



Mrs Wilburn Trexler Taylor

May 27, 2013

Wilburn Trexler Taylor, 94, a resident of Salisbury for most of her life, passed away peacefully in Jacksonville, Florida on Memorial Day with loving family members present. Also at her bedside was the flag she received during the military funeral of her husband of 70 years, Joe Todd Taylor, Jr. honoring his service in the United States Navy, before, during and after World War II. Joe died on October 13 of last year.

Wilburn and Joe met at a cookout in 1935. She was a student at Boyden High School, and he was a student in Statesville. Joe always referred to the occasion as “probably the greatest day of my life.” They married in 1942 and celebrated their 70th Anniversary on September 19, 2012.

Wilburn grew up in Salisbury, daughter of Rowan County engineer and surveyor N.A. Trexler and his wife Georgia. N.A. produced the historic 1930 map of Rowan County, in which he included name and home location of each resident of the county. Wilburn graduated from Boyden High School and Salisbury Business College and worked in the office of Cartex Mill for a while.

After the war, Joe pursued a career in retail that would include 40 years with the Belk organization in Virginia, Ohio and North Carolina, and bring the Taylors back to Salisbury in 1964 with the Belk-Harry Company, then the largest department store in Salisbury. It came to be said that, “There was a

time when Joe Taylor was downtown Salisbury.” Through Wilburn’s long friendship with Doris Harry Pfaff, Wilburn became a substantial shareholder in Belk-Harry Company, holding her interest until Joe’s retirement.

In recognition of their community service for Salisbury throughout Joe’s retailing career, Wilburn and Joe can be found in the city wall mural clasping hands - she in a white Victorian dress, and he wearing a Derby hat.

Through their efforts in the growth of Salisbury as the home of the National Sportscasters and Sportswriters Association, Joe having served as President of its foundation, the Taylors developed a particularly close friendship with Jim Nantz, acclaimed sportscaster for CBS, which Wilburn maintained for the rest of her life.

Wilburn was a lifetime sports fan, and together with Joe, dedicated supporters and regular attendees of Salisbury American Legion Baseball. As a Major League Baseball television subscriber, Wilburn was able to closely follow her favorite Atlanta Braves. Even more than baseball, Wilburn loved Duke basketball, seldom failing to see a televised game.

After Joe’s retirement in 1983, Joe and Wilburn began to regularly play golf with the North Carolina Seniors, a sport they both continued playing into their 90’s.

In 1990, the Taylors purchased the old Wiley School, where Wilburn attended grade school, and had it certified as a North Carolina historic structure to enable it to be converted into 66 low income apartments for the elderly. The Taylors also bought a VFW post building on Brenner Avenue and donated it in 1994 to Salisbury Academy for a classroom building.

Wilburn survived her brother, James W. Trexler, and her sisters, Muriel Trexler

McGinnis and Betty Trexler Hicklin. Wilburn is survived by one sister, Sarah Trexler Drennan, of Fort Mill, South Carolina.

She has two sons; Joe III and Robert. Joe III and his wife Katherine live in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida. Wilburn's granddaughter, Jennifer Taylor Kennedy and her Husband Dr. Robert Kennedy of Satellite Beach, Florida, have given Joe and Wilburn three great-grandchildren: Brooke (6), Preston (3) and Sloane (2). Jennifer's brother Steven Penny Taylor lives in Jacksonville, Florida.

The Taylor's son Robert, who lived in Peachtree City, Georgia died at the age of 57. Robert is survived by his wife Bonnie Taylor and by Joe and Wilburn's grandson Chad Robert Taylor and his fiancée Lauren Thompson of Newnan, Georgia.

The family will see friends Monday night from 6-7:30 at Summersett Funeral Home. A Funeral Service will be held at the First Presbyterian Church of Salisbury on Tuesday, June 4 at 1:00 PM. Dr. Jim Dunkin and Dr. Randy Kirby will officiate. The family will receive friends immediately following the service at Lewis Hall. Thereafter, the family will attend the burial at Rowan Memorial Park. Others are welcome. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to First Presbyterian Church, 308 West Fisher Street, Salisbury, NC 28144.

Summersett Funeral Home is serving the Taylor family and on line condolences can be made at www.summersettfuneralhome.com

Previous Events

Service

JUN 4. 1:00 PM (ET)

First Presbyterian Church
308 W. Fisher St.
Salisbury, NC 28144