. Allen you and your family are in my prayers. May you rest in peace.

Dr. Marshall Griffin

Marshall Griffin - July 24, 2020 at 02:11 PM

DL

“ I had the good fortune to have Dr. Allen for several classes at WVU-P. History was (and is) my favorite subject. Dr. Allen captivated us with his vast knowledge, his expert storytelling, his flair for the dramatic (we always wondered who he was going to dress up as next!), and his unwavering kindness and humanity.

For one of my history classes, Dr. Allen required us to read I, Claudius. I devoured it and thus began my lifelong obsession with ancient Roman history. I will be forever in his debt for that.

My thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends.

Dino Lyons

Dino Lyons - July 24, 2020 at 10:05 AM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Mr. Bernard Lee "Bernie" Allen Ph.D..*



July 24, 2020 at 09:56 AM



“ *What a delight seeing you both on Sunday's at Saint Anne's. Such glorious impressions you've left Bernie. Peace to you, Forrest.*

Dr. Jen Boyle - July 23, 2020 at 07:47 PM




“ *Dear Forrest and family,*

Michael and I are very sorry for the loss of Bernie; he will certainly be missed by our St. Anne's community. Father Rob's sermon stated it best, Bernie was a "gentle man". We enjoyed interacting with him very much and will miss his smiles and his dapper outfits. We wish you peace as you grieve and many happy memories to comfort you.

Mary Jo (and Michael) Roberts

Mary Jo Roberts - July 23, 2020 at 04:47 PM

 Darrell Groves

“ *Bernie and I first met in 7th grade. At that time he was the go to guy for the statistics of any team sports known to man. We played sports together, we graduated high school together, and later we attended WVU together. Bernie was a person that I can truly say there is no adjectives or synonyms needed to describe him beyond that he was an intelligent and good person. He was my friend and I will sorely miss him.*

Darrell Groves - July 23, 2020 at 03:07 PM

MB

“ *Dr. Allen was the Vice President of the Colonel Lemuel Benton Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution when he passed. He had served the Chapter faithfully for a number of years. He was always ready to share the story of his patriot ancestor Ensign Anthony Reager of the 13th Regiment, Virginia Continental Line. Our entire Chapter is grieved by the loss of our compatriot, but are fortunate to have known such a kind man and true American Patriot.*

*-Matthew M. Breen
President, Colonel Lemuel Benton Chapter*

Matthew Breen - July 23, 2020 at 02:13 PM

MH

“ *Dr. Allen was my instructor for Local History of Parkersburg at PCC. He was one of the educators I was privileged to have. His love for WV was expressed in his method of teaching. We not only had lectures, but we visited many landmarks in our city we never knew existed. I will never forget his fervor for making us understand the importance of knowing about the history around us. I know he made a difference in my teaching methods. Sincere condolences to his family at this time. He made a difference in so many students that were privileged to have him. Millie Hall*

Millie Hall - July 23, 2020 at 01:42 PM

SC

As a colleague, Dr. Allen always had my respect. He was always a gentleman and was concerned with the success of the college and the welfare of other faculty. His love for Wood County and West Virginia was ever-present as evidenced by his years of research and writing. He was a mentor and role model to many.

Stanley Coberly - July 23, 2020 at 04:00 PM

EG

“ *Most sincere condolences to the Allen Family. Dr. Allen was my first college professor while I was a senior in high school, and was a true pillar at PCC/WVUP. To this day I remember lessons learned from him, and the breadth and depth of the countless students he impacted is remarkable. Forever grateful for having him been a part of my academic life and as a friend too. Rest in peace.*

Eric Gumm - July 23, 2020 at 12:28 PM

DB

“ *Dr Allen I am sorry to hear of your passing I was a student of yours for at least 3 years and I enjoyed every second of your lectures..your dress up was awesome too.May God Bless you sir and your family and to help them heal and have peace... 🌹*

Deborah Balsler - July 23, 2020 at 11:59 AM

CJ

“ *Dr. Allen was my first college professor and the best!. I enjoyed the experience and took three of his classes. He talked with love of his family and truly enjoyed life. So thankful to the family for sharing him and with thoughts to all the family now at this time. Peace be with you.*

Carol Jackson - July 23, 2020 at 09:42 AM

EL

“ Evelyn, Walt, Andrew, and Chris Laux purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Mr. Bernard Lee "Bernie" Allen Ph.D..



Evelyn, Walt, Andrew, and Chris Laux - July 23, 2020 at 12:47 AM

RB

“ Another PCC/WVUP student of Dr. Bernie Allen. I will never forget the first day of Ethics class.... when he came into the room and jumped up on his desk.... with a devils mask on.... it only got better from that point. I also took his philosophy class (where on the first day he acted like one of the students) and LOVED every second !!! What a man/ educator. I also remember figuring out I graduated with his son Ben while taking one of his classes. He talked about you Ben :) My sincere sympathy to all of the family.... he will be missed but his memory will live on in every single person he influenced, encouraged or taught. Rest In Peace.

Ramona Blevins - July 22, 2020 at 11:14 PM

FB

“ Bernie and I started 1st Grade together and graduated Weston High in 1955 in Weston, West Virginia. I am heartbroken....Frieda Short Bartlett

Frieda Short Bartlett - July 22, 2020 at 09:57 PM

JE

“ We were so sorry to hear of Bernie's passing. He was so loving and thoughtful. I so enjoyed seeing and talking with him at church. May God give you all peace and comfort during this time. Our thoughts and prayers are with you. Much Love, The Ennis' ”

Jennifer Ennis - July 22, 2020 at 07:36 PM



“ Arch and I are so sorry for your loss. Bernie was a great man, father and husband. His quest for learning and teaching was remarkable. ”

Jenny Fowler - July 22, 2020 at 07:26 PM

JY

“ Dressed in his kilt, Bernie entertained Quakers at Five Rivers Meeting: he wore the kilt with aplomb and was the first real life kilt wearer I, Judith Yarbrough, had ever been next to. In fact, all of us in the Meeting hoped Bernie and Forrest would join us permanently - but they didn't. Bernie was an American of first-rate caliber: a man of integrity and humor who wrote of what he knew (not what he thought he knew) and who was open and honest with us all. P.S. to Forrest: Grace, Shelly and I would love to have you visit with us via Zoom...just contact our Clerk Grace Gifford. We love and respect you and Bernie and grieve with you for the loss of him. ”

Judith Yarbrough - July 22, 2020 at 07:05 PM

CD

“ I knew Dr. Allen both personally and professionally. I am so sorry to hear of his passing. He was an outstanding historian and humanist. Charlie Delauder past President of the West Virginia humanities council. ”

Charles Delauder - July 22, 2020 at 06:48 PM

JE

“ I was one of Dr. Allen's students at WVU-P many years ago. I enjoyed his history classes so much, and the talks with him as well. He was a wonderful teacher!
Jennifer Efaw, St. Marys, WV.

Jennifer L Efaw - July 22, 2020 at 06:42 PM

GU

“ To the family but especially Ben, may God bkess you with strength and courage during this time. Bernie was a remarkable and accomplished man and husband and father we will all miss him.
Love Geoff Elisabete and Malachai

Geoff Urbanik - July 22, 2020 at 05:14 PM

JB

“ A great colleague for over 30 years at WVUP. His distinguished career was spent doing what he loved; bringing history alive in the classroom. RIP

Joseph L. Badgley

joseph L. badgley - July 22, 2020 at 04:20 PM

TF

“ Growing up in Parkersburg, as a friend of Ben, Bernie Allen's impact was huge in the community. He was well loved and an extremely bright light. My warmest and most sincere condolences to the Allen family.

Tracy Farrell Farson

Tracy Farson - July 22, 2020 at 03:24 PM

CA

“ Dear Allen Family,
I am another former student who was inspired by Dr. Allen's gifts and talents as an educator. I was also privileged to meet his family when I became their babysitter. I know you have many wonderful family memories to comfort you.

With sincere sympathy,
Cheryl Middleton Ankrom

Cheryl Ankrom - July 22, 2020 at 03:16 PM

KD

“ Forrest, you are the woman Bernie loved. Yes, he was accomplished and academic. More than that, he was protective of you and a gentleman. “Take care of her,” he would say at the gym. We enjoyed our chats.
Please know that we are thinking of you.

Kathy and Mike DiMarino
Fit4Everyone

Kathleen DiMarino - July 22, 2020 at 02:30 PM

MN

“ Dr. Bernie Allen was my favorite history teacher that I ever had. Not only that, but one of my favorite teachers that I EVER had. I had Dr. Bernie Allen at WVU-P. I will never forget my first day in his class there. I always sat in the front on the right side of the classes that I took as a non-traditional aged student (...old, LOL). He entered into the auditorium through its entrance and as he walked down toward the stage telling us about the Vikings, he took off his suit jacket and tie. Hmmm...? And when he arrived at the front of the stage, he began unbuttoning his shirt! What?? I got nervous and thought maybe I shouldn't sit in the front of this class! Then he dramatically pulled open his shirt showing his Pittsburgh Pirate t-shirt and shouting, "If you want to know what the Vikings were... they were PIRATES!!!" LOL!!! I always sat in the front of his class and even took a second history class of his that I wasn't required to take. The way he taught history was so inspiring. Dr. Bernie Allen taught how events were connected and why they happened. It made events so much easier to understand and remember. And he also acted in other funny ways that also helped me remember things. I have bragged about him ever since I had him as my teacher. I earned my teaching degree in mathematics, but he impacted the way I taught. It was sad to hear that Dr. Bernie had passed on. My prayers go up for all of his family and friends. He will be missed.

Mrs Karen S Noel - July 22, 2020 at 11:10 AM

LD

“ Asheley and family,

I am so sorry to hear of Dr. Allen's passing. I, too, was in his history class at WVU-P. On those warm afternoons (summer school) in August, he made history come alive! I still remember some of the things he taught us and actually shared one with my granddaughter recently, I only wish we had more like him in higher education.

You are in my thoughts and prayers during this time,

Dr. Linda Dunlap

Linda Dunlap - July 22, 2020 at 10:43 AM

DK

“ *I am from Parkersburg/Vienna WV. I am a petroleum geologist now living in Chapin, SC. While I didn't know Dr. Allen personally, I can tell you he was a legend in the area of academics and history. From his obituary, his scope of impact was much broader than I knew. God rest his soul.*

Donald C Kesterson - July 22, 2020 at 09:33 AM

WW

“ *I had Dr. Allen as a professor in the mid 90's and, as I'm sure many will say, was one the most well liked of the way I faculty at WVU-P (and probably everywhere else he taught). He taught history like he was just telling a story and kept his students captivated. He will be missed.*

William Wells - July 22, 2020 at 05:16 AM

VP

“ *Dr. Allen was my favorite professor at WVU-P, he taught me so much and always made learning fun! I am so saddened to hear of his passing. Prayers for peace to his entire family.*

Valetta Pepper - July 22, 2020 at 12:20 AM

RE

“ *We are so sorry to hear this sad news. We will miss this special member of the St. Anne's family.*

Graham and Rhonda Gore Etherden

Rhonda Etherden - July 21, 2020 at 08:41 PM

SS

“ *He was one of my best customers and a great friend Steve Sands*

Steve Sands - July 21, 2020 at 04:39 PM