
Marvin L. McCrory

COLUMBIA - Marvin L. McCrory, prominent builder and founder of the McCrory Construction Company, died Tuesday, June 28, 2011, at his cottage at Still Hopes after a lingering illness. He was 92 years old. Marvin was born in 1919 in McAdams, Mississippi. He lived on the family farm with his parents and seven siblings until he joined the National Guard for service in WWII. He outlived all his immediate family; his brother and nephew, Frank and Frankie McCrory, lived in West Columbia until their deaths.

McCrory had a distinguished career during WWII as a navigator in the Army Air Force. He received the Silver Star for gallantry and bravery on his 32nd mission from Australia over New Guinea. He went on to instruct Navigation at the air base located at the Opportunity School near West Columbia. Upon his graduation from U.S.C. with a degree in Civil Engineering, Marvin began his career as a builder.

Mr. Mac founded the McCrory Construction Company in 1960 after graduating from the University of South Carolina and working with the John C. Heslep Company. McCrory Company built commercial buildings in over 40 states, concentrating on buildings in South Carolina: Thomas Cooper Library (designed by Edward Durrell Stone) and the Capstone Dorm at the University of South Carolina, the Columbia U.S. Post Office on Assembly Street and Richland and Dutch Square Malls. His work with shopping centers and other business centers took the company from Washington to Florida and Minnesota to Mississippi.

McCrory was a leader in the construction industry in the United States, particularly the Associated General Contractors of America. He was president of the local chapter and the Carolinas Branch, the largest group in the U.S., and a director of the national A.G.C. As chairman of the S.C./N.C. Apprentice Training he introduced several new training programs. Many of the most prominent builders in the greater Columbia area were trained in-house by the McCrory Construction Company.

Mac, a distinguished "mover and shaker" in the Midlands, served as chairman of the first Columbia Historical and Cultural Commission and served on the personnel committee of the S.C. Technical Education Commission and as director and board member of the Columbia Museum of Art, Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce, Palmetto State Life and S.C. National Bank. In the Episcopal church M.L. was a member of Bishop and Council of the Diocese of Upper South Carolina, leading a diocesan-wide money campaign. He was vestryman and Junior and Senior warden at his parish church, St. Martin's-in-the-Fields. Perhaps his favorite position was as Athletic Director and coach of the boy's basketball team!

An avid Gamecock fan, Mac McCrory was a full scholarship member of the Gamecock Club for over 25 years. He and his wife, Sarah, attended all football and basketball home and many away games as long as they were able. They were cited as "Fantastic Fans" in 2001.

His hobby of fishing went from the ponds at his Blythewood farm to fishing in the Atlantic Ocean from Belle Isle to many trips with friends and family in Alaska. Each year one group fished on the S.C. coast, starting with Uncle Sterling Graydon at Edisto Beach and concluding with Joe Dixon at DeBordieu Beach.

The Blythewood farm showcased his love of gardening; at one time Mac had some of the finest vegetables in South Carolina! His annual catfish stew was nicknamed "The Blythewood Cotillion." Mac was an expert woodworker and much of the furniture at Blythewood and a Lake Wateree cottage were designed and built by Mac.

Marvin McCrory is survived by his wife of over 66 years, Sarah Graydon McCrory; five children and their spouses, Clint (Sue Custance), Raven (Thorne Compton), Margie (Paul Hicks), Alice and Elliott (Joanne Gold); ten grandchildren and their spouses, Mandy Halloran (Tom Medlock), Evelyn Trantham (Michael Bruner), Marty McCrory (Lana), Clint Wallace (Jenna), Nick and Lewis Wallace, Alex and Sterling McCrory, David and Daniel Hicks; great-grandchildren, Ella and Chris Augustine, Caleb Bruner and Sadie Medlock.

A memorial service will be held 11 a.m. Saturday, July 2, 2011, at St. Martin's-in-the-Fields Episcopal Church, 5220 Clemson Avenue. Honorary pallbearers are McCrory Construction Company employees, past and present. These men and women are requested to sit together near the front of the church. A private burial in Elmwood Cemetery will precede the service with McCrory grandsons serving as pallbearers. The family will receive friends and relatives immediately after the memorial service in the church parish hall. Guests are invited to greet the family and stay for a buffet lunch.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to St. Martin's Foundation, 5220 Clemson Ave., Columbia, SC 29206, the Still Hopes Retirement Community (where Sarah and Mac have lived since 2008), Residence Assistance Fund, P.O. Box 2959, West Columbia, SC 29169 or Carolina Children's Home, Ernie Lawhorne Campaign, 3201 Trenholm Road, Columbia, SC 29204. Please sign the online guestbook at www.dunbarfunerals.com.

Published in The State on June 30, 2011
