



Mr. William E. Odom Jr.

May 21, 1917 - February 22, 2010

Col. William Elijah Odom Jr., born May 21, 1917, died on Monday, February 22, 2010, at the age of 92.

William was born in Decatur, Alabama, and grew up in Asheville, North Carolina. He attended Orange Street School, David Millard Junior High, and graduated from Asheville High School in 1934. He graduated Biltmore College in 1936, and went on to study forestry at NC State University, graduating in 1940.

He joined the Army Air Corps in 1940. Following his graduation as a cadet, he was a flight and bombing instructor and navigator. Throughout his decorated service, his stations included Hunter AFB Savannah, GA; Barksdale AFB, Shreveport, LA; Lakenheath AFB, United Kingdom, Wiesbaden, Germany; and The Pentagon, Washington, DC. Among many honors, William was a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Notable military service awards included a Legion of Merit, Joint Service Commendation Medal, World War II Victory Medal, National Defense and American Defense Service Medals, Air Force Longevity Service Award, Army Commendation Medal, American Campaign Medal, and Air Force Commendation Medal. During his service, he received an MBA from George Washington University in 1960. In 1968, he retired from the US Air Force to return to Asheville, NC.

Following his retirement, he was a flight instructor for Asheville Flying Service for many years, and is remembered fondly by his former students. He was an avid motorcyclist and bicyclist, enjoying the Blue Ridge Parkway views on years of daily trips to Craggy Gardens and back. He was an accomplished musician of clarinet and tenor saxophone, a scholar of calculus and history, and an animated storyteller. Reading was also one of his greatest pleasures, and losing his eyesight only prompted him to move to a different method of expanding his knowledge by listening to countless books on tape. He enjoyed family dinners nightly, and was a connoisseur of Tanqueray gin and strawberry shortcake. Though he will not make it to the high school graduation this summer as he had wished, one of his last and greatest joys was the acceptance of his youngest son, Will, into the

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, class of 2014.

William's numerous accomplishments were only a glimpse into the dedication and rigorousness of his spirit. Being the extraordinary man that he always was, it is difficult for those who love him to fathom that there was a final feat that he was unable to conquer. In this, we can only remember these words of Oscar Wilde, "one can survive everything nowadays, except death, and live down anything, except a good reputation."

He is preceded in death by his mother, Blythe Hill Odom, his father, William Elijah Odom Sr., and former wife Bonnie Belle Odom, mother of surviving son Paul M Odom, of Greensboro, NC. He is also survived by wife Alastair McDonald Odom, and their son William Elijah Odom III of Asheville; step daughter Emily C. Nyberg, of Wellington, New Zealand, step daughter Leacey C. Bachhuber, of Efland, NC, and dear friend Nathan McGhee, of Raleigh, NC.

A memorial service will be held 11:00 AM, Saturday, March 6, 2010 at Trinity Episcopal Church with the Revs. William A. Whisenhunt and Carol Hubbard officiating. The family will receive friends in the church hall following the service.

Morris Funeral Home, 304 Merrimon Avenue is assisting the family. Condolences may be sent to www.morrisfamilyfuneralhome.com

Cemetery Details

Lewis Memorial Park

415 Beaverdam Road
Asheville, NC 28804

Previous Events

Service

MAR 6. 11:00 AM (ET)

Trinity Episcopal Church
60 Church Street
Asheville, NC 28801

Tribute Wall



“ *Mr. William E. Odom Jr.*

October 07, 2023 at 11:15 AM



“ 18 files added to the album *Wm. Odom Family Photos*



Morris Funeral Home & Cremation Service - March 04, 2010 at 01:44 PM



“ *Dear Will and Family,
We would like to wish you the most sincere condolences in your time of need.
Our thoughts and prayers are with you in your time of loss.*

Your Beaucatcher Family.

(posted on behalf of the staff)

I b - February 25, 2010 at 08:38 AM