



Dr. Gerard "Jerry" Marder

January 20, 1924 - January 7, 2014

Jerry Marder, our beloved father, grandpapa and great grandpapa, uncle and great uncle, dear friend, devoted husband, and storyteller to anyone who would lend an ear, has passed away. He was just a few days shy of his 90th birthday, lived a long and happy life, yet it was still too soon for us all.

Jerry was born in Brooklyn, NY from where countless tales arise – playing stickball, trips into the city, general mischief, and even a story about a wayward aunt and uncle's Christmas tree being shoved out an upper story apartment window when their grandfather unexpectedly came to visit. He was the son of Ida and Frank Marder, and the younger brother of Julienne Marder Winner. While in NY he attended Montauk Junior High School and Erasmus Hall High School. Jerry was fortunate to grow up with many of his nearly forty cousins, who were like brothers and sisters, and with whom he remained close his entire life.

The family moved to Asheville in 1939 when the Ecusta paper mill, the first cigarette paper manufacturing plant in the United States, located operations in North Carolina. Jerry's father and one of his uncles worked for the company, as did Jerry for two summers in its chemistry laboratory. He graduated from Lee Edwards High School and went on to the University of North Carolina. There he joined Navy ROTC and became a member of Tau Epsilon Phi fraternity.

During WWII Jerry left UNC to begin active duty as an Ensign in the US Navy. He was executive officer and later commanding officer of the amphibious ship USS LCI(L)-758 in the South Pacific, Philippines and China. They participated in, among other duties, at least five invasions. He was very proud of his service and spoke of it the rest of his life.

Once decommissioned, his ship was converted to a tour boat sailing around Manhattan for Circle Line Sightseeing Cruises. Jerry spent two years tracking down the ship, locating former crew and organizing a reunion on board. They were treated like kings, even making the local news (search NY Times, Collections, Landing Craft) and he often said it was one of the happiest days of his life. The ship was recently retired and is now being converted to a museum for the Circle Line company. Jerry, along with his wife, was honored last spring when they were brought to NY to record his many memories from the war.

“Captain Jerry” enjoyed the many challenges of navigation, using a compass, charts, a sextant, and the stars, all of which contributed to his later love of sailing with friends and family on Lake Norman, in the Chesapeake Bay, the Florida Keys, and the Caribbean.

“After the war,” as he often said, Jerry returned to Chapel Hill and in 1947 graduated with the class of '44. He graduated from Duke Medical School in 1952 and then returned to active military duty as a medical officer before returning to Duke for pediatric training. Jerry was a proud alumnus of both universities but those close to him know which team he pulled for when they competed against each other.

“Doctor Jerry” and a classmate from medical school opened one of Gastonia’s first pediatric practices. They were on call every other night and every other

weekend; and they were called often! There were stories of homemade culture medium using their own blood before commercially prepared culture plates were readily available, anecdotes of painful shots received followed by hugs and assurances that they would feel better, and more than one testimony of lives saved long before there were CT scans and outside laboratories. Jerry was a very skillful diagnostician. Other wonderful physicians later joined the many dedicated nurses and administrative staff who brought the same level of care and professionalism that Jerry did.

Jerry retired from full-time practice in 1989. He continued to work part-time at the Gaston County Health Department and substituted for pediatricians around the country until he saw his last patient at the age of 75. He had been a Fellow in the American Academy of Pediatrics, president of the NC Pediatric Society, Chief of Staff at Gaston Memorial Hospital, and president of the Gaston Medical Society. He was a founding member of Holy Angels, a Sisters of Mercy ministry in Belmont, NC that continues to provide a home, daycare, medical care, education, training, and love for the differently able; and he served as its first physician. Jerry was recently bestowed the honor of being named a Paul Harris Fellow by the Rotary Club of Gastonia.

Jerry was a member of Temple Emanuel in Gastonia and Beth HaTephila in Asheville before moving to Burlington, NC in 2012 where he found new friends and a new audience for his reminiscences.

Jerry was married in 1949 to Naomi Cooley. They had three children - Jeffrey Marder of Sunrise, FL, Tony Marder and his wife Marisa of Gastonia, and Vicki Marder and her husband Christopher Austin of Asheville. In 2000 he married Joan Timson Blaetz, whom he adored. In addition to his wife and children, Jerry is survived by his stepchildren David Blaetz and his wife Mary, Robin Blaetz and her husband Cosmas Demetriou, Peter Blaetz and his wife Patty,

Pierson Blaetz and his wife Shannon Fry. He is also survived by grandchildren Brandy Vance and her husband Lex, Ashley Bowman and her husband Cory, Russell Marder, Alexandra Austin, Elyse Marder, and David Marder; and from the Blaetz family - Taylor, Evan, Gordon, Meredith, Zachary, Jarryd and Isadora. He is also survived by great grandson Dru Vance and many loving and loved nieces and nephews, great nieces and great nephews too.

A graveside service was held at Riverside Cemetery in Asheville on January 9, 2014, officiated by Rabbi Batsheva Meiri.

If you would like to make a contribution in Jerry's memory, please consider JDRF/Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (Suite 102, 205 Regency Executive Park Drive, Charlotte, NC 28217,) Holy Angels (PO Box 710, Belmont, NC 28012) or Temple Emanuel (320 S. South Street, Gastonia, NC 28052.)

On a personal note, we were all amazed by Dad's vast knowledge of history and keen intellect. He was a product of public schools in NY and NC but I think it was equally, if not more likely due to his mother's influence because his sister had a great mind too. Jerry loved perusing maps, his many nautical charts and a well-worn National Geographic Atlas of the World. He was fortunate to travel often and our parents always brought back gifts, many that he selected himself. But his favorite souvenirs were pictures of people he travelled with and others he met along the way, some of whom became life-long friends. Jerry wasn't shy. It wouldn't have been unusual for him to see a crowd of people celebrating or just enjoying themselves and to jump right in and have his picture taken with them. He loved old movies, especially Casablanca, which he surely had seen two or three dozen times, but would still watch every time it came on TV. He often sang snippets of songs from the 30s and 40s. Or maybe it was the 20s and 50s, I don't know, but they weren't anything I'd ever heard before. He did enjoy Karaoke, not singing himself but

listening to Jeff singing classic Frank Sinatra tunes. We don't know why my brother was the only one in the family who could carry a tune, that is, till the grandchildren came along. Jerry and Joan liked costume parties, even winning 1st place at the Grove Park Inn, when he dressed in tails and a top hat and Joan as a beautiful flapper. And recently they dressed up a la Grant Wood's American Gothic. I don't think I've ever laughed as hard as I did upon seeing the picture of my father in overalls. He did take moderation to the extreme - smoking one cigarette a day until he quit in the 80s, exercising the bare minimum recommended, his motto being "No pain...no pain!" And he drank "one unit" of alcohol each and every evening, even getting my husband to appreciate the joy of gin and tonic. I know he thoroughly enjoyed the beer that Tony procured the night before he passed.

Jerry was quite a guy. Not a saint, as he would readily admit, but, to us, saintly none the less. He truly exemplified "The Greatest Generation." He proudly served his country, worked hard, raised a family, seldom complained, and needed little recognition for what he thought was just the way we should all conduct ourselves. He was a man of unquestionable integrity of the kind that is not so common anymore. Jerry had joy and love in his life and for that we are all grateful. He will be missed.

Cemetery Details

Riverside Cemetery

53 Birch Street
Asheville, NC 28801

Previous Events

Graveside Service

JAN 9. 3:00 PM (ET)

Riverside Cemetery
53 Birch Street
Asheville, NC 28801

Tribute Wall



“ *Dr. Gerard "Jerry" Marder*

October 07, 2023 at 11:15 AM



“ *As an RN, I knew and worked with Dr. Marder at Gastonia Pediatric Associates for about 10 years beginning in the early 70"s. He was always caring of not only his patients but also his employees. He was always pleasant and possessed an awesome sense of humor. Many times since I left his employ in the early 80"s I have thought of him. I feel honored to have known him and to have worked with him. He will be missed.*

Jean Smith - January 19, 2014 at 06:47 PM



“ *"Dr. Marder was our family pediatrician for years and his kindness, forthright approach, keen intellect, and humor are remembered with great fondness and respect. Our deepest condolences to the family."* Costas

DC - January 13, 2014 at 09:35 AM



“ *I am so sorry for your loss. The Bible provides comfort during these difficult times. Revelation 21:3-4 states, And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away. Very soon now, we will never experience losing our loved ones in death. Hope these words give you a new hope.*

Ana - January 12, 2014 at 01:39 PM

CC

“ Dr. Marder saved my life when I was only 9 years old. I was in a terrible car accident with my mom in Belmont , NC, when a car crossed the center line and hit our car head-on. I was in and out of a coma but my parents wouldn't allow the hospital to let me go home without Dr. Marder checking me out. He of course suspected internal bleeding and was right...I had a ruptured spleen and would have died if my parents had listened to the emergency room doctor and taken me home. I owe my life, 35 year teaching career, and a very happy marriage and family to Dr. Marder....May he rest in peace in our Lord's presence for eternity.

Connie Carnes
Mt. Holly, NC

Connie Carnes - January 10, 2014 at 12:40 PM

SG

“ Joan and Jerry were welcome & vibrant additions to The Village At Brookwood family. Our time with Jerry was relatively short but long enough to have a sense of the terrible loss the family is feeling. We hope and pray that the many memories that Jerry left with you will carry you thru this difficult time. I will always regret that our circumstances didn't allow the time for me to share and re-live our USN experiences in the Pacific. May he always have fair winds and following seas.

Sam Gagliano

sam gagliano - January 09, 2014 at 01:01 PM

AH

“ As residents of Brookwood Village where JERRY AND JOAN have lived recently we became very fond of his humor and friendship. His camaraderie at Halloween and wonderful partnership at bridge will as well as hi friendship will be sorely missed. Agnes and Bob Heller

agnes heller - January 09, 2014 at 09:42 AM