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Wendell Byron Holmes

AAFA #0657

Charter Member

January 17, 1920 – July 8, 2008

Dr. Wendell Byron Holmes, 88, died peacefully at his home on July 8, 2008.



Visitation will be from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Friday at Hartman-Sharkey Funeral Home in McComb. Funeral services will be 10 a.m. Saturday at First Baptist Church of McComb, with the Rev. Donald Dick officiating. Burial will follow at Hollywood Cemetery.

Dr. Holmes was born January 17, 1920, in Lexie, Mississippi to Byron Berkley Holmes and Dixie Smith Holmes.

He attended Copiah-Lincoln Junior College. He matriculated at the University of Mississippi and continued his education at Tulane Medical School, graduating in 1944. He completed his residency in ophthalmology at Tulane University in the Eye, Ear, Nose & Throat Hospital. Dr. Holmes was certified by the American Board of Ophthalmology and was licensed to practice medicine in Mississippi and Louisiana.

He also served in the U.S. Navy as a medical officer in Okinawa and in the South Pacific. He was honorably discharged in 1953. He was a member of the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Dr. Holmes married the love of his life, Joy Whitworth Ratliff, on Nov. 5, 1944.

The couple were married for 62 years until Joy passed away on Jan. 19, 2007.

In November 1944, Dr. Holmes and Joy moved to Pineville, La., where he was associated with the Huey P. Long Charity Hospital as a resident physician. He began his private practice in 1948, when he returned to McComb.

He and his brother, Dr. Verner Holmes, opened The Holmes Eye, Ear, Nose & Throat Clinic and Hospital in McComb. In the 1960s, Dr. Holmes opened a private practice of ophthalmology. In the 1990s, he continued his practice in the Wal-Mart Super Center in

McComb. He established the first bona fide medical clinic in that retail chain. Dr. Holmes was the past district chairman of the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped and received an administrative citation for his services.

He also served as vice-president of the Mississippi State Medical Association and as a member of its board of directors. From 1968-69, he served as president of the University of Mississippi Medical Alumni and as a member of its advisory council.

Dr. Holmes was the chief of staff at Southwest Mississippi Regional Medical Center from 1971-72. He was a member of numerous national and state professional organizations.

Dr. Holmes was a dedicated member of the community. He was a Master Mason and a member of Wahabi Shrine. He was a past president of the McComb Rotary Club and received the Paul Harris Fellow Award. Having joined the Rotary Club in 1948, Wendell had perfect Rotary attendance for 54 years. This year was his 60th year as a Rotarian. In 1975, Dr. Holmes was honored by the Junior Auxiliary of McComb as its Azalea Ball King.

He also served as a deacon in the McComb First Baptist Church and was active in the Sunday School Department.

In 2004, he and Joy were chosen the Grandparents of the Year for the State of Mississippi. He was also chosen Father of the Year by the McComb Enterprise-Journal in 2005.

Dr. Holmes was an avid pursuer of knowledge. All of his loves and interests, including his family and career, were engaged in with passion. His interest in books, bridge, travel and computers satisfied his love of learning. He enjoyed the speed of e-mail and the ability to send pictures to his widely dispersed family. He also enjoyed hunting and walking the woods of his beloved Wenjoy Acres, where he cultivated hundreds of acres of pine trees. Because of his love of the land and study, he continued to take forestry management classes. He received the Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year Award for Pike County in 1969.

Throughout the years, Dr. Holmes earned the respect of others by his gracious manner. He treated all individuals with respect and dignity in the polite, easy-going manner that defined his personality. He looked for the good in everyone. He was much loved and respected by all who knew him and will be sorely missed.

Dr. Holmes is survived by three children, Delilah Joy Holmes Boyd and husband Samuel Lane Boyd of Dallas, Warren Lane Holmes of Pensacola, Fla., and Llewellyn Holmes Coon and husband Billy Coon of Summit; eight grandchildren, Kelsey H. Mitchell and

her husband Gray, Warren W. Holmes and wife Anne, Stacy S. Wheeler and her husband Trey, Mason M. Statham and his wife Hayden, Jake R. Statham, Samuel L. Boyd Jr. and wife Kilee, Cassidy A. Coon and Samantha E. Coon; five great-grandchildren, Emma H. Mitchell, Eleanor W. Mitchell, Marian Joy Mitchell, Seth Boyd and Alexis Boyd; and Larry Magee of McComb, a special family member who has loved and cared for the family for many years and emulates the spirit of kindness and civility exhibited by Dr. Holmes throughout his life.

Pallbearers are Warren Holmes, Gray Mitchell, Trey Wheeler, Mason Statham, Jake Statham and Larry Magee. Honorary Pallbearers are Dr. Jim Brock Sr., Norman Gillis Jr., Johnny Thompson and Dr. Robert DeCoux, and the Phillip Brady Sunday school class at the First Baptist Church of McComb.

Visitation is Friday, July 11, 2008 at Hartman-Sharkey Funeral Home in McComb from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm. Funeral services will be 10 am, Saturday, July 12, 2008 at First Baptist Church of McComb on Saturday, July 12, 2008, with Reverend Donald Dick officiating. Burial will follow at Hollywood Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Community Hospices of America, 140 North 5th Street, Suite B, McComb, MS 39648 or a charity of choice.

HARTMAN-SHARKEY FUNERAL HOME McComb, MS.

Published in the Enterprise Journal on Jul 10, 2008.

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Copied from the Legacy.com web page.

Dr. Holmes Guest Book

- "Dr. Holmes, you will be greatly missed. Thank you for your great example of a life and for your generosity to so many. Time spent with you was a great investment in life." - Edward, Ericka and Madison McKellar

Dr. Wendell B. Holmes was not an Alford but was born and raised around them. He and Gil corresponded and exchanged a lot of data years ago.

Birth: 17 Jan 1920
Lexie, Walthall County, Mississippi, USA
Death: 8 JUL 2008 (aged 88)
McComb, Pike County, Mississippi, USA
Burial: Hollywood Cemetery
McComb, Pike County, Mississippi, USA
Memorial ID: 28189984
Photos added by: [Larry Ray](#) on 30 May 2012.

Family Members

- Parents
Byron Berkley Holmes, 1883-1967
Dixie Smith, 1887-1982
- Spouse
Joy Whitworth Ratliff, 1921-2007 (m. 1944)
- Siblings
Verner Smith Holmes, 1909-2000
Iska Holmes Montgomery, 1911-2001
Omer Lane Holmes, 1913-1993
Mabrie Willette Holmes Lancaster, 1925-2007

Information copied from the [Find-A-Grave](#) and [Ancestry.com](#) web pages.