



## Mr. Richard Gundry Jennings, Jr

August 2, 1924 - August 7, 2017

### Pioneer in the Aquaculture Industry

Richard Gundry Jennings, Jr., died on August 7, 2017, at his residence in Asheville, NC. He celebrated his 93rd birthday five days prior, with his wife of sixty-six years, and their three children.

Born on August 2, 1924, Jennings hailed from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. His parents were Sara Chaplin Jennings and Richard Gundry Jennings, Sr., both of Pittsburgh. He had a secure future in the oil business with his family, but instead, he chose to move south, to untamed land which his grandfather had purchased over his lifetime. That land spanned about 30,000 acres at one time, from Jackson to Transylvania Counties. Jennings' father, Richard, Sr., warned, "You'll starve if you choose this path." He spent the next seven decades creating an unparalleled legacy for his family and countless others.

Jennings attended Yale University, interrupted by World War II, where he served in the Philippines with the United States Army. After the war ended, he made his way south to Cashiers, NC, where he started a mink farm in 1948, followed by a trout farm. He and Frances Clark, of Asheville, raised their three children there and carved out a significant niche within this remote Appalachian community.

In the early 50's and 60's, Jennings was instrumental in building a community Center in the heart of Cashiers, where folks could meet, share ideas, and consider different educational paths for their children. He was considered a trustworthy friend by all who knew him. He was also known for his prowess at square dance calling.

In the 60's, he and Frances made their way to Asheville, where they have remained ever since.

Over the next three decades, Jennings served on numerous boards and was known for his less than complacent personality when it came to issues in which he believed. He made a difference in whatever he tackled. He looked back most fondly upon his years on the Warren Wilson Board, where he served for twenty years.

During his life in Asheville, he expanded his trout business to include a large rearing facility in Haywood County, and today, incorporating a new state-of-the-art processing facility in the heart of Waynesville. He defied the traditional thoughts and process of fish farming and was never afraid to step outside of his comfort zone. He stood up for his principles, ideals, and friends, regardless of consequences.

Perhaps Jennings' greatest legacy was his grandfather's property in Cashiers, which he protected and preserved over his lifetime, making sure that he could pass it along to his children. That he did, establishing a very unique mountain community, unlike any other. Jennings was able to go visit his property in Cashiers, known as Lonesome Valley, not long before his death, at which time he was heard to say, "I believe all your ancestors are looking down proudly over all you've accomplished."

Even at ninety, Jennings still drove out to the farm on a regular basis, giving

good counsel when he deemed it appropriate. He enjoyed watching the fruits of all his labors coming to pass.

Jennings is survived by his wife, Frances Clark Jennings, their three children, Richard Gundry Jennings, III (Dickie), and his wife, Eli Corbin Jennings of Asheville, NC, Binford Virginia Jennings of Asheville, NC, Sara Chaplin Hudson (Sally), and her husband, Charles Edward Hudson of Waynesville, NC.

He is also survived by nine grandchildren: Wesley Eason, Benjamin Eason and his wife Anna Eason, Sara Hughes (Katie) and her husband Clay Hughes, Richard Jennings IV, and his wife Sarah, of Cashiers, NC, Sarah Kowalski and her husband, Jim, of Savannah, Corbin Jennings, of Washington, DC, Rachael Jennings, of Washington, DC, Nicholas Sievers of Athens, Ohio and Timothy Sievers of Cincinnati, Ohio.

In addition, there are seven great-grandchildren, Taylor, Mollie, and Emory Eason, Edward and Richard Jennings V, Grayson and Crosby Kowalski and Henry Hughes.

Generous by nature, he encouraged graciousness toward community, friends and family. We will miss his guidance, his bigger-than-life presence, his remarkable wit and never-ceasing sense of humor.

Services will be held Saturday, August 12, 2017, at 3:00 PM, at Trinity Episcopal Church, followed by the interment at Calvary Episcopal Church. And following, the family invites everyone to join them in celebrating the "Life Well Lived" of Richard Jennings at the Biltmore Town Hall.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Children's Welfare League, PO

Box 15425, Asheville, NC 28813. Follow this link, [www.cwl-asheville.org](http://www.cwl-asheville.org) to go directly to their homepage and then click on "Donate".

# Previous Events

## Family will Receive Friends

AUG 11. 4:30 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Morris Funeral & Cremation Care  
304 Merrimon Ave.  
Asheville, NC 28801  
(828) 252-1821  
info@morrisfamilycare.com  
<http://www.morrisfamilycare.com>

## Funeral Service

AUG 12. 3:00 PM (ET)

Trinity Episcopal Church  
60 Church Street  
Asheville, NC 28801

## Celebration of Life

AUG 12. 5:00 PM (ET)

Biltmore Forest Town Hall  
355 Vanderbilt Road  
Biltmore Forest, NC 28803  
<http://townhall@biltmoreforest.org>

# Tribute Wall



“ *Mr. Richard Gundry Jennings, Jr*

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October 07, 2023 at 11:15 AM



“ *Uncle Dick was an inspiration of true dedication to the trout farm and his family. We always enjoyed our visits to NC and will cherish his stories.*

*Lots of love from,  
Collie & Justin Spakes and Mike & Lauren Jennings*

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**Collie Spakes** - August 15, 2017 at 05:39 PM



“ *We are so very sorry for your loss. You are all in our thoughts and our prayers*

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**Gray and Bobby Marrow** - August 14, 2017 at 11:42 AM

RL

“ To the Richard Gundry Jennings, Jr family,

*On behalf of president Lynn Morton and all at Warren Wilson College we give thanks for the life of and service of Richard Gundry Jennings, Jr. We take time out to pay tribute to him and share in your loss. Dick was a true friend and leader to Warren Wilson College serving on the board of trustees and friend over many years. We hold you all up in the light and we send our deep and sincere condolences. He was truly a great presence of good spirit and always with a wonderful smile, he will be missed. Rest in peace Dick, our thoughts and prayers go out to your family always.*

*Warren Wilson College  
Rodney Lytle  
Alumni Ambassador*

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**Rodney Lytle** - August 14, 2017 at 11:02 AM

BP

“ *Dear Frances, Sally, Dick, Binford and your families, John and I send love and healing thoughts at this time of loss. I especially send love in place of what my Mom, Benn Edney Fass, would have sent your way. You are all dear to me throughout my life and I hope to see you soon to deliver my love in person. God Bless you all.  
XOXOX*



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**Benn Edney Fass & John T. Pickering** - August 13, 2017 at 08:41 PM

DC

“ Dear Sally, Dick and Binford,

*My father, Jamie Clarke, had many friends in Western North Carolina that he admired and loved, but his admiration and love for absolutely none of them came close to his admiration and love of your father. He absolutely treasured his friendship with your dad and loved nothing more than spending a day with him on some crazy, usually last-minute planned, adventure in the woods somewhere in the mountains trying to find some lost cabin or place that they remembered from earlier days or just wanted to see how it had changed since they saw it last. Your dad was one of the few people my father knew would always be with him, regardless of disagreements they might have on issues or policy. The friendship they had meant that much, i think, to both of them. Ironically, both my father and mother were buried in Calvary Church yard, so in that sense they will remain close forever.*

*My own earliest memory of your father was a childhood visit to Cashiers with my dad to tour the mink farm. I can remember it, well, like it was yesterday. All i think I have to say is no matter how old you get, one does not forget a visit to a mink farm easily.*

*I deeply regret that neither I nor any of the other Clarke's who equally admired your father could be at the funeral service today. I did not know about his death until shortly after the service began and, when I did, I was in Charlotte. My sister, Annie, and her husband, John Ager, are in New York State this week with their children and grandchildren. I hope you all know that we each would have wished to be there to help you celebrate the incredible life he lived, the amazing person he was and honor the memory of how much he meant to our father and mother.*

*Dumont (f/k/a "Dubie") Clarke*

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Dumont Clarke - August 12, 2017 at 09:29 PM

BJ

*Thank you, Dubie! We feel the same way about the great friendship of our dads, Jamie and Dick. Two peas in a pod. Yesterday was a good send-off for our dear father, with stories of admiration, love, grateful hearts and plenty of humor as well, to be sure. Already missing him, it soothes my soul to know others were moved and positively affected by daddy. A mountain of a man with a wonderful heart and a deep love of these western NC woods, he will live on in our hearts, as does Jamie Clarke.*

*Love,  
Binford*

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**Binford Jennings** - August 13, 2017 at 06:00 PM

AB

*“ Binford, Sally and "Dickie" I am so very sorry to learn of the loss of your father. My prayers are with you during this difficult time  
Peace,  
Abby Bates*

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**Abby Bates** - August 11, 2017 at 07:22 PM



*“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Mr. Richard Gundry Jennings, Jr.*



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August 11, 2017 at 05:44 PM

BW

*“ Deepest Condolences to all the Jennings family from Laurretta, Billy, and all the Warlick family on losing Dick. We cherished our time with him and are blessed to have known him and all he did for our communities.*

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**Billy Warlick** - August 11, 2017 at 03:21 PM

DS

“ *Very sad to hear the news of Binford's daddy passing. He was a force to be reckoned with. Loved that man the minute I met him! He was smart, tough and had a great sense of humor. He will certainly live on in our memories.*

*Dana*

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**dana whitney steinke** - August 10, 2017 at 11:17 AM

BJ

*Thank you for this, Dana. So true. Much love, Binford*

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**Binford Virginia Jennings** - August 12, 2017 at 07:29 AM

NW

“ *Remember him and your mother coming in to the hospital. Despite the reason for the visit they were energetic and fun. Know they will be sorely missed. Hugs*

*Nila and Ron*

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**Nila Wilbur** - August 10, 2017 at 10:05 AM

BW

“ *One skill that was not mentioned in his obituary was that he was a fluent French speaker.*

*He joined our Cercle Francais at Deerfield for a few meetings and was far ahead of the schoolroom French that was the best we could manage. Apparently Dick learnt the language from visiting France to acquire experience in fish farming as part of his Sunburst Trout Farm business.*

*We recall him as a lovely man and would like to have known him better. We enjoyed reading the excellent obituary.*

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**Ben Watson** - August 10, 2017 at 10:02 AM

BJ

*Thank you, Ben. He spent much time in France as he found the language and the country so totally enchanting. I will cherish memories of being there with him. His favorite ski destination, especially...La Clusaz.*

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**Binford Virginia Jennings** - August 12, 2017 at 07:33 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Mr. Richard Gundry Jennings, Jr.*



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August 10, 2017 at 08:33 AM

JC

“ *He was a very special man! Enjoying getting to know him at Deerfield. Will miss him coming into the River Walk Spa for nail service and talking to him. His granddaughter Rachel and my daughter are good friends. My prayers are with your family may God give you comfort and peace!*

*Sincerely  
Judy Cody*

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**Judy Cody** - August 09, 2017 at 05:51 PM

SS

“ To the family of Richard Jennings or Dick which is what my Daddy called him. I did not know him well just saw him once or twice with Daddy when he was working for him. The people of Cashiers remember him fondly. They called him a friend and loved him. He did many great things for our community we are still using the Community Building for events.

*Shirley Baumgarner Slaughter, Daughter of Franklin Baumgarner.*

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**Shirley Baumgarner Slaughter** - August 09, 2017 at 02:17 PM

WK

“ Sally, Binford, Dick

*I believe on cannot adequately express in words all the memories, close and far. To me your father was always a fair, kind (as much as any one person can be) understanding individual. He would make you work for what you wanted but always kept a hand on the rudder. A GOOD man that will be missed by many.*

*My thoughts and love are with you family and friends.*

Wayne

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**Wayne Kevitt** - August 09, 2017 at 01:21 PM

JS

“ I am saddened to hear that Dick Jennings has passed. He will be missed by many. My sincere condolences to the Jennings family.  
*John Swann*

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**John Swann** - August 09, 2017 at 12:24 PM

TM

“ *Sally, Dick and Binford,  
I was saddened to learn of your father's passing. Please accept my  
condolences.  
I will keep you all in my thoughts and prayers. Much love to each of  
you.  
I sure remember all the trips to Cashiers to fish and driving by  
Happy Valley!  
Tommy McMahon*

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**Tommy McMahon** - August 09, 2017 at 09:14 AM

MJ

“ *Thru the years Mike and I enjoyed visits with Dick to the trout farm.  
He loved the mountains of North Carolina and spending time with  
family when we were able to visit.  
Mike and Billie Jennings*

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**mike jennings jr** - August 09, 2017 at 08:54 AM