



Earl Elkins

July 28, 1922 - June 29, 2015

Earl Elkins, 92, of Morganton, NC passed away June 29, 2015. He was born to the late Albert and Louise Elkins on July 28, 1922 in Pike County, KY.

Earl was born in the coalfields of Southeastern KY, where he was deafened by a bout with meningitis at the age of 14. He graduated from the KY School of the Deaf, and went on to receive his BA degree from Gallaudet College, in Washington, DC. Later, he earned his MA degree in Educational Administration from California State University at Northridge. His professional life was focused on service to the Deaf and hard of hearing communities, first as a teacher at schools for the Deaf in MS, KY, and TN for 20 years. He moved his family to NC in 1966 to work as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Eastern NC, then later in Morganton from 1970-80. His last position, before retiring, was as the Director of the Deaf in-patient mental health program at the Central State Hospital in Indianapolis, IN. He returned to NC in 2000 to reside in Burke County on the family "homestead" in the Dry Ponds Community.

Earl was a man of many interests which included the outdoor activities of gardening, hiking, camping, and fishing. He was also skilled in basic auto mechanic work, and wood working. No stick of wood laid around long, before he was making something of it, be it shelves, furniture, or birdhouses. His true passion was in Scouting. He served as the Scout Master of troops at both Tennessee and North Carolina Schools

for the Deaf, where he provided inspiration and guidance to many young men through the Scouting experience.

He was a loving husband, father, father-in-law, brother, uncle, grandfather, great grandfather, and friend. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by one brother, seven sisters, and his first wife, Gertrude Slattery Elkins.

Those left to pay tribute to his memory are his beautiful wife, Ella Henneman Nicolai Elkins; his daughter, Janet McDonagh and her husband, Jim of Huber Heights, OH; his two sons, Earl F. Elkins and his wife, Kathy, Barry J. Elkins and his wife, Linda, all of Morganton; and a sister, Lois Rowlett of Salem, VA. He is also survived by fourteen grandchildren, and fourteen great-grandchildren.

A special expression of gratitude goes out to those who provided care for Earl in his final days: Burke Hospice and Palliative Care, his devoted wife, Ella; sons, Barry and Earl; daughter-in-law, Linda; and grandson, Richard Elkins.

A memorial service will be held at 2:00 p.m., Saturday, July 25, 2015 at the family home. Memorial contributions may be made to Burke Hospice and Palliative Care, Inc., 1721 Enon Rd., Valdese, NC 28690.

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

Tribute Wall

—Leonard Mike Ernest