



Walter Lee Cottingham

September 11, 1919 - July 2, 2008

WALTER LEE COTTINGHAM

Walter Lee Cottingham, 88, a native and longtime resident of Greenville, SC, died on July 2, 2008, at his home in Charlotte, NC, with members of his family by his side.

Mr. Cottingham was a faculty member and Director of Intramural Sports at Furman University from 1959 until his retirement in 1978. For sixty years of his long life he was enthusiastically associated with summer camping, first in his youth at Camp Greenville and later as Director for many years at Camp Pinnacle in Hendersonville, NC. In retirement he was associated for a number of years with Falling Creek Camp near the family's summer home in NC. He was a perpetually happy person who loved to whistle.

Clearly a member of "The Greatest Generation", Mr. Cottingham was an Infantry Officer in World War II, participating in the North African and Italian campaigns, the Normandy landings, and the Battle of the Bulge. He was awarded the Bronze Star, among other decorations for his military service to his country. He would not want to be remembered so much for his military service, however, as for his influence on young people at camp and at Furman; for his love of family; and for his dedication to his Christian faith.

Mr. Cottingham received his BA degree from Emory University and his MA degree from University North Carolina.

Born in Greenville County, he was the youngest son of the late A.H. and Louise Marchant Cottingham and was predeceased by his wife, the late Dale Parrish Cottingham. He is survived by a sister and brother-in-law, Mary and Dick Newkirk of Atlanta; two sisters-in-law, Caroline Blackmon Cottingham of Greenville and Pauline Parrish Horne of Thomasville, GA; five children, Walter Cottingham, Jr. and family of Hendersonville, NC, John A. Cottingham and family of Carlsbad, CA, Nancy Cottingham of Charlotte, NC, Mary Grier Powers and family of Parrish, FL, and Phillip M. Grier of Washington, DC. He is survived as well by eight grandchildren, six great-grandchildren and numerous equally beloved nieces and nephews.

On his last night, Walter Cottingham talked with friends, ate some doughnuts and went to sleep. A sweet man to the end.

A memorial service will be held Monday, July 7 at 11 a.m. at Travelers Rest United Methodist Church, Travelers Rest, SC. The family will receive friends from 10 until 11:00 a.m. at the church prior to the memorial service.

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 7. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Travelers Rest United Methodist Church
19 South Main Street
Travelers Rest, SC

Service

JUL 7. 11:00 AM (ET)

Travelers Rest United Methodist Church
19 South Main Street
Travelers Rest, SC

Tribute Wall



“ I was a counselor at Camp Pinnacle summer of 1969. My first job ever. I was terrible. I couldn't relate to the boys in my cabin, and while other counselors took them out for nature walks, or told them ghost stories around a camp fire. I did nothing with my boys. Perhaps because I was an only child, i just didn't relate to the boys. Ultimately I quit before the camp session was up, leaving them shorthanded. Mr. Cottingham tried to get me to stay, my excuse was that I wasn't making enough money. It wasn't true, I didn't care about the money. The truth was I was ashamed that I was such a failure as a counselor, and I didn't know how to tell him that. Mr. Cottingham was very angry and told me to get the hell out. I've never stopped feeling guilty for leaving him in a lurch, and quitting. I hope he forgave me. He was a wonderful person.

FX Krogh - March 28, 2024 at 05:19 PM



“ I just became aware of Mr.Cottingham's home-going. As a young teenager I knew him three or four summers at Camp Pinnacle . Until I read his obituary I did not actually know the great details of his life. However,I can tell you that I was not surprised in the least. He demonstrated strength and graciousness. Once when the entire western part of North Carolina was experiencing a GI virus, the people at Pinnacle including myself came down with it. I was up all night and by the next morning very weak. It was none other than Mr. Cottingham who came by my cabin and brought me a Coca-cola to drink. He was a big man, but never to big to remember those under him.##imported-begin##preston conger##imported-end##

July 23, 2011 at 07:00 PM



“ I attended Camp Pinnacle in 1962 & 1963. Here's a final "How to the Brow!"###imported-begin##Tom Moore##imported-end##

September 02, 2008 at 01:37 PM



“ Dear Walt and Family:

Myrna and I were so sorry to hear of your Fathers passing. I received a call from Henry as he and his Dad were on their way over to the Lake House for the night. I had asked him for your address but as you know they have been busy with other problems much larger than my simple request. Please accept our deepest sympathy.###imported-begin##Jim and Myrna Newkirk##imported-end##

July 14, 2008 at 12:04 PM



“ It was truly a pleasure to have know Mr. Cottingham. Your family will be in our thoughts and prayers.###imported-begin##Dr. Duncan & Scottie Shirley and the staff of Prime Dental and Lake Bowen Dental##imported-end##

July 09, 2008 at 09:21 AM



“ *What a lovely and befitting service for our dear Walter that concluded with his whistling of Taps !
A Pinnacle echo that resonates to this day ... " all you women, let's go swimming ! " It could be heard all over Wolfe lake !
He truly touched all who knew him in a very special way.
All my love to Mike, Mary Lynne, Walt, John, and Nancy and your very loving families.
Nancy, you did a wonderful service to us all.
Jane Cottingham###imported-begin##Jane Cottingham###imported-end##*

July 09, 2008 at 08:49 AM



“ *My warm thoughts of Coach Cottingham came rushing through my head when I read of his passing. I was fortunate to have attended Furman with his son, Mike, in the 60s. Though I was among the less physical students he had, he always took time to "show me how to do it". He will be missed by many.###imported-begin##David Zipperer###imported-end##*

July 08, 2008 at 11:04 PM



“ *We are so sad to learn of the loss of your father. Although we didn't have the privilege of knowing him, we can see that his legacy lives on through the "sweetness" of his family and hope the warm memories glow for many, many years to come.###imported-begin##Karen Larken and Family###imported-end##*

July 08, 2008 at 09:58 AM



“ *Mr. Cottingham is among my fondest memories of my years at Furman! A sweet, kind, and gentle man who always greeted everyone with a smile. It was my privilege to have known him. My thoughts and prayers are with Walt, John, Nancy, and the entire Cottingham family.*##imported-begin##*Jim Bolt*##imported-end##

July 07, 2008 at 07:59 PM



“ *Our thoughts and prayers are with you.*##imported-begin##*Phil and Margie Hill*##imported-end##

July 07, 2008 at 05:56 PM



“ *Your family continues to be in my prayers. I would like to share addresses with Daddy so that he can get in touch with each of you as I know he would like to do that. Take care.* *Anne*##imported-begin##*Anne Reese Duncan*##imported-end##

July 07, 2008 at 01:38 PM



“ *As a camper at Camp Pinnacle over 40 years ago, you were always treated by him as if you were the only camper. He was one of a kind! Your family is in my thoughts.*##imported-begin##*Nat Hyde*##imported-end##

July 07, 2008 at 01:14 PM



“ Dear Walt and family,

*It was with great sadness upon learning of the passing of your beloved father. But in the same respect, the great joy of him entering the gates of heaven. What an incredible man. His life echos the meaning of giving and walking with Jesus. His legacy lives on. As you and your family continue to walk the path just know he is walking right beside you extremely happy and whistling still. My heart and prayers are with you all. Love, Pam
Whitmire##imported-begin##Pam Whitmire##imported-end##*

July 07, 2008 at 01:06 PM



“ We are sad to read of the loss of your father, Walt. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family as you gather together today to celebrate his life and legacy.##imported-begin##Ann Pyles##imported-end##

July 07, 2008 at 12:36 PM



“ Mr. Cottingham was a wonderful man and will be greatly missed. I remember seeing him at the Masters several years ago with Walt Jr.

He was one of my favorite people. My God be with his family.##imported-begin##Russ Hunt##imported-end##

July 07, 2008 at 10:51 AM



“ *It was with sadness that I read the obituary notice. My sincere condolences to the family.*

My late husband, Sandy Molnar, shared PAC facilities at Furman University with Walter for many years. Walter was always kind & friendly towards my children as they grew up around the PAC building. I remember many generous invitations to Dale & Walter's Greenville home where I saw Dale's artwork -- one painting sticks in my mind of their two pairs of feet.

I have sorely missed Walter's happy whistling as he bicycled through campus.

May that lovely, gentle man rest in peace. And may his family know that his friends loved him.

Sincerely,

Lynda Molnar.##imported-begin##Mrs. Lynda Molnar##imported-end##

July 07, 2008 at 10:18 AM



“ *Dear Mr. Walter Cottingham, Jr. and family, We were so sorry to see where your father had passed away. He certainly lived a full and happy life, and surely was a joy to have as a father. He also served his country honorably. Philip and Megan also send their condolences and remember you very fondly as one of the "great" teachers. From our family, to you and yours, our prayers and thoughts are with you. Sincerely, Phil and Naomi Grose##imported-begin##Phil & Naomi Grose and Philip & Megan##imported-end##*

July 06, 2008 at 09:07 PM



“ Walt, Please accept our condolences for the passing of your father. Having both lost our mothers in this Spring, we feel your pain and know of your emptiness. We didn't know your father well but certainly remember him as a wonderful, caring and gentle man. I especially remember his eyebrows and in fact to this day when my kids(or wife) urge me to trim mine, I think of him and am glad that he left the "eyebrow legacy!" May time heal your sorrow, may peace replace your heartache and may warmest memories remain. Your friends from Tuxedo, Bill and Lee Burdett###imported-begin##Bill and Lee Burdett###imported-end##

July 06, 2008 at 07:40 PM



“ I only knew Walt for two summers during the 1970's when I was a counselor at Falling Creek, but it didn't take much exposure to Walt to realize he was a very special man. He was always exuberant, always an inspiration to the boys around him, and always raising the general level of enthusiasm wherever he showed up. Though I was saddened initially by the news as I glanced at the Charlotte Observer obits this morning, I was glad to learn that Walt continued to inspire others for three more decades of a long and fruitful life after our paths briefly crossed. Deepest sympathies to John, Walt Jr., and the whole family.###imported-begin##Bob Forbes###imported-end##

July 06, 2008 at 08:39 AM



“ Just learned of Walter's death while reading the Times-News this a.m. What a wonderful obituary! I've never submitted an on-line condolence message before, but I thought this might be the best way to reach all of you quickly.

It seems only yesterday that Ethlyn and I were part of the extended Cottingham clan at Falling Creek or that Mike and I were kicking around together at Ft. Bragg. Walter's death brings back so many memories. What a good, kind and caring person he was. I can close my eyes to this day and see (and hear!) him walking down the road to the high wire tower at FC.

Please know that Ethlyn and I are thinking of you and mourning the death of a wonderful man and end of an era. We would like to be with you at the service tomorrow but already have a Monday morning commitment that may be difficult to get out of. Without question we will be with you in spirit, however.##imported-begin##Frank Byrd##imported-end##

July 06, 2008 at 08:03 AM



“ Mr Cottingham always treated you as an equal and with respect. I will always remember him as a Very Good Friend and always smiling.

Carroll##imported-begin##Carroll Wyatt (Wyatt Appliance Ser)##imported-end##

July 06, 2008 at 05:38 AM