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Dan R. Simpson

Feb. 20, 1927 - Jan. 24, 2015

Daniel Reid Simpson, 87, of East Point Road at Lake James, died Saturday, January 24, 2015 after a courageous battle with Lewy Body Dementia.

Born in Glen Alpine on February 20, 1927, he was the son of the late James Reid Simpson and Ethel Newton Simpson. After graduation from Glen Alpine High School at age 16, he joined the Army and fought with MacArthur's forces in the Philippines, and served in the occupation forces in Japan. Upon his return, he attended Wake Forest University where he obtained his undergraduate and law degrees in 1951.

After passing the North Carolina Bar Exam, Dan returned to Morganton, where he married his love, Mary Alice Leonard, who became his wife for the next 63 years; and set up his law office, where he would practice for the next 50 years.

Mr. Simpson believed in civic responsibility and community service. He served as Burke County's State Representative for three terms, elected in 1957, 1961 and 1963; and he served as Burke County's State Senator for six terms, elected in 1985, 1987, 1989, 1991, 1993 and 1995. One of his proudest achievements was introducing, and shepherding through to passage, the bill that created Western Piedmont Community College.

He also served as an Alderman and as Mayor of the Town of Glen Alpine, as a Burke

He also served as an Alderman and as Mayor of the Town of Glen Alpine, as a Burke County Criminal Court Judge, and as a member of the N.C. Courts Commission and the N. C. Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Dan served as a North Carolina Delegate to the Republican National Conventions of 1968 and 1972.

Realizing the necessity for activities for youth, Mr. Simpson joined with several other civic leaders of the Glen Alpine area to form the Glen Alpine Recreation Foundation in the mid-1960s, to create opportunities for kids to play football and baseball in a structured environment. This organization is still continuing and expanding its mission 50 years later. In 2007, the Foundation named its athletic facilities "Simpson Field" in his honor.

Dan is survived by his wife, Mary Alice Leonard Simpson, of the home; his daughter, Mary Simpson Beyer and husband Richard of Morganton; his son, James Reid Simpson II and wife Lannie of Morganton; and his daughter, Ethel Barie Simpson of Boone. He is also survived by his brother, James Abernathy Simpson.

He is survived by eight grandchildren: Kate Beyer Haas and husband Tyrone; Elizabeth Beyer; Caroline Beyer LaCalamito and husband Michael; Daniel Reid Simpson II; Elliott Simpson Todd; James G. Simpson; Mary Helen Simpson; and J. Reid Simpson III; and great-grandsons Beyer Simpson Haas and Hughes Reid Haas.

The family will receive friends at Sossoman Funeral Home in Morganton from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. on Monday, January 26, 2014. The funeral will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, January 27, 2015, at Morganton First Baptist Church, with Dr. Thomas A. Bland, Jr. and Dr. Bob D. Shepherd officiating. Interment will be at the Glen Alpine Cemetery following the service.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Burke Hospice and Palliative Care, Inc., 1721 Enon Road, Valdese, NC 28690 or to the Glen Alpine Recreation Foundation, c/o Glen Alpine Town Hall, P.O. Box 898, Glen Alpine, NC 28628.

Sossoman Funeral Home and Crematory Center is assisting the family with the arrangements.

Tribute Wall



–Anonymous