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Robert Douglas Walker, Jr.

July 6, 1937 - Dec. 6, 2021

Robert Douglas Walker, Jr. the oldest child of Mary Tucker Jeter Walker and Robert Douglas Walker, died peacefully at his home surrounded by his family after an extended battle with Parkinson's Disease.

He is survived by his wife of 40 years, Bonnie Lokensgaard Walker, his daughter Nancy Walker Etheridge (husband, Jay) and son Robert Douglas Walker, III (wife, Whitney). He is also survived by Melba Walker, mother of their children. Other survivors include a sister, Judith Walker Teele (husband, Dockery) and a brother, John Jeter Walker.

He also leaves nieces Nan Jeter Teele (husband, Yoo Jin Kim,) Tucker Walker Campbell (husband, Don), Elizabeth Walker Seaton (husband, Eric,) and nephew Robert Walker Teele (wife, Katherine). He is also survived by great nieces and nephews Laura, Porter, Will, Evan, Cate, Charlotte, Henry, and Eleanor. Also mourning are his Minnesota family and the many friends made throughout his life.

Doug was a gentle, kind man of many interests and talents. With a larger-than-life character, he filled any room he entered with his unique presence. As an accomplished musician, he played several instruments and was well known as the bass player for the Lenoir-Rhyne University "Crew Necks," a group which went on a

world tour for the USO to entertain our troops overseas. He also played bass with the Josey-Goodman Combo until he retired from playing in the 1970's. Doug had a love of all kinds of music but enjoyed listening to Jazz or Classical music most.

Above all, he was an avid railroad buff and earned the title of "Trainman!" He began his love of railroad memorabilia in his early teens and it was to become his ruling

passion. His vast collection of railroad switch lamps and other items is now housed at the North Carolina Transportation Museum in safekeeping for future generations.

As his collection grew, it fueled a lifelong interest in old logging railroads of Western North Carolina and surrounding areas. He co-authored The Watauga and Yadkin River Railroad and The Lawndale Railway and Industrial Company and his railroad photos often appeared in several railroad history publications such as the Blue Ridge Stemwinder and Railroading in Western North Carolina. Doug also appeared on a PBS special showcasing the railroads of the Carolinas with his friend and co-author, Matt Bumgarner.

Doug treasured his time as a volunteer for the History Museum of Burke County and is the Curator Emeritus for the old Morganton Train Depot. There, clearly in his element, he wore his striped engineer hat and regaled visitors with his colorful stories of early train travel in Burke County. Doug thought fondly of this quote by Edna St. Vincent Millay: "Yet there isn't a train I wouldn't take no matter where it's going."

He was an enthusiastic archivist and local historian, collecting hundreds of area and old family photographs. Many of these now reside in the "Picture Burke" collection at the Morganton Public Library.

Visitation for family and friends will be held at the Sossoman Funeral Home, 1011 S Sterling St, Morganton, NC 28655 from 3 – 5pm on December 12, 2021 (http://www.sossomanfh.com/). You may link to the photo presentation here (http://shorturl.at/adD03).

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held the following day, December 13, at 12.00 Noon at St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church, 728 W Union St, Morganton, NC 28655 (https://www.saintcharlesborromeo.org/).

Memorial gifts may be made to the St. Charles Food Pantry at 728 West Union Street, Morganton, NC 28655 or the History Museum of Burke County at P.O. Box 416, Morganton, NC 28680.

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

Tribute Wall

No tributes added yet.