



Hall Steele

November 28, 1928 - December 25, 2016

Robert Hall "Hall" Steele, 88, of Salisbury passed away Sunday, December 25, 2016 at the Glenn A. Kiser Hospice House.

He was born Nov. 28, 1928, in Salisbury, to the late Margaret Hall Steele and Robert Lee Steele.

He was a graduate of Mt. Ulla High School Class of 1945 and attended Mars Hill College, where he was co-captain of the basketball team. He served in the U.S. Army from 1946-48 as a military policeman at Oak Ridge, Tenn., and at Sandia Base, Albuquerque, N.M. He then graduated from Clemson University in 1951 with a bachelor of science degree in agricultural economics and was a member of Alpha Zeta honorary fraternity.

Hall spent more than 50 years in public service to Rowan County, while owning Steele Feed & Seed in Mt. Ulla and managing it for 40 years. He served 12 years on the Rowan County Board of Commissioners, four of them as chairman.

Steele's years of service in local government was a crucial time for Rowan County. Decisions made during the years that he served on the Board of Commissioners continue to affect Rowan County today.

During the years 1974-1986, the Board of Commissioners began countywide ambulance service, conceived the Economic Development Commission after Steele learned of a similar economic recruitment commission in another county; purchased the historic 1909 Federal courthouse (now the county office building), and built a new public library in Salisbury. In 1983, he was one of the recipients of Historic Salisbury Foundation's first annual preservation awards, honored for public leadership for preservation of the federal courthouse.

He was a member and sub-chairman of the Rowan County Strategic Planning Process. He represented the Board of Commissioners on the Rowan County Department of Social

Services Board, the Rowan County Board of Education, the Rowan County Sheriff's Office, Centralina Council of Governments, where he was chairman of the Job Training Consortium; and as a director of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners. In the 1970s, he worked to establish a Farmland Preservation program in North Carolina.

He served as chairman of the Rowan County Democratic Party for four years. He was a founding member of the Yadkin River Association, a river protective group formed in the 1970s and composed of volunteers from area counties bordering the river. Knowing how crucial the river was to the growth of Rowan and surrounding counties, the group initially concerned itself with the inner basin transfer of water, but was also instrumental in locating eight wildlife access areas along the river. Steele served as vice-president of the organization.

He worked to establish a farmers' market in Rowan County.

He was a member and director of the Rowan County Chamber of Commerce and was elected by the Chamber as Outstanding Committee Chairman in 1976 and received the Community Service Award in 1986. He served on the Board of Directors of First Union National Bank.

In the 1980s, he served on the Salisbury-Rowan Economic Development Commission and the Rowan County Convention and Visitors Bureau. In the 1990s, he worked to promote the Hampton family's Lazy 5 Ranch as a tourist attraction in Rowan County, now one of the state's top tourist attractions.

He was a lifelong member of Thyatira Presbyterian Church, having served as deacon, elder, elder emeritus, and trustee. He was president of the Thyatira Memorial Association, the oversight committee for the historic cemetery and church grounds. He worked to add a columbarium and scatter garden to the historic cemetery and restore the original rock wall around the cemetery perimeter.

He was instrumental in organizing and was a charter member of the Bear Poplar-Mt. Ulla Volunteer Fire Department and the Mt. Ulla Lions Club, serving as president and director of both and receiving the Jack Stickley Service Award. He was fire chief for 25 years and was also an officer of the Rowan County Volunteer Fire Department Association. He served as a director of the Rowan County YMCA and as chairman of the Capital Campaign for the West Rowan YMCA. He also served on the Advisory Board of the Salvation Army, Salisbury. In the 1990s, he volunteered as a mentor for SCORE, (Service

Corps of Retired Executives), a nonprofit group dedicated to entrepreneur education and to helping in the formation, growth and success of small businesses.

Professionally, he grew up working in the family business, a general store in Mt. Ulla that his father purchased in early 1929. In addition to groceries, hardware and clothing, the store served as the post office with a barber chair located in the back for shaves and haircuts. He returned to the store after college, and in 1953, facing competition from major grocery stores, he changed the focus of the business to farming. He expanded to Davie County in the 1980's and also owned Steele Feed and Seed in Mocksville. During the 1970s, Steele Feed & Seed serviced more than 200 dairy farms in a six-county area.

After retirement, he and his wife, 'Ronney', who worked in the store with him, spent part of their time at their second home in Sparta and traveled widely.

In addition to his parents he was preceded in death by two sisters, Mary Ida Steele Mathis of Granite Quarry on November 1, 2010 and Irene Steele Weaver who died April 1, 2014.

His family consists of his wife, the former Roselind Holloman of Ahoskie, whom he married Dec. 27, 1952; two sons, Robert Vann Steele and wife June of Mocksville and John Ridley Steele and wife Joyce of Bear Poplar; a daughter, Mary Margaret Steele of Wake Forest; and one sister, Frances Steele Ballard of Mt. Ulla; two grandchildren, Elizabeth Steele Patterson (Jared) and Margaret Steele (Brandon Davis); five great-grandchildren, Melanie Steele, Emily Patterson, Benjamin Patterson, Lilyhope Patterson and Samuel Patterson.

A Memorial service will be conducted at 11:00 AM Wednesday, December 28, 2016 at Thyatira Presbyterian Church with Rev. Stacey Steck Officiating.

A reception will immediately follow in the church parlor.

Memorials may be made to Thyatira Presbyterian Church, 220 White Road, Salisbury, NC 28147 or to the donor's choice.

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

Tribute Wall

DC

“ NC lost a great citizen on 12/25/16 in Hall Steele. I was an assistant to Commissioner Jim Graham and got to know Hall and his family It was always a treat when Mr. Steele and Charlie Peacock came to Raleigh for a visit. We all looked forward to it. My sincere sympathy goes out to all the family and they will be in my thoughts and prayers.

Donna Creech

Donna Creech - December 29, 2016 at 10:16 AM

RR

“ Ron And Judy Ridenhour lit a candle in memory of Hall Steele



Ron and Judy Ridenhour - December 28, 2016 at 02:11 AM

AJ

“ Hall was a very important man in my working life in Mt Ulla and he meant a lot to his community. A life well lived and a man we loved. Rest in Peace. Rosalind and family may you find peace knowing you will be restored to Hall's presence one day. God Bless. Anne Jones

Anne Jones - December 27, 2016 at 11:58 AM

FJ

*Mary Margaret and Family,
I was saddened to see that your Dad passed away on Christmas Day. He will never have another bad day. I will keep you and your family in my prayers during this time.
Your Friend always,
F. Erwin McKenzie, Jr.*

F. Erwin McKenzie, Jr. - December 27, 2016 at 01:45 PM

BS

To Hall Steele's Family,

So sorry to hear of Our Loss. Not only our loss, but a loss that will not be replaced. Hall served His fellowman in all that He did. Always thinking of ways to help Others. I know. I have been on some of his trips to help others. Always be Proud of Your Dad and Husband. God Bless and May Hall Rest in Peace.

Bobby C. Shook

Bobby C. Shook - December 27, 2016 at 10:41 PM

RR

Love and Prayers for his Sweet family....God give you His Peace and Comfort.....a life well lived!

Ron and Judy Ridenhour - December 28, 2016 at 02:09 AM

RT

Ronney and family,

Our sincere condolences for your loss. Hall was a fine man and good friend who left footprints on our hearts and we will never be the same. Will always cherish the wonderful memories we made.

Richard (RT) and Mary Sue Tarlton

Richard Tarlton - December 29, 2016 at 01:07 PM