



## Mr. Lester Eugene "Lefty" Gardner

July 4, 1926 - May 15, 2016

Lester Eugene "Lefty" Gardner, 89, passed away on May 15, 2016, at the Glenn A. Kiser Hospice House.

Mr. Gardner was born July 4, 1926 in Lamont, PA. He was preceded in death by his father, Lloyd Andrew Gardner and mother, Dora Miller Gardner; brothers, John and Petey Gardner; sisters, Gertrude Conrad and Gladys Hostler; daughter, Jeanne Gardner; and son, Ted Gardner.

He graduated from Bellwood Antis High School in Bellwood, Pennsylvania and Catawba College in 1950 with a BA degree in physical education and history.

Lester served as a Sergeant in the U.S. Army Air Corps (Force) from 1943-1946. He received the American Campaign Medal, Army of Occupation medal, and World War II Victory medal. His name was added to the WWII Memorial in Washington, DC on June 9, 2007.

Lester played football during college and was subsequently inducted into Catawba College's Sports Hall of Fame in 1990. He was a four year football letterman, 1946-49; honorable mention recipient Little All-American, 1949; honorable mention recipient Ap All-N.C., 1948-49; All North State Conference, 1947-49, Co-captain, 1949; All time Catawba Team, 1950; Member of 1947-

48 Tangerine Bowl Champs; received Aycock Award as Catawba's Top Senior Athlete; Varsity Club, 1946-50; (VP in 1948); Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities. The legendary Catawba Coach Gordon Kirkland, Jr. stated that Lester was the best guard he had ever coached. He was a member of Catawba's Chief's Club.

After college, he coached on two different state championship teams at Lumberton High School (2A) and Boyden (Salisbury) High School (4A).

He was Chief of Kinesiotherapy at the VA Medical Center in Salisbury where he worked for 31 years.

Lester enjoyed hunting, fishing, big band music, woodworking, restoring old cars, refinishing antiques, gardening, and watching football games. He volunteered for meals on wheels, and was a member of Sacred Heart Catholic Church.

He is survived by his wife, Charlotte A. Gardner, two sisters, Pearl Patterson, Bellwood, Pa and Ada Marie Dengate, Barberton, Ohio, his brother, Jim Gardner, Altoona, Pa, three sons, Terrence (Terry) Gardner (Tina) of Pittsboro NC , Timothy (Tim) Gardner (Kerry) of Salisbury, Thomas (Tom) Gardner of Roxboro, NC, and a daughter, Leslie Gardner Tully (Mike) of Snellville, Georgia. He is also survived by a grandson, Garrett Gardner of Salisbury, and five granddaughters, Katie Gardner Nickerson (Stephen) of Charleston, SC, Mallory Gardner of Chapel Hill, Victoria (Tori) Gardner of Wilmington, NC, Savannah and Chloe Tully of Snellville, Georgia.

Arrangements: Visitation is Wednesday from 7pm to 9pm at Summersett Funeral Home. A funeral mass will be held on Thursday at 10am at Sacred Heart Catholic Church by Father John Eckerd with burial with military honors to follow at the church cemetery. Family and friends will be received at the

home of the family after the burial.

Memorials: In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Sacred Heart Catholic Church Memorial Fund, 375 Lumen Christie Lane, Salisbury, NC 28147.

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

## Cemetery Details

### Sacred Heart Catholic Church Cemetery

Salisbury, NC

## Previous Events

### Visitation

MAY 18. 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM (ET)

Summersett Funeral Home  
1315 W. Innes St.  
Salisbury, NC 28144  
(704) 633-2111  
<https://www.summersettfuneralhome.com>

# Tribute Wall

EA

“ On behalf of the current Kinesiotherapy Department at the W.G. "Bill" Hefner VA Medical Center, I extend our condolences. Lefty hired me 30 years ago and was such a positive influence and mentor during my career beginnings. I'm very thankful our paths crossed.  
He will always be part of the KT family.

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**Eric Andrews** - May 19, 2016 at 02:52 PM

TB

“ I was so sorry to hear about Lefty. Please know that I'm thinking and praying for you and your family. **Thelma Boulus**

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**Thelma Boulus** - May 18, 2016 at 01:32 PM

JA

“ *Lefty, No amount of time on this earth is long enough to SHARE with those we have come to respect and love or to prepare ourselves for goodbye. May your journey through the gates of heaven be swift Lefty. Forever missed and never forgotten.*

*We'll get together on the front porch again some day Lefty, tell each other stories and laugh aloud. I will miss the golf cart rides, the morning coffee sessions and the how to's in the garage that was filled with every type of tool known to man. You were my closest friend, a great man having led a full life and leaving a legacy that is hard to compete with*

*Charlotte and family, I am so proud that I was able to share a few years with Lefty and learn what a great and caring guy he was. Always there to lend a hand or offer advice. I will remember him always.*

*Jim & Wendy Alcock  
Salt Lake City, Utah*

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**Jim Alcock** - May 17, 2016 at 05:29 PM

JK

“ *Coach Gardner coached me in track and wrestling at Boyden High School in 1955 and 1956. Looks like he had a long and good life.*

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**john kirk** - May 17, 2016 at 04:37 PM