

Obituary
Forrest B. Claxton, Jr.
1923 - 2016

Forrest B. Claxton, Jr., Springfield, Missouri, passed away on March 5, 2016, after a five year decline in health. He was born March 30, 1923 in Fayette, Iowa, the son of Forrest B. and Ruth (Dubbert) Claxton.

Forrest spent his childhood in Fayette. His parents were cultured, community leaders who raised him to be dependable and hard working. He was valedictorian of his high school class and attended Upper Iowa University before entering WWII in February, 1943. He enlisted in the Army Air Corps, took military and flight training in Wisconsin, California, Arizona and Texas, was commissioned as an officer, became a P-47 pilot and flew numerous missions over Germany with the 406th Fighter Group, 512th Squadron, before being shot down and captured by the Germans. He received the Purple Heart, Air Medal and Prisoner of War Medal.

After the war he attended Iowa State University for a time, then returned to aviation, which he loved. He became a mechanic for Central Airlines, followed by 26 years as a pilot for Continental Airlines until his retirement in 1983. In his years as a pilot, he flew Stearman, Vultee, AT-6, P-40, P-47, DC-3, DC-7 and Boeing 727 aircraft, showed his son the basics of recreational flying in light aircraft, and flew model aircraft with his son and grandsons.

He married Kathryn Yearwood in 1953, and to them was born a son, Roger Farrell Claxton. They ceased their life together in 1980. Later Forrest married Laura Ann Killingsworth in Austin, Texas. Shortly after, they moved to Springfield, Missouri, and except for nine years spent in Arkansas, have lived there until their 35 years together ended at his death. He loved and cherished Ann deeply, and was so very sweet to her, as she was to him. He and Ann were the Lord's gift to each other and to their children, who witnessed that gift and its blessing of true happiness and love.

He was a kind, generous, good and always supportive father to Roger, providing for a good education and foundation for life and giving him advice at just the right times and only when needed. He was a member of the local chapter of American Ex P. O. W. and attended reunions of his WWII organization.

Survivors are his wife, Ann and her children; his son Roger and Roger's wife Bridget; and his grandsons Robert R. Claxton and Andrew R. Claxton. Those who passed on before Forrest were his parents and his sister, Barbara Ann Claxton. Forrest will be placed at rest with his parents and sister in his home town of Fayette.

Forrest was a loving husband, father, and grandpa. We celebrate his life and accomplishments, his quiet but strong sense of duty and patriotism, as well as his certainty of the presence and power of the Lord. In his words, "we've got a Lord and benefactor" who we know saved him many times so that he could be with us for so many wonderful years.

We will cherish our memories of him.

-Springfield, MO News-Leader on Mar. 13, 2016