



## George Smith

February 28, 1924 - August 30, 2012

George Marcel Smith, 88, of 277 Starmont Blvd. Danville, VA, passed away on Thursday, August 30, 2012 at his residence. Mr. Smith was born in Terre Haute Indiana on February 28, 1924 a son of the late Vivian Joseph Smith and the late Myrtle Cromer Smith. He served in the U.S. Navy during WWII and the Korean War in the forces that invaded Normandy as well as the Pacific Fleet in Tokyo Bay where the Japanese surrendered. Having achieved three Master's degrees, Mr. Smith worked in the space programs at Hughes Aircraft in CA and the Perkin-Elmer Corporation at Wilton CN. He dedicated his post-aerospace engineering career to education, having taught at Indiana State university, as well as the Navajo Reservation, and finally at Hargrave Military Academy. Mr. Smith is survived by his wife, Maria Socorro Smith of the residence; two sons, Ted Smith of San Diego, CA as well as T. George Smith of Roanoke, VA; and one sister Dorothy Musselman of Leesburg, FL. The following is an "Odyssey" that was written by Mr. Smith on January 18, 2012: I George Marcel Smith began my "Odyssey" at 410 S. 8th St., in the West Terre Haute, Indiana on the 28th of February, 1924, where a Dr. Don Maddox delivered me from my mother Myrtle Cromer Smith's womb. She was 22 years old and came from the bluegrass region of Kentucky with her family, consisting of parents John and Lucy Cromer and eight other "hungry mouths." Later, when she was 20 or so she met my father, Vivian Joseph Smith, oldest son of Marion W. Smith and Addie Plummer Smith, my paternal grandparents. Although we were not of the "gentility" class, nearly all the

family practiced a refinement and courtesy and many of them achieved University education. Thanks to uncles and aunts and the loving efforts of my parents, I was able to achieve 3 Master's degrees in my quest and pure hunger for knowledge and refinement. I grew up during the Great Depression and I attended public schools the first 6 grades of which urged me to the top 5% of my class, but high schools lack of effort brought me down to average. These lack-luster years had their consequences, so I had to make up for what I hadn't learned by years of study while I was in the Navy. I was a high school Junior in 1941 when Japan attacked the U.S. fleet, and I was a recruit sailor by August of 1942, during which time I got some radio training at the University of Wisconsin before joining the fleet. The most poignant experiences during that 40 month tour was my taking part in the D-Day invasion of Normandy, France; then being transferred to Hawaii to serve with Admiral Chester W. Nimitz at CINCPAC and Guam, where we built and operated radio station KU5Q. These were exciting times for I was placed among "notables" of the day, including Edgar Rice Burroughs, author of "Tarzan", Edward R. Murrow a broadcast scion, and many of the network and news correspondents of that era. Then came the time when one of us had to join in with the 3rd Marines and head for Japan which had just given word of their desires to capitulate. I got that responsibility and soon was with the U.S.S. Missouri fleet to witness and help arrange the surrender broadcast. Very soon after that occurrence, the U.S. Military arranged to discharge those with "points" and I had plenty overseas credits, so consequently I was a civilian again on the 10th day of Dec. 1945. Thanks to the Roosevelt administration, I was able to be in University classes on the 11th of December 1945, as an eager freshman of 22 years of age. I forgot all about the Great War so it never had any lasting effect on me. This made the next four years rather predictable, study and then study more, all the time gaining study habits from my girlfriend who was a straight-A student in Pre-Med courses. I had a "B" average and was able to graduate August 1949 with majors in Math and Physical Science. The Korean War was becoming imminent and I was still in

the Naval Reserves meaning that I could be called back into service soon; therefore I took a temporary teaching job at Green Springs, Ohio (Sandusky City) to finish out the year at a school that had lost its science teacher-basketball coach who died suddenly. I finished out the year for them and then started my preparation for another "hitch" in the Navy by enrolling at Capital Radio Engineering Institute in Washington, D.C. I was recalled to the Navy Service in the spring of 1951 and served at the Norfolk Naval Air Station for the period of 18 months, but I was able to live off base with this wonderful stereotypical southern family comprising of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Davis and their son, Wilson Chandler. On my spare time, I helped them in their clothing store and played many rounds of golf with Mr. Davis. Wilson Gray Chandler and I became good buddies and our closeness raised some evil minded eyebrows, yet I can certify that our relationship was totally platonic. They lived at 310 Battersea Rd. Pinewell, Ocean Beach, VA, just two blocks from the Bay and they belonged to the beach club at Virginia Beach, which meant that Wilson and I could go to the club and see the big hands that came there. This family re-oriented me into courteous and polite habits and showed me gentleman manners. I never questioned their financial status, but when they all were deceased, I was awarded a legacy of thousands of dollars, all of which I never expected. I will included herein some of the highlights in my post Korean War civilian life as it progresses with my life, Indianapolis to Norfolk: - Fall of 1952 to 1955 Teacher at South Port (Indianapolis) -Spring of 1955 thru 1957, back to Norfolk to help Mr. Davis in the store at 437 Church St. and to help Wilson and Mrs. Davis with their rental units in Chandler Court Apartments. -Fall of 1958 thru fall of 1966-Engineering Writer in Field Services Division of Hughes Aerospace, "Surveyor" moon-landing. At this time I also was playing the trombone section of a Big Band, "Danny Coviello's" Band in Los Angeles. (During my Indianapolis days I was a member of the Mello-Tones, a four piece modern harmony vocal-instrumental group who performed weekly on WIBC television) I also wrote and sold many musical

advertisements ?jingles? at the time. -Fall of 1966-Transferred to the Perkin-Elmer Electro-Optics Corp. in Wilton Connecticut where I was a senior technical writer, mainly of ?New Technology? reports for the government. This corporation began changing its efforts from the waning physical science projects to the Biological Field, so Coco (Maria) and I along with Ted, age 4 and Toby and 3 headed for Aguascalientes, Mexico where we lived for 3 years, having purchased one new home and building another. In the summer of 1973 we returned to Terre Haute where I had to start all over again in my profession; however, by living at my father?s house, we were able to help him in his last years before he died of heart failure, Feb. 28, 1975. (Mother had died at age 58 of sinus cancer). During this stay with dad, I was able to achieve a grad-student teacher in the math department at ISU, all the time (2years) working on Master?s degrees in Math, Physics, and Spanish. I graduated in 1975 and worked for ITT recruiting until the summer of 1978 at which time we took an assignment at the Navajo town of Newcomb, NM some 30 miles from Shiprock. I was a math teacher and Coco was a librarian who helped treat students of any injuries of sickness. (She?s an RN) This school went to grade 10 only and Ted and Toby needed to be off the ?Rez? so we had them in the Baptist school ?Grace Baptist? in Farmington, NM, where they lived on the farm of a Mr. and Mrs. Kopley. This arrangement was splendid, thanks to all the adults who helped our boys. I was recruited by the Hargrave Military Academy for the year of 1982, so we came to Chatham, VA the spring of ?82 where I volunteered my time for that summer and was given a uniform, and a language lab to manage. Ted graduated in 1985 and Toby did so in 1986, but I stayed on until 1993 when I needed by-pass heart surgery, so that became my termination day. It was (and is) a bit of a struggle daily but I was able to play bass and trombone in the Starmont Big Band and in the Jimmy Storms Trio for club dates. At present, however I have become totally involved in oil painting, spending two or three hours daily in such. I will be 88 years old come February 28, 2012. A memorial service will be conducted on Wednesday, September 5, 2012 at 8:00 p.m. at the Wrenn-

Yeatts North Main Chapel with the Reverend Jack Robertson officiating. The family will receive friends one hour prior to the service from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the funeral home and at other times will be at the residence, 277 Starmont Blvd, Danville, VA 24540. Wrenn-Yeatts North Main is respectfully serving the Smith family.

# Tribute Wall



“ *A sympathy card has been sent to a friend or relative of George M Smith .*

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September 25, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ *I am proud to say that George was my cousin, though we only met some 15 years ago. He will remain in my memory as a true gentleman who always saw the good in any situation. He will be missed.*

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**George Williams** - September 25, 2012 at 12:00 AM

KK

“ George was such an inspiration to me. I was at a musical dead end and he introduced to all the wonderful songs of his generation which inspired me to explore new (at least to me) musical styles. His gentle and kind disposition was such a contrast to the coarseness that we see so much in today's culture. I loved his stories about life in the thirties, forties, and fifties and how things were different back then ? often times different for the better. I remember a talk we had about people wanting to return to the good old days of the WWII generation and his response was, ?It will never happen, people are different now.?”

George always strived for the truth. He refused to hide his head in the sand to avoid unpleasant realities of life. I don't believe that you could have found a more honest man. A couple of weeks before he passed, he appeared to know that there wasn't much time and he told me that he had ?no regrets, no regrets? regarding his life. As written, he repeated ?no regrets? twice with much more emphasis on the second time as if he really wanted to make it clear that he meant what he said but anyone who knew George also knew that he always meant what he said. George never played head games. There aren't many people who can live 88 years and have no regrets and I am certainly not one of those people.

Although George is no longer with us, he will continue to inspire me. I have commented to my wife several times over the last 10 years that when I'm George's age, I want to have interests, be active ,and participate in life like him. I met George for the first time sometime during Feb.2001 and one of my regrets is that I didn't meet him sooner.

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**Kurt Kueng** - September 09, 2012 at 12:00 AM

LA

“ George was so special to me!! I first met him in 1998 when I moved back to Virginia. Little did I know there was a fellow "jazz lover" living right in Danville. I enjoyed singing with him and was blessed when he arranged two songs for my second cd, "In the Dark" and "Rock Me in your Arms". Despite our age difference we became fast friends and would talk regularly. The music community here will truly miss George!!

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**Laura Adcock** - September 06, 2012 at 12:00 AM

JP

“ Ted, Toby, and Mrs Maria: May the Lord give you all the blessings in this hard passage of life!

Yours always,  
Jorge Polanco

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**Jorge Polanco** - September 06, 2012 at 12:00 AM

FA

“ My nama is Fernando Quesada from Panama city Panama, i will allways remember cap Smith as one of my best teachers in my life, he was my mentor when i arrived to HMA in 1985, one of the most dedicated teacher that i ever had Thank you Cap Smith my condolences to his family,!!

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**Fernando Quesada A** - September 05, 2012 at 12:00 AM

MH

“ I am sorry to hear of Capt. Smith's passing. It makes me sad to hear. He was my Spanish teacher for 2 yrs and taught me more than a different language. I enjoyed water colors and he gave me some pointers to improve my paintings. I didn't know Ted or Toby too well, but graduated in 87.

*Capt. Smith was one of the highlights of my education at Hargrave and a teacher I remember well.*

*I wish you and your family peace during this time. I am very sorry for your loss.*

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**Mary Brinkley Han** - September 05, 2012 at 12:00 AM

TI

“ Dear Smith Family,

*Bo Snell here. I graduated from Hargrave in 1983 and had Capt. Smith as my Spanish teacher. He was very kind to me, and I enjoyed listening to his stories, as he was quite the raconteur! Please know that I am a better person for having known him. . . . I am so sorry for your loss. Tim "Bo" Snell (I lived on Guam about 35 years after Capt. Smith!)*

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**Tim** - September 05, 2012 at 12:00 AM

SS

“ Ted, Toby, and Smith family,

*My dad emailed me last night about Captain Smith and I was filled with memories of the two years I studied Spanish with him at Hargrave. I also felt incredibly sad that I had not spoken with him since college because so much of my journey in life began with his teaching and encouragement.*

*Your dad enjoyed teaching and shared that enthusiasm with me. He introduced me to a world beyond my own and lit a flame for travel, language and culture in a girl from rural Whitmell, VA that has taken me around the globe.*

*My heart breaks that I did not tell him of how I too taught for a few years - English as a second language to Hispanic middle schoolers, and Spanish to university students in Kansas; how I started a program for the State of North Carolina to train and certify court interpreters in Spanish, translated forms into Spanish, and created a curriculum for judges and attorneys on cultural sensitivity, interpreting ethics, etc.*

*I only mention me because there might not have been that adventure in my life had it not been for him. He gave me confidence to try new languages and inspired me to study broadcast journalism and Spanish in college. He made me feel good about myself and made me feel I was good at something- a gift that I can never repay.*

*I wish he had known that all the work he did with my Spanish accent in the language lab paid off when I traveled abroad and people thought I was a native speaker. I wish he could have seen how far his influence reached from me to others.*

*My best memories of your dad will be his singing and playing the guitar for us and bringing your beautiful mom, Coco, into class to visit. I will also never forget receiving the Spanish Award from him, nor a visit to your home where we sampled Mexican cooking. Your*

*dad was a dear soul who had traveled, seen, and tasted all life had. He made me want to do the same.*

*I cried myself to sleep last night remembering him and hoping that even though I did not see him before he left, that somehow he knew how special he was to an old student from long ago.*

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**Stephanie Scarce** - September 05, 2012 at 12:00 AM

GT

“ *We will long remember George. He was a very accomplished man and full of life. He enjoyed his painting and music. We were honored to have known him.*

*Love, Glojean-Lonnie-Lemmert-Lem Ryan and LoriE*

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**GloJean Todacheene** - September 04, 2012 at 12:00 AM

LW

“ *To the Smith Family, I am sorry for your loss. I send my condolences to you and yours.*  
*The Bible makes it clear that God did not originally intend for humans to die.*  
*As the Bible explains: "Through one man [Adam] sin entered into the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men."*  
*Romans 5:12.*

*After sin and death entered the world, God revealed that it was his purpose that the dead be restored to life by means of a resurrection. Yes, Almighty God has not only the power but also the desire to resurrect persons whom he chooses.*

*Jesu Christ himself said: "Do not marvel at this, because the hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out." John 5:28&29; and also read Acts 24:15.*

*May Jehovah God and Jesus Christ be with you and your Family?*

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**Loretta Womack** - September 03, 2012 at 12:00 AM