



Wilford Harrelson

June 25, 1922 - December 6, 2014

Colonel Wilford LeRoy Harrelson, Jr. US Army, Retired, 92, died Saturday December 6, 2014. He was a former newspaper editor and publisher, public relations and marketing executive and gubernatorial press secretary. Colonel Harrelson was born in Marion, S.C., the son of the late Dr. W. LeRoy Harrelson, first Mayor of Myrtle Beach, S.C. and the late Harriett Foote McKnight Harrelson. The family moved to Myrtle Beach in 1927 where Dr. Harrelson, doctor of pharmacy, opened the first pharmacy on the Grand Strand, Delta Drug Company. A 1939 graduate of Myrtle Beach High School, Colonel Harrelson was a graduate of The Citadel, class of 1943. He received a Master's Degree in journalism from the University of Wisconsin. He was a graduate of the School of Financial Public Relations, Northwestern University Chicago campus. Colonel Harrelson received an honorary doctor of letters degree from The Citadel in 1996. He was a recipient of the Order of the Palmetto, the State's highest honor for community and state service, awarded in 1974 by Governor John C. West. Colonel Harrelson's military service began upon graduation from The Citadel and included 10 years of active duty, Regular Army, and 25 years in the Army's Active Reserve.

As an Infantry Company Commander, airlifted from Okinawa, he was among the first troops beginning the Occupation of Japan in September 1945. He later served as public affairs officer at the Japanese Prefectural (State) level. He served the office of General Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers and Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Far East Command, as

aide-de-camp to the Chief of Staff Major General Paul J. Mueller. He is believed to be the last surviving member of General MacArthur's personal office during the Occupation of Japan.

Assignments which followed include, during the Korean War, the personal staff of General J. Lawton Collins, U.S. Army Chief of Staff and branch chief in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Office of Public Information, Washington, D.C. He left active duty in 1953, and entered the Army's Active Reserve. Colonel Harrelson was editor and publisher of the Myrtle Beach News, with his wife Harvey as women's editor, for five years in the mid 1950's, before becoming press secretary and administrative assistant to then Governor Earnest F. Hollings. He was vice president public relations, Citizens and Southern National Bank of South Carolina; becoming in 1967 vice president, Public Relation West Point Pepperell, Inc. international textile manufacturing company. He established W. LeRoy Harrelson Associates, Inc. Public Relations and Marketing firm in 1971, based in Columbia, S.C. Colonel Harrelson became vice president, public affairs, for the Christian Broadcasting Network based in Virginia Beach, VA in 1980. This included return trips to Japan and other countries of the Far East. He retired in 1985, moving to DeBordieu Colony near Georgetown. Colonel Harrelson was particularly active in alumni affairs of The Citadel. He served as alumni member of the Board of Visitors, during the presidency of General Mark Clark; president of the Association of Citadel Men, now the Citadel Alumni Association; and founder of The Citadel Alumni Public Relations Advisory Council. He was founding vice president of The Citadel Development Foundation in 1960, serving its first 11 years and continuing as a director; having served as director emeritus of the succeeding The Citadel Foundation. He was president of the Citadel Club of Washington, D.C. and co-founder of the Citadel Club of Metropolitan Tokyo during the Occupation of Japan. Colonel Harrelson served as president of the Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce during the mid-1950's, chairman of the post Hurricane Hazel Horry County Beach Preservation Association; and also was a 57 year member of Rotary

International. He served as president of the Columbia, S.C. Rotary Club and member in Norfolk, V.A., West Point, G.A., concluding in the Georgetown Rotary Club.

He has served as chairman of the American Cancer Society. He has also served as elder in Presbyterian churches in Myrtle Beach, Pawleys Island, Columbia and West Point, G.A. He was communications consultant in the founding of Trinity School for Ministry Anglican Seminary in Ambridge, P.A.; and a member of the founding committee of the annual S.C. Governor's Prayer Breakfast. Since retirement in 1985, Colonel Harrelson has served as a director of Peoples Federal and First Federal Savings and Loan Association (South State Bank). He was also a member of the Horry Georgetown Technical College Foundation Board and a member of the Pawleys Island Presbyterian Church. Colonel Harrelson was pre-deceased by his wife of 62 1/2 years, Harvey Newsom Harrelson and sister Mary Elizabeth Harrelson Hinson of Myrtle Beach.

He is survived by three sons. W. LeRoy Harrelson, Jr. of Conway; James Newsom Harrelson (Grace) of Boone, N.C.; and Calhoun Harrelson (Julie) of Murrells Inlet, S.C.; and five grandchildren: Abigail, Andrew, Margaret, Katherine, and Julian Harrelson.

A memorial service will be held at 11:00 AM Wednesday December 10, 2014 at Pawleys Island Presbyterian Church. Rev. Frank Holsclaw will be officiating. Burial will be private. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be sent to Operation Christmas Child, c/o of Samaritan's Purse, PO Box 3000 Boone, NC 28607.

Sign a guestbook at www.goldfinchfuneralhome.com.

Cemetery Details

Ocean Woods Cemetery

2408 S. Kings Hwy
Myrtle Beach, SC 29577

Previous Events

Service

DEC 10. 11:00 AM (ET)

Pawleys Island Presbyterian Church
9967 Ocean Hwy
Pawleys Island, SC 29584-7415

Tribute Wall

HT

“ Dear Cal, Roy & Jim
Sorry to only just learn of your father's passing. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family. Col Harrelson was a true Southern Gentleman and a dear friend of my family! He will be dearly missed by all that knew him.
Harvey & Lesa Terry

Harvey Terry - December 16, 2014 at 11:11 PM

CC

“ Dear Jim,
May the Lord's comfort fill you, and your dear ones. I thank God for your faithfulness in honoring your father's legacy. In Christ we are more than conquerors, Romans 8.
Fraternally, Carlos Castaneda.

ccastaneda - December 11, 2014 at 04:13 PM

HS

“ Cal, Roy, and Jim -- My heart aches with the loss of your sweet father. He was my boss, the head of the A-Team, at CBN back during the 1980s and we remained friends through the years. He impacted my life and the lives of many, many others for good by his gentle witness of Christ's faithfulness.
Cal, thanks for the reminder that when he closed his eyes on Saturday, one minute later, he opened his eyes to see Jesus. What a beautiful and comforting thought!
Love to all the family, Helen Spore, Virginia Beach, VA

Helen Spore - December 09, 2014 at 09:54 AM

DH

“ I was honored to visit Mr. Harrelson several times in the last year and talk with him about Operation Christmas Child. He was a fine, godly man and I came away each time having been strongly encouraged. My prayers are with you.

Diane Hutto, Operation Christmas Child Volunteer

Diane Hutto - December 09, 2014 at 08:24 AM

SB

“ Jim and Grace and family: Our thoughts and prayers are with you. What a heritage you have Jim!! What an amazing life your Father lived! Blessings to you and your brothers and families. We love you, and may God be your comfort in your loss. We will be holding you up in our prayers. Susan and Jack Bechtel

Susan Bechtel - December 09, 2014 at 06:42 AM

DS

“ Cal and Julie, so sorry for your loss. We were amazed at all the accomplishments of your Dad. You must be so proud to have been raised by what sounds like one of the most accomplished men of his time. Much love to you and your family, Donna and Daryl

Donna Raye Skeen - December 08, 2014 at 03:53 PM

PB

“ So sorry to hear about Roy. He was a true southern christian gentleman. Your family will be in my prayers.

Patricia Byrd - December 08, 2014 at 09:14 AM

OW

Like a song that remains in the heart when the music is playing no more, Like a fragrance that stays in the air where a flower has blossomed before, Like a star that continues to glow long after the breaking of dawn, The ones we have loved remain with us still, and the beautiful memories go on. May you find comfort, strength, and peace in the knowledge that love is eternal. With my deepest sympathy and love, Olin.

Olin Franklin Williams

Olin Franklin Williams - December 09, 2014 at 09:03 AM

WU

“ RIP Soldier !!!!



Wayne Williams - USMC - December 08, 2014 at 09:12 AM

MM

“ *Deepest condolences to the family of Colonel Roy Harrelson, who was a very dedicated Christian gentlemen.*

Mary Jane Magrath - December 08, 2014 at 08:25 AM