

Date of Birth

Jul 21, 1916



Date of Passing

Apr 01, 1980

WILLIAM HARTLEY STONE

STONE, WILLIAM 'BILL' HARTLEY William 'Bill' Hartley Stone was born on July 21, 1916 on Sand Mountain Alabama near the town of Highpoint, son of Jennie Mae and Jerry Alfred Stone. In 1920 at the tender age of 4, Bill first arrived in Alachua County with his family which began his fateful connection with Newberry and the surrounding area. For 13 years he helped his father farm and run a dairy in the county while attending school in Alachua. No school buses back then, he walked or rode a horse the several miles to school. On the weekends he would milk cows for the Shaw family who lived nearby. He knew he wanted to go to college from an early age, when he would discuss it with his father he would just laugh and say, ' Son you are going to make a fine farmer

someday.' In September 1934 Bill succeeded in gaining entrance to the University of Florida. He did this with only \$75 in his pocket of which \$60 was needed to register for school. To pay for college he drove a school bus which paid very little but did come with room and board and all the squirrel stew you could eat. The only problem was the squirrels were served 'heads and all'! His determination to obtain a higher education in the depths of the Depression with no financial support was almost unheard of during that time. In 1938 he graduated from the University of Florida with a degree in agriculture, a ROTC commission and as the 168th member of Alpha Gamma Roe fraternity. The graduating class was only approximately 400 students! Wasting no time, Bill started his career in agriculture as the first Agriculture teacher at Newberry High School reporting to Bill Barry, the local school trustee, on July 1, 1938. This would turn out to be the most fateful decision of his life as he met the love of his life, my mother, Cilla Karlene Thames. He met her the first week in town staying at the old boarding house across the street from the First Baptist Church of Newberry. They were married in this very church on June 1, 1939 over 77 years ago. During Bill's tenure at Newberry High he started the first vocational agriculture program, established a chapter of the Future Farmers of America, renovated the top floor of the Little Red School House, and was awarded Highest Rated New Teacher in the State of Florida. Just as life seemed to be going their way, he received orders in August 1941 to report to the Army in Ft. Bragg North Carolina. As so many had during those years, he had been called to leave his wife and his career to join the war effort. Assigned to the Army 72nd Field Artillery Regiment he reported as a green 2nd Lieutenant and began his stateside training. While in training Pearl Harbor was attacked resulting in his regiment being sent overseas where he saw action in the Solomon Islands of New Caledonia and Guadalcanal. On Guadalcanal he received the Bronze Star Medal for leading a crew of men during an air raid to repair damaged communication lines. In November 1944, surviving the war, he returned back to the states and made the first phone call to his wife in 3 years. Soon after his return he was released from active duty but he remained in the Army Reserve until 1958 by which time he had obtained the rank of Major. After the war

Bill was eager to get on with his life and took a position as a personnel trainer with a large hardware company in Birmingham Alabama. During his time there he established a special program to attract and train war veterans. After that position he would try his hand at cattle ranching which finally lead to a sales position with a regional fertilizer company. His experience with farming and soft spoken manner made him a natural for sales to farmers in central Florida. It wasn't long before he was promoted to Sales Manager and finally to the President of Wilson and Toomer Fertilizer Company in Jacksonville. When the company was sold he went to work for W.R. Grace and managed the fertilizer production facilities in Puerto Rico and Ft. Pierce Florida. In 1982 Bill and his wife retired and moved back to where it all began in Newberry Florida. Since his retirement he was active for many years in the First Baptist Church of Newberry, the Newberry Lions Club and various other community programs. Bill and Collie Stone had two sons, three grandchildren and three great grandchildren. His son, Jim Stone passed away in April 1980. Sadly, in March 2013 Bill lost his wife and dreamed of the day when he will join her. Bill is survived by his sister Blanche Echols, his sister in law Nancy Stone, son Jack Stone, daughter-in-laws Cathy Stone and Shirley Stone, his grandchildren Adam Stone and his wife Dana Stone, Michael Stone and his wife Lauren Stone and Patricia Harder and her husband Nathan Harder, and his great grandchildren Will Stone, Ava Stone and Haiden Harder and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins. To all the friends and extended family in the Newberry Florida area we extend our deepest thanks for the friendship and love given to Bill and Collie over the years. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the First Baptist Church of Newberry Building Fund, 25520 West Newberry Road Newberry, FL. 32669. A visitation will be on Tuesday, October 4th, 2016 from 5pm to 7pm at Milam Funeral Home of Newberry and funeral Services will be Wednesday, October 5, 2016 at 10:00 AM at First Baptist Church of Newberry, FL., followed by a committal service at the Newberry Cemetery with Military Honors. Arrangements are under the care of MILAM FUNERAL AND CREMATION SERVICES, 22405 W. Newberry Road Newberry, FL 32669. (352) 472-5361. www.milamfh.com

Memories of WILLIAM

