



Franklin Smith

October 27, 1926 - March 5, 2014

Myrtle Beach...Franklin J. Smith's journey ended on March 5, 2014. The journey was long and fruitful. It was a journey marked by resolute determination, perseverance and hard work. It was a journey that encompassed the joys, disappointments, rewards and heartaches of a full rich life. It was a journey sustained by faith and family. It was a journey that exemplifies the meaning of life.

His journey began in Hazelton, Pa. on October 27, 1926 when he was birthed by Frances Rabon Tolman; however, he was nurtured and raised from an early age in Socastee by Edgar and Laura Smith. His adolescent years were similar to many poor Southern children raised on farms; material comforts were in short supply but he was sustained by family, faith and the hope of something better.

He graduated from Socastee High School in 1945. After graduation he served in the Air Force and Merchant Marines. Upon returning home he began earning a living and raising a family. Opportunities for a high school graduate were limited but he was never without a job and he lived the American dream in that he worked to make a better life for himself and his children.

He met the love of his life, Elnita Jones, and they were married in 1950.

Together they forged a living and raised a family. He worked with the Tyson & Van sign company for many years before moving into various sales positions.

He worked for the Top Value Trading Stamps Company for fifteen years and finished his career as an independent salesman. In addition to his "day job" he

and Elnita owned and operated the Beach Plaza Motel and "Gator Golf" miniature golf in Myrtle Beach for more than 20 years. They sold the Beach Plaza and Gator Golf in the mid 80's. After selling the motel they moved back to Socastee, living in Watson's Riverside for a few years and then at 5807 Highway 707. It was appropriate that he spent his final years in Socastee- the place where he started.

Work defined his life and he never really retired. He was a born salesman and was always on the lookout for a product that he could sell. In his later years he was marginalized by the internet and dismayed by the technological revolution. Selling in person was his talent and it was no longer needed. Once his traveling sales days were over he fulfilled his need for conversation by having regular yard sales at 5807 Highway 707. He and Elnita were well known in the Socastee area for having the best yard sale around. Embodying the sentiment that Stevie Wonder sang about in the 70s- "her clothes are old but never are they dirty"- their merchandise was old and used but it was always clean and neat. They provided a need of the community and had many regular customers.

Elnita was unexpectedly taken from him in 2005 and his world was turned upside down. He was fortunate a few years later to meet a wonderful woman, Oneita Fowler, who agreed to become his wife. Elnita would have approved. He was a member of the working class. He achieved a respectable level of economic success given his educational limitations; however, his greatest successes were in the areas that mean the most- faith and family. He was a member of the Socastee United Methodist Church for more than 80 years and served in many capacities at the Church over the years. He earned the respect of friends, relatives, Church members and business acquaintances and raised three children to be responsible and respectful citizens. He encouraged his children to get the education that he never had.

His life is a testament to the view that every man is an end in himself and not a replaceable part. He was steadfast, honest and dependable; characteristics that are the bedrock of southern culture. He was never in the corporate world,

never in politics and never aspired to any social hob-knobbing. One of his many virtues was the way he accepted and embraced his fate. It was a fate that George Eliot paid tribute to in the last paragraph of the novel "Middlemarch": "For the growing good of the world is partly dependent on unhistorical acts; and that things are not so ill with you and me as they might have been, is half owing to the number who lived faithfully a hidden life, and rest in unvisited tombs". He lived a faithful life far from the spotlight but have all benefited from him and his kind. You may visit his tomb at Socastee United Methodist Church.

We cannot all be the performers. We cannot all be the leaders. Most of us are just ordinary and that is not something to be ashamed of. The measure of a man is how he deals with his talents and limitations. He made the most of what he was given. He lived his life with dignity, faith, quiet determination and measured pride. He was a common working man like the millions of others that have come before and will come after him. His character, successes and struggles are a testament to the nobility and grandeur that can be found in the life of the "little man".

He was predeceased by his wife of 55 years Elnita Jones. He is survived by his wife, Oneita Fowler Smith; his children- Brenda Bellamy and her husband, Ted; Gwen Owens; and Frank Smith Jr. and his wife, Ree, six grandchildren and one great grandchild. In lieu of flowers memorials may be made to the Socastee United Methodist Church.

Funeral services will be held 3:00 PM Saturday at Socastee United Methodist Church with Rev. Ray Smith officiating. Burial will follow in the church cemetery.

The family will receive friends one hour prior to the service.

An online guestbook is available at www.goldfinchfuneralhome.com

Goldfinch Funeral Home, Conway Chapel is in charge of arrangements.

Cemetery Details

Socastee United Methodist Church Cemetery

5575 Dick Pond Road
Myrtle Beach, SC 29588

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 8. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

Socastee United Methodist Church Cemetery
5575 Dick Pond Road
Myrtle Beach, SC 29588

Service

MAR 8. 3:00 PM (ET)

Socastee United Methodist Church Cemetery
5575 Dick Pond Road
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Tribute Wall

AB

“ I'm so sorry for your loss. Please accept my deepest sympathy. May you find comfort from your memories, as well as God's word the bible. Why do people we love die? Romans 5:12 says: "That is why, just as through one man (Adam) sin entered into the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men because they had all sinned." How loving of God to promise what is found at Revelation 21:4 which says, "And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away.”

A. Bell - April 03, 2014 at 07:24 AM

SM

“ Dear Brenda,

I am so sorry to hear about your dad. I do not know your brother and sister, but you were my nursing instructor when I was in school. I always bumped into your mom and dad at the many garage sales we all attended. I used to take my grandmother, Mazie Milligan, and Aunt, Isadora Bellamy, every Saturday. Boy, those were happy times and memories I would not take anything for. Every time I saw your dad, he gave me a hug, and I always told him just how much he reminded me of my daddy, Ray Watts. He passed away in 1988, and there is never a day that goes by that I don't miss him. With every hug your dad gave me, it seemed as though I was receiving a hug from my daddy again. It was always such a pleasure to run into him at church, yard sales, the grocery store, or just anywhere. The last time I saw your dad was at the Socastee Heritage Festival. The world has lost a wonderful man, and you a wonderful dad. Keep your memories close. They will always make you smile, even when your heart is broken. My prayers are with you and your family. Sheri Mathis



sheri mathis - March 09, 2014 at 09:43 AM

AD

“ *I did not know Mr. Smith but after reading his amazing and touching obituary I was moved to tears. I wish I had known him. I pray for him and his loving family. With my sincerest condolences. Ann*

Ann Dunham - March 08, 2014 at 01:30 PM

JS

“ Dear Gwen and Brenda,
Our thoughts and prayers are with you now. Your dad was a remarkable man with a good heart. I knew him for 16 years and remember well the times he came to the church office, never knowing what he might have on his mind, weather we should run or stay put. He always spoke his peace and kept us in line at his beloved church. On a personal note, I said to him one day, Frank, I need a bike just to ride to get a little exercise. So, he sold me a bike. I should say he gave me a bike. His memory will live on with us.
Much love to you and family, Joy and Jay

Joy & Jay Robertson, Sec. of SUMC - March 07, 2014 at 10:16 PM



“ Sacred Cross Bouquet was purchased for the family of Franklin Smith.



March 07, 2014 at 06:41 PM

FA

“ Dear Frank and all of the Smith family,
Please know our thoughts and prayers are with you. Having grown up playing basketball on every open driveway we could find, I remember Mr. Smith was always glad to have us around. After reading his life journey I am humbled to have known him. I know he has passed his love of family and work ethic onto his children, May God Bless you.



Felix & Nita Ayres

Felix Ayres - March 07, 2014 at 04:27 PM

DW

“ Dear Gwen, Brenda, and Frank, Our hearts were touched to read of your Dad's journey. I am so thankful for the many years knowing him, your dear Mom, and spending nights at the Smiths. I always remember breakfast and how pleasant Mr. Frank and Mrs. Elnita were as they served all of us before school. I loved the boiled eggs and crispy bacon with orange juice. Will never forget because it was one of my favorite places aside from my own Home. Over the years, we would frequently bump into Mr. Frank at various locations around the area while he was busy selling face-to-face and he was always so glad to see us and to talk of my parents with a smile. I know you will all miss him so much and Socastee will miss that dear man. We are a better community for having been touched by Mr. Frank. May he rest in peace for a job well-done on this earth. Our prayers are that your hearts will find comfort and peace. With Much Love, Debbie Ammons Wolfe and Mark Wolfe

Deborah Ammons Wolfe and Mark Wolfe - March 07, 2014 at 12:01 AM

WU

“ RIP Airman !!!!



Wayne Williams - USMC - March 06, 2014 at 07:17 PM