



David Sager Clay

August 29, 1923 - December 26, 2023

David Sager Clay, beloved son, husband, father, and grandfather died peacefully at home on Tuesday, Dec. 26, 2023. He lived a long and wonderful life; he was 100 years old.

Mr. Clay was born to Lottie Hill and William Clifton Clay on Aug. 29, 1923, in Danville, VA. Dave served in the U.S. Army from 1943-1946. He graduated from the University of Richmond in 1949, with a BA in Business Administration.

He married Sophia Bowen, mother of their four daughters, in 1950, and they lived and worked in Texas for two years. In 1952, they moved to Salisbury where he managed Wachovia Bank's insurance department. He eventually went to work for Freeman Insurance which became Riley-Clay and then Riley-Clay-Turner Insurance (now Central Carolina Insurance).

Mr. Clay enthusiastically embraced Salisbury and served with many civic organizations. He was named Salisbury's Young Man of the Year in 1954 and 1958. He was among the group of Jaycees who worked to reorganize the Rowan County Agricultural & Industrial Fair and establish its permanent facility; he served as Fair manager from 1954 to 1964. Mr. Clay became president of the N.C. Association of Agricultural Fairs and later was inducted into its Hall of Fame. He served as both a board member and chairman or president of the Jaycees, YMCA, Chamber of Commerce, Merchants

Association, Downtown Action Committee, Economic Development Council, Civitan Club, Salisbury First Union Bank Board, Firefighters' Relief Fund, and the N.C. Transportation Museum.

Mr. Clay was a member of the Salisbury City Council for four years, participating in the city's successful bid to become an All - American City in 1961. He served as mayor pro tem and was one of the most popular incumbents Salisbury has ever seen.

David Clay was the epitome of a Christian gentleman, putting Christ as the cornerstone of his life and others before self. The First Baptist Church of Salisbury and the N.C. Baptist Children's Homes were the beneficiaries of his passion, generosity, and dedication for many, many years. He served as Deacon Chairman, Trustee Chairman, Moderator, and Adult Sunday School Department Director for the First Baptist Church. For the NC Baptist Children's Homes Mr. Clay served as a member and chair of the Board of Trustees; he received their Baptist Heritage Award in 2010.

He was an excellent advisor for any life situation; it's for that reason he was so sought after as a leader by any organization with which he was affiliated. He was a wise mediator and expert at building consensus.

Dave had the gift of nurturing friendships, not only with clients and colleagues, but with everyone who had the good fortune of talking and conversing with him. He was steadfastly loyal to family and friends. He never gave up on anyone, without exception seeing the good in people. He had a quick wit - he could always make people laugh plus was first to catch a joke.

Mr. Clay took great joy in sports, especially baseball, and cheered for the Rowan Legion team, Catawba Indians, Atlanta Braves, Richmond Spiders, and Carolina Tarheels. His love for the city and baseball motivated him to

support a major league baseball farm team that operated out of Catawba College's Newman Park. Dave mowed the field with his lawn mower; his daughters swept the stands.

Dave also loved to travel and journeyed widely across the United States, as well as many countries abroad, with friends and family. He had a special place in his heart for the South Carolina coast where he had a home in Cherry Grove Beach. He participated in several bridge clubs, playing well into his nineties.

He enjoyed a bowl of ice cream almost every day. He left a deep and rich legacy.

In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by brothers James Hill Clay; W.C. Clay, Jr.; Irvin Kenneth Clay; and Richard T. Clay as well as sisters Margaret Clay Houghton, Virginia Clay Daugherty, and Jacque Clay Pennell. He was also predeceased by his wife Sophia Bowen Clay, his wife of forty-seven years, and Anne Carlton Clay, his wife of twenty years.

He is survived by daughters Colin Walker (Ray) of Decatur, GA; Julia Newsom (Eddie) of Atlanta, GA; Dr. Louise Clay of Charleston, SC; and Ginny Young (Rob) of Morganton, NC. His grandchildren are Lauren Geitgey (Michael), Charlie Walker (Katie), David Walker (Courtney), Sophie MacColl (Alec), Julia Bowen Rees (Spencer) of Atlanta, GA; Sarah Frances Newton (AJ) of Lexington, SC; Clay Young (Hallie) of Greensboro, NC; and Bowen Young of Black Mountain, NC. He had nine great-grandchildren and many nephews and nieces. Mr. Clay is also survived by his step-children: Carole Brooke (Tom) of China Grove, NC; Graham Carlton, Jr. (Susan) of Salisbury, NC; and Anne Finley Carlton of Charlotte, NC. His step-grandchildren are Maxwell Brooke (Meghan) and Richard Brooke of Charlotte, NC; Sarah Lynn Carlton of Wilmington, NC; and Graham "Trey" M. Carlton, III of Charlotte, NC.

The family would like to thank Mr. Clay's outstanding and compassionate caregivers who made it possible for him to live at home until his death: Mary Corriher, Dawn Rangel, Janet Durham, Connie Julian, and Living Life Home Care.

In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be made to First Baptist Church of Salisbury or NC Baptist Children's Homes.

A Celebration of Life will be held at First Baptist Church on Saturday, January 27, at 1 pm; reception to follow at the Country Club of Salisbury, 747 Club Drive.

Summersett Funeral Home is serving the Clay family. Online condolences may be made at www.summersettfuneralhome.com.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

JAN 27. 1:00 PM (ET)

First Baptist Church Salisbury
223 N. Fulton St.
Salisbury, NC 28144

Visitation

JAN 27. 2:00 PM (ET)

Country Club of Salisbury
747 Club Dr.
Salisbury, NC 28144

Tribute Wall



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of David Sager Clay.*



January 22, 2024 at 10:02 PM



“ *We are thankful for the life of David and his family and their contributions to the life of First Baptist Church in Salisbury. You are in our thoughts and prayers during this sad time. We love you - Gerald and Dorcus*

Gerald & Dorcus - January 16, 2024 at 12:23 PM



“ *Dear Weezie and family,*

I am sorry for your loss.

Judy Coble

Judy Coble - January 08, 2024 at 10:45 AM

JP

“ I have so many wonderful memories of the time I worked "with" Mr. Clay. Please note I didn't work "for him" but "with" him! He taught me to be a better person and to live for Christ! I share his love for the Baptist Children's Home.

I am heartbroken that I won't be able to attend his service as I will be out of town during that time. My condolences to his precious family.

Joyce Poole

Joyce Poole - January 06, 2024 at 11:52 AM