



Robert DeWitt Harris, Sr.

December 25, 1918 - February 2, 1998

Robert DeWitt "Bob" Harris, Sr., age 79, of Morrilton, Arkansas, owner of Harris Funeral Homes of Morrilton and Perryville died Monday, February 2, 1998. He was born December 25, 1918, in Arkadelphia, Arkansas, a son of Alva Clinton Harris and Lonicera Hall Harris. Mr. Harris was born into the funeral business in Arkadelphia, where his father, Alva, was a pioneer funeral director operating the funeral home from his furniture store. He attended Ouachita Baptist College and later graduated from the Cincinnati College of Embalming in 1941. Before entering the service, he was associated with his father and brother in the Harris Funeral Home in Arkadelphia. He was a Navy veteran of World War II and served on the USS Cruiser Little Rock. The day he sailed from the states during World War II, the funeral home burned. After returning home from the Navy with his wife Golda, daughter of the late Dr. James Monroe Matthews of Morrilton and Charlotte Thedford Matthews of Perry County, Arkansas, he bought Reid Funeral Home in Morrilton in 1947. Bob was a member of the First Baptist Church where he served as church treasurer for many years and was a deacon from 1948 thru 1989. He served in various organizations in the funeral profession. He was the 1958 president of the Arkansas Funeral Directors Association and in 1959 was honored as "Funeral Director of the Year." He was a member of the National Funeral Directors Association, Arkansas Funeral Directors Association, National Selected Morticians and was former chairman of the Burial Association Board. He was a founder and served as secretary-treasurer of Selected Funeral and

Life Insurance Company, Selected Holding Company, and Selected Financial Services Corporation in Hot Springs. An advocate of quality education, Bob was actively involved in local and state education in the 1950's. He served as president of the Morrilton School Board and was later president of the Arkansas State Board of Education. For this work, he received an Arkansas Traveler Award. Also, during this time, he worked with the late Winthrop Rockefeller when Mr. Rockefeller built Reynolds Elementary, a "model school" in Morrilton. Bob was always active in the affairs of his community, having served as Conway County Coroner for thirty six years and several terms on the Morrilton Chamber of Commerce and Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce. For several years, he served as vice-chairman of the Governing Board of the Conway County Hospital. He was instrumental in bringing several industries to the community such as Arrow Automotive and Sound Craft. He was a member and past president of the Rotary Club, where he was a recipient of the Paul Harris Fellow and recently received a fifty year membership pin. He was a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, a member of Scimitar Temple of Little Rock and was a 32 degree Mason, and recently received a fifty year membership pin from the Morrilton Lodge #105. He was on the board of the Morrilton Depot Museum, a member of the "Old Timers Pine Box' Club, a member of the Arkansas Basin Development Association and served on the Selective Service Board for twenty five years. As president of the non-profit Museum of Automobiles on Petit Jean Mountain he loved to talk about "old cars" and his antique machines on display at the museum. He enjoyed sharing his antique circus calliope in area parades. He was active in the Mid-America Old Time Car Association and member of the Arkansas Travelers Auto Club.

Survivors include his wife, Golda Matthews Harris; one son and daughter-in-law, Robert DeWitt Harris, Jr. and Michelle of Morrilton; two daughters, Emily Dockery of Solgohachia and Charlotte Harris of Morrilton; five grandchildren, Susan Calhoun Dumas of Morrilton, Amy Shaw of Bowling Green, Missouri, Janna and Justin Harris, both of Little Rock and Haylee Harris of Morrilton and

two great-grandchildren, Taylor and Abby Edwards of Greenbrier.

Funeral Services will be 1:00p.m. Wednesday, February 4, at the First Baptist Church by Dr. Bill Brown. Burial is at Elmwood Cemetery by Harris Funeral Home of Morrilton. Memorials may be made to the First Baptist Church in Morrilton or the Museum of Automobiles on Petit Jean Mountain. Pallbearers will be Fred Peck, Jim Matthews, Bill Plummer, Robert Mitchell, Buddy Hoelzeman, and Courtney Crouch. Honorary Pallbearers will be Maurice Sefton, Bill Mansker, Dean Hicks, Ed Poe, Jeff Bowden, and Bennie Ross.

Tribute Wall



“ *Robert DeWitt Harris, Sr.*

January 30, 2023 at 02:08 AM



“ *I remember you well from my days selling Newspapers in Morrilton. I remember you walking across the railroad tracks from the funeral home early on Sunday mornings to Warrens cafe to have coffee with all the men (mostly county officials) that gathered there every Sunday morning before church.*

robert Rainbolt - June 30, 2018 at 01:25 AM