



Ralph Lawton Wykel Sr.

September 21, 1927 - January 27, 2023

Ralph Lawton Wykel, Sr., only 95, passed peacefully on January 27, 2023 surrounded by loving family. He came into the world on the 21st night of September, 1927, but that was long before the song was written and undoubtedly not about small-town Arcadia, South Carolina. “Senior” was spirited to the very end and was mercifully granted the briefest of illnesses before the Lord called him home. As a standard bearer of the Greatest Generation with a childhood forged through the Great Depression, he proudly served as a gun mechanic in World War II. At age 14, he lied about his age to get a job at the rail yard and so began a 46-year love affair with trains and logistical problem-solving. The only pause in his singular career and ascent to Yardmaster was an enlistment in the Army the day before his 18th birthday. He served valiantly across Italy and returned home to his fiancée after a dedicated letter writing campaign, one of which still exists in all its sappy, sweet, treasured glory.

Ralph was a simple man; he loved the Lord, his family, and this country more demonstrably than most. He watched three pastors preach four sermons every Sunday and he always knew the state of the union and local news before anyone else. He loved to barter a good deal, watch football and NASCAR, and collected anything with a motor or chamber. He spent many glorious years at Lake Greenwood driving anyone and everyone around on his pontoon, filling their bellies with mouth-watering smoked BBQ chicken, and riding his jet skis and golf carts until they needed a fresh charge. Just a few

short years ago during a routine pacemaker surgery, which he was awake for, he jokingly assured the nurses he'd need more juice than the seven years of promised battery life that would push him past 100. His doctors, care team, and everyone he ever met knew and loved Mr. Ralph. He planned to live and thrive. His passion for life was only cooled by popsicles, and he graciously handed those out as well.

Daddy always cosigned the adventure. He was the source of sage wisdom and sound advice. He shared everything he had selflessly and provided first cars to his babies and never let anyone leave empty-handed. Papa advised us to "be good" and "behave." As a grandfather and great-grandfather the proud twinkle in his eye and chuckle that rose from his belly never diminished. Ralph was a friend to all and never met a stranger. He was a man of resolute character and Godly principles. His many kindnesses and legendary stories will never be forgotten.

He is survived by his three children, Ralph Lawton (Fay) Wykel, Jr., Melba Darlene Lancaster, and Mark Lawton (Michelle) Wykel. His legacy continues forward with 5 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren and their sprawling families.

Ralph was preceded in death by his beloved bride of 53 years, Myrtle Mae Burger Wykel, and cherished son, Mike Alva Wykel.

Visitation will be held at Wood Mortuary in Greer, SC, at 2:30 p.m. on Monday, January 30th, 2023, and service will proceed at 3:30pm led by longtime family friend, Reverend Preston Edmonds. Interment to follow directly thereafter at Wood Memorial Park, where he will be laid to rest next to his sweetheart.

The family wishes to express their gratitude to the community that surrounded and supported the life of our hero and patriarch. We have nothing but gratitude in our hearts for a life well-lived full of love.

In lieu of flowers, please consider supporting your local church or mission. Spend time with your family, forgive any transgressions, and live life honorably in the service of others. Love God and love others, this is our greatest commandment.

Online Condolences may be made to www.thewoodmortuary.com.

Cemetery Details

Wood Memorial Park

863 Gap Creek Road
Duncan, SC 29334

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 30. 2:30 PM - 3:15 PM (ET)

The Wood Mortuary, Inc.
300 West Poinsett Street
Greer, SC 29650
(864) 877-3351
woodmortuary@bellsouth.net

Service

JAN 30. 3:30 PM (ET)

THE WOOD MORTUARY CHAPEL
300 West Poinsett Street
Greer, SC 29650
(864) 877-3351
woodmortuary@bellsouth.net

Tribute Wall



“ *The Wood Mortuary created a Tribute Video in memory of Ralph Lawton Wykel Sr.*



The Wood Mortuary - January 29, 2023 at 06:06 PM

SM

Such a wonderful tribute to your precious Dad, Granddad! Keeping the entire family in Our thoughts and prayers. Love, Ronald & Sandra Miller 🙏❤️🙏

Sandra Miller - February 02, 2023 at 03:24 PM

AW

“ *Ann Woodward lit a candle in memory of Ralph Wykel*



Ann Davis Woodward - August 21, 2023 at 04:33 PM



“ 28 files added to the album Life Tributes



The Wood Mortuary - January 29, 2023 at 06:05 PM



“ Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of Ralph Lawton Wykel Sr..



January 29, 2023 at 03:30 PM