



# Arthur Dorris McMurtry

JUL 23, 1921 - JAN 23, 2018



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# Arthur Dorris McMurtry

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**A**rthur Dorris McMurtry, Sr. a Memphis businessman, passed away peacefully, during the night of January 22, 2017 at age 96. He was born in the twenties, spent his formative years during the crucible of the Great Depression and went to war in the forties as an officer in the Merchant Marines. During the war he saw action in the North Atlantic, the Mediterranean Sea, and at Normandy Beach. By the end of his service, he achieved the rank of Lieutenant Commander and was Chief Engineer of one of the largest oil tankers in the world. He was born during the early years of flight and the radio, two themes that would reoccur throughout his long life. Before joining the Merchant Marines he worked in several aircraft factories where he became a skilled tool and die maker. He was a gifted engineer, building a crystal radio at the age of 5, an English Long Bow at the age of 7, and countless other projects culminating in building airplanes in his garage after retirement. He started and owned two companies, Executone of Memphis, and General Electronics. General Electronics sold and serviced General Electric commercial two-way radios. He was close to his customers, which included municipalities, law enforcement agencies, farmers, and countless small businesses. He was an early Bell South Mobility Agent, selling the first mobile phone in Memphis to a prominent local businessman. He was passionate about the love of his life, his surviving wife of 71 years, Bennie Sue Gordin of Oakland, MS., his large family, all things flying, and the engineering projects that consumed his gifted mind through out his life. In his 50's he learned to fly. He owned several planes he used for business and pleasure. One customer, Eaker Air Force Base allowed him to land his small airplane on the same runways used by B-52 bombers. His adventures in flying and building airplanes turned into a featured article in the Commercial Appeal. For many years he was a respected member of the Experimental Aircraft Association. Later in life he donated his large collection of machine and wood working tools to the EAA. He was a Deacon at Raleigh



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Presbyterian Church. Later in life, he joined Idlewild Presbyterian Church. He is survived by his wife of 71 years, Sue Gordin McMurtry, his four children- Anita Dempsey (Charlie Thomas) of Nashville, Mary Cochran (Terry) of Collierville, Arthur Dorris McMurtry, Jr of Panama City, and B. Gordin McMurtry (Lisa) of Memphis, 11 grandchildren and 23 great-grandchildren. The family will receive friends from 5-7 p.m. Friday, January 26th and from 9 a.m. until his Celebration of Life service begins at 10 a.m. Saturday, January 27th at Memorial Park Funeral Home and Cemetery. Arrangements have been entrusted to Memorial Park Funeral Home and Cemetery, 5668 Poplar Ave., Memphis, TN 38119 (901) 767-8930. "Celebrating Life... Behind the Stone Wall".



## Tribute Wall

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MB

**Malcolm Barker** posted:

Resident of The Hearth assisted living facility in Franklin TN. We miss seeing Arthur wheel in on his power wheel chair each morning for breakfast and other places during the day.

January 26 at 10:08 AM

JG

**Jack Gazelle** posted:

To the McMurtry Family – please accept my sincere condolences. I fondly remember the kindness the entire family showed me when I moved to Memphis to begin teaching at Bartlett High School. I never forgot having dinner with the McMurtry's and still grateful.

January 25 at 1:07 PM

LJ

**Laverne Jones** posted:

My condolences to your family. We can look forward to the time when all sickness, suffering, and death will be gone forever. Isaiah 33:24; 25:8 Please accept my condolences at this time.

January 24 at 8:31 AM



## **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Arthur by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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