



Edward Alonza Holmes

June 6, 1925 - August 12, 2019

Edward Alonza Holmes, Jr. packed adventure and good works into his 94 years of life. Born June 6, 1925 in rural Washington County, Georgia, he was the oldest of a family of 3 boys and 2 girls. He did well in school and athletics all while helping with all the various chores on the family farm. After he completed high school, he became a Naval aviator and trained as a dive bomber pilot during WWII. His passion for flying remained with him throughout his life and extending to restoring an old Aerocoupe--his favorite aircraft—which he flew for years.

After the war he completed his undergraduate degree from Mercer University and then earned a divinity degree and a PhD in History from Emory University. He became a Chaplain in the Naval Reserves and served until his retirement as a Commander in 1972. Up until the last decade of his life he remained an enthusiastic pilot.

Ed's career reflected his interest in serving and helping make the world a better place. He was an ordained Baptist Minister, a college professor at Stetson University, a Dean at Emory University, a soccer coach and referee, a Peace Corps Regional Director in Nigeria, the founder of the Overseas Development Program of the Episcopal Church helping to establish libraries hospitals and refugee programs in many areas of Africa, and in Liberia, the Dean of a private university and creator of a rural farming development program, and a grants administrator for the International Foundation.

Ed loved doing things that made the world a better place and worked well into his 80s. He traveled all over the world, meeting and encouraging people, and helped fund projects in health, education, and humanitarian assistance. Thailand, the Amazon River basin, Viet Nam, Sudan, Kenya, Liberia, the Philippines, and many other developing areas benefited from his help to bring hospitals, schools, clean running water, and other resources they needed.

He had an undying interest in the happenings in the worlds of science, history, and human affairs and was an avid reader of books, periodicals, and magazines that expanded on his

voracious appetite for knowledge. Ed was also a lifelong athlete who loved competing in track and field events, especially high jump, shot put, discus, and hurdles. Inducted into the Emory University Sports Hall of Fame, he continued attaining records and wins in Masters events worldwide up into his 80's.

He was the proud and loving patriarch of a large family. He leaves behind his beloved wife, Shirley Miller Holmes, and children, Jane Holmes Bass (Leon), Margaret Holmes Bryant (Bill), Graham Holmes (Rebekah), and Shirley Kathryn Woods (Tim); as well as, step-children, Frances Page Glascoe, Charlotte Rorech (Paul), and David Page along with numerous grandchildren and great grandchildren. Edward was preceded in death by two sons, Edward A (Skip) Holmes, III, and Douglas M. Holmes.

A memorial service will be held at Whispering Pines Retirement Community, 7501 Lead Mine Rd, Raleigh, NC 27615, service date and time are still to be determined.

In lieu of flowers , please consider a donation to the Souther Poverty Law Center (<https://splcenter.org>)

Comments



“ Ed was like a family to us at the Rural Development Institute, which he headed as director. Ed was never too busy to listen and nothing was too little or big for him to undertake. We will surely miss him.

Albert Wolokolie - 14 hours ago



“ I remember him setting things to right for me at Cuttington. Torre

Torre Bissell - 18 hours ago



“ Rest In Peace Dr. Holmes. You touched the lives of so many and the impact you've had will extend beyond your passing from this world. I will miss the updates my Dad would joyfully share with me after your conversations. Your vitality amazed me!

Teizu A. Wolokolie - Yesterday at 01:13 AM



“ My father, the late Rev. Fr. Emmanuel W Johnson always spoke so highly of Dean Holmes as being his right hand man on Cuttington University College and as being in charge of overseeing the building of the Rural Development institute (RDI). As a child, I remember him flying through CUC in his SUV. We would always say" the pilot is coming get out of the way". This was indeed a life well spent. May your soul rest in perfect peace, Dean Holmes.

Helene Johnson - August 15 at 11:03 PM



“ Joanna and Barbara purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Edward Alonza Holmes.



Joanna and Barbara - August 14 at 09:02 PM