



## John Crane Whitfield

March 22, 1931 - July 2, 2019

Mr. John Crane Whitfield, 88, passed away Tuesday, July 2 at the W.G (Bill) Hefner VA Medical Center.

John was a loving father, grandfather, and friend to all. He is survived by his loving wife of 64 years, Dora Jean “DJ” Milligan Whitfield, son Jeff Whitfield (Leigh), daughter Jennifer Byers (Laine), sister Linda Linhares, brother Bob Whitfield, beloved grandsons Skyler Whitfield, Miles Annas, and William Gay, and many nieces, nephews, and cousins.

John loved life and, in particular, enjoyed playing golf and traveling. John and DJ traveled all over the world and were able to visit or play at some of the most well-known courses, such as St. Andrews in Scotland and Pebble Beach in California. He was perhaps most well-known for his sense of humor, as he always had a joke or pun at the ready (“Really? No, Raleigh!”) John was a gentle man, as well as a gentleman.

John graduated from Sussex High School in New Jersey in 1948. He then earned his bachelor’s degree from Davidson College in 1952 and went on to serve in the United States Air Force until 1954. Upon his return in 1954, John married his wife, DJ. They moved to North Carolina where he graduated from UNC-Chapel Hill with a master’s degree in Social Work in 1956. His career in social work began at the VA Hospital in Salisbury. John, with Drs. Jane Higbee and Warren Young, then helped to establish Rowan County Mental Health Clinic, which grew into Tri-County Mental Health Clinic. He maintained a private practice at his home, even after his retirement in 1993, counseling

many in the community.

John was active in the community and worked with many organizations. He served for over 50 years in many capacities at John Calvin Presbyterian Church. John was a founding member of the Piedmont Players. He also volunteered his time with the Good Shepherd's Clinic, Family Crisis Council of Rowan County, Rowan Helping Ministries, and Civitan Club of Salisbury, among many others. He was a true humanitarian, serving on boards of countless community organizations.

The interment will take place at the Salisbury National Cemetery Monday, July 8 at 9:00am, where military honors will be presented by the Rowan County Veterans Honor Guard and the North Carolina Army National Guard. A celebration of life will follow at John Calvin Presbyterian Church at 10:00am with a reception after.

The family wishes to thank the staff of Rowan Diagnostic Clinic, North Carolina Veteran's Home, and the VA Medical Center for their loving compassion and care. The family also thanks their "family" of caregivers from Caring Hands of Salisbury for their loving dedication and compassionate care. He loved each and every one, and no better care could have been given to him.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to the Family Crisis Council of Rowan County 502 N. Long Street, Salisbury NC 28144; Rowan Helping Ministries 226 N. Long Street, Salisbury NC 28144; or John Calvin Presbyterian Church 1620 Brenner Avenue, Salisbury NC 28144.

Summersett Funeral Home is serving the Whitfield family. Online condolences may be made at [www.summersettfuneralhome.com](http://www.summersettfuneralhome.com).

# Previous Events

## Service

JUL 8. 10:00 AM (ET)

John Calvin Presbyterian Church  
1620 Brenner Ave.  
Salisbury, NC 28144

# Tribute Wall

CM

“ We were so sorry to hear of John's passing. Both of us worked with him many years at Tri-County, and had nothing but admiration for him. Good counselor, good friend, good man. He will surely be missed.

*Jim and Carla Mallinson*

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**Carla Mallinson** - July 08, 2019 at 02:16 PM

JT

“ Please accept my deepest condolences of John's passing. While growing up, I always enjoyed hearing wonderful things about John and DJ from my parents, Bob and Arva and how much they really cherished their friendship. I know they must be thrilled to welcome John in Heaven. Will miss him. With love to his family from Jenni Thomas

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**Jennifer Thomas** - July 08, 2019 at 09:04 AM



“ I'm so sorry for your loss. Praying for God's perfect grace to cover each of you during this season.

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**Julie Warren** - July 07, 2019 at 08:29 PM

VF

“ John was a great man. He bought Girl Scouts cookies from our daughter, Lauren and gave us a place to stay at the beach several times. He was thoughtful, caring, and loyal. He will be missed dearly by the Campbells in Rockwell, NC.



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**Viktoria Campbell and family** - July 07, 2019 at 01:12 PM

EB

“ Sympathy to the family. John was a caring man that helped many people. He will be missed greatly. His little breakfast club on Thursday always enjoyed his jokes as well as his wise words. I am thinking about u Jennifer. Losing a dad is always a hard part of life. Deepest sympathy! Sandy and Ed Bowles

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**Ed and Sandy Bowles** - July 07, 2019 at 07:50 AM

DP

“ John was a gentle giant who knew no disagreement about anything, simply a situation that could be resolved amicably by everyone involved. I had the honor of working with him for years at Piedmont Players and under his guidance on a project at the Rowan Mental Health Clinic. He was the best mentor I ever had. I trusted his judgment and his deep caring for me and everyone completely. I loved him and will miss him greatly.

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**David Post** - July 06, 2019 at 05:00 PM

BB

“ DJ, Jennifer, Laine, Jeff and family,  
We are so sorry about your loss. John was a special gentleman and will be missed by all who knew him. He loved you so much. You all are in our thoughts and prayers. Cherish the precious memories..that does help.  
We love you,  
Bo & Carl

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**Bo Butler** - July 06, 2019 at 03:45 PM