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Gary Franklin Hammond

None - March 23, 2013

Gary Franklin Hammond of Grace Ridge in Morganton, NC died Saturday, March 23, after a period of declining health. Born in West Union, SC in 1924, he was the son of the late James Luther Hammond and Selma Craig Hammond of Seneca, SC. He was preceded in death by a daughter, Gloria Lee Hammond, and two brothers, Dr. Luther Carlisle Hammond and Henry Donald Hammond. He is survived by Betty Clement Hammond to whom he was married for 60 years, a daughter, Ann Hammond, of Glen Alpine, NC, one brother, Dr. Leigh Hugh Hammond and his wife Cynthia S. Hammond of Raleigh, NC, and two sisters, Carmen H. Ford and her husband Dr. Walker H. Ford of Beaufort, SC, and Genelle H. Camp of Raleigh, NC, as well as a number of nieces and nephews.Mr. Hammond was a World War II Veteran, a Corporal T5 Specialist, serving in the Army Field Artillery, 66th Panther Division and 75th Rainbow Division in the European Theater (England, France, Germany, and Austria). He took Basic Training at Fort Bragg, NC, Field Artillery Training at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, and Advanced Training at Camp Chaffee, Arkansas, and joined the Division at Camp Rucker, Alabama. He drove a jeep for the Battery Commander, fired 105 Howitzers, and was a Mechanic in the motor pool. In his words, "It was quite an adventure for a farm boy. I went in as a boy (18 years old) and became a man in a short time. These were hard times for families, but the entire nation rallied together in support. Everyone made sacrifices. There was no question about it. The freedom we have today came at a great price and sacrifice. It is a debt we can only repay by our remembrance, our gratitude, and our service."Mr. Hammond was a graduate of

Clemson University Class of 1951 where he received a B.S. degree in Vocational Agriculture Education. He taught Vocational Agriculture in Abbeville County in SC for one year. He came to Burke County as the first Vocational Agriculture Teacher at Oak Hill High School. He completed further study at NC State, the University of North Carolina, and Appalachian State University. Later he became the first Local Director of

Vocational Education for 8 high schools in the Burke County School System. He finished his 30-year career as the Head of the Vocational Department at East Burke High School where he taught Horticulture and Drafting.Mr. Hammond was an active member, Deacon, and Yokefellow of the First Baptist Church in Morganton, NC and the Koinonia Sunday School Class. At Grace Ridge, he volunteered on the Scholarship, Building and Grounds, Finance, and Health Care committees. He was a Charter Member and past President of the Oak Hill Ruritan Club, a member of the Burke County Fair Board, a life member of the Burke County Retired School Personnel, a member of the North Carolina Education Association, and a member of the North Carolina Retired Governmental Employees Association. He was a life member of the Disabled American Veterans organization of Burke County, and was a charter member/organizer of the WWII and Korean Veterans Chat Group, as well as on the Veterans Advisory Board. He was a member of the Lions Club for 54 years. He served on the Blue Ridge Community Action Board of Directors for Burke and Caldwell Counties and was a member of the Compas Cable Advisory Board. He was also a member of the Clemson Alumni Association, the local AARP chapter, and the Blue Blazers at the COMMA. He received the Duke Energy Volunteer of the Year Award for 2007 for Burke County Veterans Services.He enjoyed gardening, photography, camping, reading, western square dancing, small wood-working and restoration projects, water aerobics, consumer shopping, church and family activities, being a fan of Clemson football, telling jokes, and being a good neighbor.The family gratefully acknowledges the kindness of Dr. Thomas A. Bland, Jr., Dr. Edward Plyler, the Grace Ridge family, and the staff of Burke Hospice and Palliative Care.A Celebration Service will be held Saturday, March 30, at 3:00 p.m. at the First Baptist Church in Morganton, NC with Dr. Thomas A. Bland, Jr. officiating. Prior to the service, friends are invited to meet with the family in the Church Parlor at 2:00 p.m. A private family burial will be held at Hillcrest Cemetery in Valdese with military rites provided by the NC National Guard and the Caldwell Veterans Honor

Guard. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to First Baptist Church for the Vision Program, PO Drawer 459, Morganton, NC 28680. Sossoman Funeral Home and Crematory Center is assisting the family.

Tribute Wall

No tributes added yet.