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Dr. Gerald "Jerry" Fulenwider McBrayer

Jan. 30, 1934 - Feb. 27, 2019

Dr. Gerald "Jerry" Fulenwider McBrayer, 85, passed away peacefully under the excellent care of Burke Hospice on February 27, 2019. He was born in Reidsville, NC to Gerald Sr. and Sarah Hubert McBrayer on January 30, 1934, graduated from The University of North Carolina School of Dentistry and married Helen "Audrey" Graham of Liverpool, England in 1959. As a dentist, Jerry served in the US Naval Dental Corps and later joined the private practice of Drs. Coffey, Falls and Derricks of Morganton, NC in 1961.

In 1963, a hobby begun with his father, making lamps out of salvaged wagon wheel hubs, led to the founding of Knob Creek Home Furnishings. For the next 45 odd years McBrayer rode the ebb and flow of the furniture industry, the last 20 of which as proprietor of Finders Keepers: an antique import and retail business, which provided further outlet for Jerry's visionary entrepreneurism, boundless energy and business acumen. Trust in this, these endeavors are but mere highlights in a storied career better suited to the pages of a voluminous biography than the brief summation appropriate to this notice.

He served on the boards of numerous local and national organizations including North Carolina National Bank, Outward Bound, Foothills Mental Health, Western Carolina Foundation, Western Piedmont Community College Foundation, and the

Carolina Foundation, Western Piedmont Community College Foundation, and the Business Advisory Board of Appalachian State University. He was an active member of Grace Episcopal Church, serving on many committees and the vestry over the years.

His many professional accomplishments and charitable works aside, he would have most liked to be remembered as excelling in the arts of fellowship, joviality and kindness. He was a hail- fellow-well-met whose numerous travels and interests earned him a host of friends across three continents and the former prison colony of Australia.

He was a stalwart friend to many, the well trained and obedient spouse to his wife of 60 years, a captain of industry, and a dutiful servant to his adoring children.

To say Jerry lived a life of intellectual curiosity and artistic endeavor defies the limits of understatement. He read voraciously, wrote memoirs with abandon, and would dive into conversation like it was a pool of cool water on a hot summer's day. His crowning achievement in the arts was an astonishingly prolific, late-in-life renaissance as a painter, primarily inspired by the works of Vincent Van Gogh. His love of the arts combined with his penetrating and genuine interest in the lives of others left all who knew him frequently charmed and often captivated by his depth of presence and his agreeable good character.

In his off hours, Jerry enjoyed bacon (both foreign and domestic), was known to take a drink, and never refused his ear. God bless him.

He leaves his wife Audrey and 4 children: his daughters, Margot Wagner (Frank) and Dovie, his sons James and Christopher (Katie) and his granddaughter Imogene. He is also survived by his sister, Betty Sasser and her children. He took delight in all of his extended family which included in-laws, nieces, nephews, cousins, friends and the family of man.

A memorial will be held Saturday, March 16 at Grace Episcopal Church at 2p.m.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Burke Hospice and Palliative Care, 1721 Enon Rd., Valdese, NC 28690 or Grace Episcopal Church, 303 S. King St., Morganton,

NC 28655.

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

Tribute Wall

No tributes added yet.