



Mr. Royce Virgil Colby

March 21, 1924 - July 21, 2016

Royce Virgil Colby, 92, passed away Thursday July 21, 2016 in Raleigh, NC. He was born on March 21, 1924 in Terril, Iowa to Hazel and Melvin Colby. He married Jeanette Fladland in St. Paul, MN on Valentine's Day 1948. They were married for 61 years, always providing a welcoming home for their children, grandchildren, friends, and relatives. Royce was predeceased by his parents, his sister Leona Harries, and his beloved wife Jeanette, who died in 2009.

He is survived by his children-- Candace (Brian) Kennedy of Salem, OR; Jack (Brenda) Colby of Raleigh, NC; Cathy (Justin) Colby-Grauer of Ridgefield, CT; Beth (Peter) Manning of Pawcatuck, CT; and Christie (John) Hancock of Richmond, VA. He is also survived by ten grandchildren: Todd and Kevin Kennedy; Jennifer (fiancé Brian May), Jeffrey, and Stephen Colby; Jesse Grauer; Christopher, Thomas, and Amy Manning; and Callie Hancock and by his sister-in-law Elizabeth Finberg of Chisago City, MN.

Raised in southern Minnesota, Royce graduated in June 1942 from Jackson High School, where he excelled in athletics and music. Upon graduation, he began his career as a clerk with the FBI in Washington, DC

In the fall of 1943, Royce enlisted in the Army Air Corps and served in the 8th Air Force, 2nd Air Division/European theatre in WWII, flying 27 missions as a

tail gunner and radio operator on a B-24 Liberator with the 491st Bomb Group. On his 14th mission, the plane was hit by enemy fire and the crew was forced to bail out over Belgium. All but one crew member survived. T/Sgt Colby was decorated with the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, Purple Heart, and other commendations. A highlight of Royce's life was returning to the crash site in Belgium for the dedication of a monument in honor of the crew, organized by The Patton Drivers, Leuven Centraal, who remain friends to this day.

Royce graduated with a BS from The University of Minnesota in 1953 before continuing his career as a Special Agent at FBI offices in Minneapolis, Dallas, and New York, and then returned to the FBI Laboratory in Washington, DC. He retired in 1976 after 33 years with the Bureau.

After raising their family in Springfield, VA for 25 years, Royce and Jeanette moved to Salisbury, NC in 1981. There they enjoyed many years of retirement during which they traveled to re-connect with relatives and friends such as Ex-Agents Society; Ex-Communicators; 8th Air Force, 2nd Air Division, 491st Bomb Group and their Springfield group. Royce belonged to Salisbury Civitans, First Presbyterian Church, Salisbury Newcomers, and the American Legion where he attended many baseball games throughout the years. In 2014, he relocated to Raleigh, NC. The family is indebted to and thankful for the kindness of his friends and caregivers at Hillcrest, Raleigh and extends its deepest gratitude to the Patton Drivers Leuven Centraal, ever grateful for their dedication and steadfast vigilance in remembering and memorializing all of the brave troops who participated in the liberation of Europe during WWII.

The family will greet friends from noon to 1pm Friday, July 29 at Summersett Funeral Home, followed by a Celebration of Life service at 1pm. Military burial in Salisbury National Cemetery will follow at 2pm.

Memorials in Royce's honor may be made to Salisbury Civitans or American Legion.

Cemetery Details

Salisbury National Cemetery

501 Statesville Blvd.
Salisbury, NC 28144

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 29. 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM (ET)

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

Memorial Service

JUL 29. 1:00 PM (ET)

Summersett Memorial Chapel
1315 W. Innes St.
Salisbury, NC 28144

Tribute Wall

WH

“ Royce Colby was a dear friend from the time we lived in the same neighborhood. We shared a common bond of Civitan setting at table number one. He especially enjoyed the days when his family members would come to visit with him and it was a requirement for them to enjoy Ciivitan with him. I also enjoyed those days. What an interesting life he lived and the many lives he touched. His 90 birthday party at the Lutheran Home was a testament to this. He was a delight to be around when Gene Wall Curiis Montgomery and I visited him in Raleigh. We all were honored to be called hid friend. I was out of town and so sorry I missed his celebration of life.
Wayne Hayworth



waynw hayworth - August 04, 2016 at 09:46 AM

AB

“ I did not have the opportunity to meet Mr. Royce Colby, but know he is a great man. One reason is by knowing his son, Jack Colby. We work with Jack at NC State and he is a tremendous leader and role model. The other reason is that Mr. Royce Colby flew more than the required number of missions in the European Theater during WW II. By flying more than was required, he went above and beyond by volunteering for additional missions. This speaks to his character and selfless service to our nation.

You have my deepest sympathies and we will keep the entire family in our prayers.

Allen Boyette

Allen Boyette - July 28, 2016 at 02:24 PM

GW

“ Woodfield neighbors, Civitan members and other friends of Royce will miss his wonderful sense of humor and the great stories that he shared of his life and his family. Our most sincere condolences to his family. Gene and Marsha Wall

Gene and Marsha Wall - July 28, 2016 at 11:29 AM

KC

“ The difference and distinction between men will naturally become realized after their departure from this mortal world. But this distinction is not in respect to place, but in respect to the soul and the conscience. For the Kingdom of God is sanctified (or free) from time and place; it is another world and another universe. And know thou for a certainty that in the divine worlds the spiritual beloved ones will recognize one another, and will seek union with each other, but a spiritual union. Likewise a love that one may have entertained for anyone will not be forgotten in the world of the Kingdom, nor wilt thou forget there the life that thou hadst in the material world.



Dear Mr. Jack Colby and family,
Please accept our deepest condolences for your lost. I know he will be watching over you and assisting you in the difficulties!
Casey and Nadia Charepoo

Kourosh Casey Charepoo - July 28, 2016 at 07:59 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Mr. Royce Virgil Colby.



July 27, 2016 at 04:17 PM



“ *Sweet Tenderness was purchased for the family of Mr. Royce Virgil Colby.*



July 27, 2016 at 03:49 PM



“ *Sacred Duty Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. Royce Virgil Colby.*



July 26, 2016 at 01:26 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mr. Royce Virgil Colby.*



July 25, 2016 at 08:39 PM



“ *Jack you and your family are in my thoughts and prayers during this time.*

David Smith - July 25, 2016 at 02:16 PM

MG

“ *Merri Jo and Bill Gamble purchased the Strength & Solace Spray for the family of Mr. Royce Virgil Colby.*



Merri Jo and Bill Gamble - July 25, 2016 at 02:05 PM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Mr. Royce Virgil Colby.*



July 25, 2016 at 01:39 PM

JW

“ *Dear Jack and Family,
Our deepest sympathy and prayers to you
and your family.*

God Bless, Jay and Paige Williams



Jay Williams - July 25, 2016 at 10:33 AM

NM

“ Dear family

We are so touched and sad by this loss and wish you all our deepest sympathy, love and support !!

Royce will always be remembered, we keep his memory into our hearts and keep his spirit alive

He made a deep impression on us, he was such a love-able guy, family man, respected and sweet !

And we are so glad and proud that we had the chance to meet him. Our heart is mourning and we think of you !!

His legacy goes on in his children and grandchildren (and us) Now he is in heaven, enjoying the rest he earned, looking over us all

We will miss him tremendously and in the evening we will look into the sky and see him in the shining stars

Be well over there in heaven Royce !!

*Many hugs and kisses to you all from your Belgian friends
Nancy and Mark XX*

nancy and mark - July 25, 2016 at 05:29 AM

ST

“ My sincere condolences to the family and his friends. He was a true 'Hero'. We will miss him.

*Stephan Creutzburg
(Patton Drivers Leefdaal, Belgium).*



stephan - July 25, 2016 at 03:04 AM

PD

“ *It was an honor and blessing to get to meet Royce in Belgium and to get to know his family. My prayers and sympathies are with his family during their sorrow.*

Patti DaPra - July 23, 2016 at 06:40 PM

TP

“ *thierry Peeters purchased the Pink Tribute Spray for the family of Mr. Royce Virgil Colby.*



thierry Peeters - July 23, 2016 at 01:55 PM

TP

“ *Even at the other side of that big ocean in Belgium we're so touched and sad by this loss. We will miss him.*

Be well over there in heaven Royce

Your extended family from Belgium

Thierry , Anja & Febe

thierry Peeters - July 23, 2016 at 12:43 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mr. Royce Virgil Colby.*



July 23, 2016 at 12:06 PM