

Obituaries

J. OLLIE HARRIS SR.

Former Kings Mountain Senator John Oliver Harris Sr., 82, of 921 Sharon Dr., died February 9, 1996 at Gaston Memorial Hospital of a blood clot arising from complications from cellulitis. He had entered the hospital February 6 after developing inflammation in his left leg.

Born September 2, 1913 in Anderson, SC, he was the son of J. Frank and Jessie Hambright Harris. His mother was a direct descendant of the Revolutionary War hero Colonel Frederick Hambright who served in the North Carolina General Assembly in 1775.

Harris attended grammar school in Anderson and moved to Shelby in 1927 to live with his grandparents, J. Frank Harris Sr. and Genie Miller Harris. He graduated from Shelby High School in 1931.

His first job was with the Lutz-Jackson Funeral Home in 1928 which became the Lutz-Austell Funeral Home in 1933 and he worked there until 1947 when he opened his own business in Kings Mountain.

In 1934, Harris married Abbie Jane Wall of Shelby and graduated from Gupton-Jones College of Embalming, Nashville, Tn. He became licensed as an embalmer and funeral director in 1935.

In 1943, Harris entered the US Army and took basic training at Camp Barkley, Texas and Surgical Technician training at Fort Sam Houston. He went overseas in the European Theater of Operations in October 1944, serving in France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany and Austria with the 65th Field Hospital as a Surgical Technician and Staff Sergeant. Sgt. Harris was serving in Bostogne, Belgium during the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944 and earned the Bronze Star for services beyond the call of duty. Discharged in December 1945 at Fort Bragg, he returned to Shelby as an employee of Lutz-Austell Funeral Home.

In 1946 Harris assisted in the organization of the Veterans of Foreign Wars in Shelby and became its first elected Commander and was elected Coroner of Cleveland County and served until 1970. He was elected president of the N.C. Coroner's Association in 1965.

In July 1947 Harris became the owner of Harris Funeral Home in Kings Mountain. He bought the H. Tom Fulton Mortuary on Cherokee Street and a year later leased the 1917 Allison home on North Piedmont Avenue beside old City Hall, now the Kings Mountain Police Department. Major renovations included a new chapel in 1970.

In 1954 he was elected a member of the N.C. State Board of Embalmers and was president of the group in 1958. In 1960 he was elected president of the North Carolina Funeral Directors Association and served one term.

Harris, a 50-year member of the American Legion, served as Commander of Kings Mountain American Legion Post 155 and Kings Mountain Veterans of Foreign Wars, as president of the Kings Mountain Lions Club, the Kings Mountain Red Cross Chapter and as a trustee of Gardner-Webb University. He is a member and former chairman of the board of deacons at Kings Mountain Baptist Church and a retired volunteer member of the Kings Mountain Fire Department and also previously served in the Shelby Volunteer Fire Department. He was a Mason and member of

Fairview Lodge 339 AF&AM and an honorary member of the Kings Mountain Kiwanis Club.

A lifetime of Democratic activism led Harris to run for the Senate in 1970, giving up the county coroner's job he held since 1946. He served for 18 years in the 25th Senatorial District that included Cleveland and Rutherford counties from 1971-72, 1975-90 and in 1993-94 for two years in the new 37th District that includes Cleveland and Rutherford Counties. He was by then known as the "dean of the N. C. Senate." He became the chairman of the Senate Human Resources Committee in 1977 and served 14 years. He was chairman of the pensions and retirement committee in 1993.

Due to his leadership in mental health, he won the Valand Award in 1979, the Outstanding Legislator Award in the field of Public Health by the North Carolina Association of Health Departments in 1979 and the Outstanding Legislator award by the North Carolina Health Care Association in 1979.

He was vice-chairman of the Senate ways and means and the senior citizens and rules committees, banking and judiciary I and appropriations committees and the University board of Governors. He was a member of the Mental Health Study commission, the Mental Health, Mental Retardation, Alcohol and Drug Abuse commissions and the governmental operations committees. He also served on the legislative services, social service and emergency medical service commissions. At 82 Harris held the record of holding public office longer than any other person in Cleveland County, 44 years.

He was nominated by former Governor James Martin and the State Medical Society to receive the national Nathan Davis Award which credited him for helping bring major improvements in the state's institutions for the mentally handicapped. He was active on the advisory board of Western Carolina Center, the institution for the mentally retarded in Morganton and was instrumental in a drive to build a chapel. In November 1992.

Harris was elected to his 10th term in the N.C. Senate, the first person to be elected from the newly formed district composed of Cleveland and Rutherford Counties.

He was honored in his home district in 1993 by having the newly completed Cleveland County Mental Health Building named in his honor.

Surviving are his wife, Abbie Jane Wall Harris; one son, Ollie Harris Jr. of Nassau Bay, Texas; one daughter, Becky Harris of Kings Mountain; four grandchildren, Johnny Harris, Elizabeth Harris, David Hambright and Kathy Blanton; two great-grandchildren, Jada Blanton and Phillip Carter; and one sister, Helen Folsom of Hendersonville.

The funeral was conducted Monday at 3 p.m. at First Baptist Church by Rev. Olin Byrum, pastor of Kings Mountain Baptist Church; Dr. John Sloan, First Baptist pas-

tor; and former Senator Marshall Rauch.

Active pallbearers were legislators who served with Harris in the N.C. Senate, including Harold Hardison, Monk Harrington, Bill Golstein, Paul Smith, Bob Harris, Bill Pulley, Ken Royall, Rep. Jack Hunt and former Lt. Governor Jimmy Greene, former Kings Mountain mayor John Moss, former Shelby mayor George Clay, former county commissioner and former House Speaker Jack Palmer and Kings Mountain businessmen Tom Tate and J.C. Bridges.

Memorials may be made to Western Carolina Foundation Inc., PO Box 646, Morganton, 28680-0646 or to Cleveland County Mental Health Center, 917 First St., Shelby, 28150.

DONNA C. CORNWELL

Donna Crawford Cornwell, 45, 405 East King Street, Kings Mountain, died February 11, 1996 at her home.

A native of Kings Mountain, she was the daughter of Donald and Joe Ann Blalock Crawford of Kings Mountain. She was employed by the Joe Ann Don Agency and was a member of Boyce Memorial A.R.P. Church.

In addition to her parents, she is survived by her companion, Roger Morris; her grandfather, Charlie Blalock of Kings Mountain; a son, William Paul "Bill" Cornwell of Charlotte; a daughter, Angela Kay Cornwell of Bessemer City; and a granddaughter, Kelsie Kay Davis.

The funeral was conducted by the Rev. Doug Petersen Tuesday at 2 p.m. at Boyce Memorial A.R.P. Church. Burial was in Mountain Rest Cemetery.

GORDON PRESLEY

Gordon Leon Presley, 46, 145 Jim Patterson Road, Kings Mountain, died February 12, 1996 at Carolinas Medical Center in Charlotte.

A native of Richmond, Va., he was the son of Sharlene Keen Presley and the late Eugene Presley. He was a member of Kings Mountain Baptist Church and was employed by Truck Tech in Charlotte.

In addition to his mother, he is survived by his wife, JoAnn Smith Presley of Kings Mountain; three daughters, Lori Clary of Shelby, Melissa Brooks of Crossville, TN and Brandy Presley of Kings Mountain; a brother, Jerry Presley of Richmond, Va.; a sister, Sue P. Sandberg of Fairbanks, Alaska; and one grandchild.

The funeral was conducted by the Rev. R.L. Pendergrast Wednesday at 2 p.m. at Harris Chapel. Burial was in Antioch Baptist Church Cemetery in Blacksburg, SC.

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To The
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IDA PAYNE

TOWNVILLE, SC - Ida Irene Pagenstecher Payne, 82, widow of John Thomas Payne of 219 Timberlake Dr., died February 8, 1996 at Anderson Area Medical Center.

She was a native of Brevard and the daughter of the late Bernard and Elizabeth Blanton Pagenstecher. She was a homemaker and a member of Kings Mountain's Second Baptist Church.

Surviving are three sons, Daniel Payne and Jerry Payne, both of Townville, and Thomas Payne of Seneca and three grandchildren.

The memorial service was held February 10 at 8 p.m. at Davenport Funeral-Home Chapel in Walhalla, SC.

Sylvia Neisler hosts Honors Bridge Club

Sylvia Neisler entertained members of the Honors Bridge Club Thursday night at her home on Little Creek Drive.

After two progressions of bridge, the hostess served a dessert course.

Mrs. Neisler won the high score award. The low award went to Shirley Austin.

Mrs. Maryleigh Broadwell was present as a guest.

Kings Mountain Weather Report

(Compiled by Kenneth Kitzmiller)

	Feb. 7-13	Year Ago
Total precipitation	.20	.41
Maximum one day	.10 (7th, 8th)	.32 (10th)
Year to date	7.61	8.04
Minimum temperature	22 (12th)	10 (8th)
Maximum temperature	64 (9th)	54 (11th)
Average temperature	45.4	32.9

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CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTER

In Loving Memory of Virginia Sims February 15, 1995



Love,
Jack Sims, Vincent, Curtis,
Greg, Mike, Sisters, Brothers
Friends and Relatives.



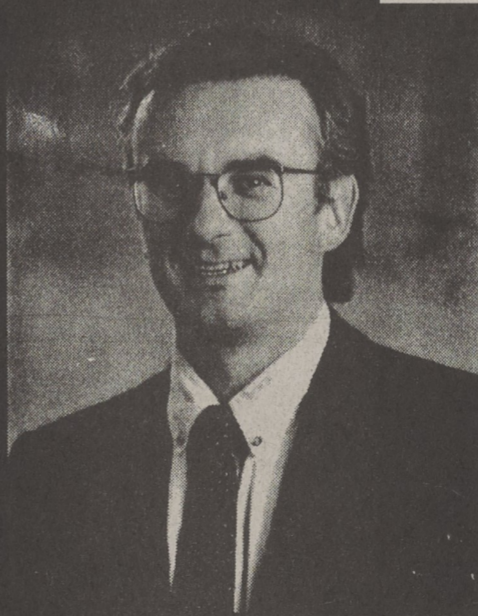
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COUNTRY SETTINGS

Mon.-Thurs. 7:00 am - 9:00 pm • Fri., Sat. 7:30 am - 1:30 pm

739-9142

Gospel
Singing

The
Kevin
Spencer
Family

Sunday
February 18th
6:00 pm

True Gospel
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Church

1608 Shelby Rd.
Kings Mountain
For more info. call
739-1625