



Sanford Erastus " Sam " Peek, Sr.

May 17, 1935 - April 30, 2023

Sanford Erastus "Sam" Peek, Sr., age 87, passed away peacefully at home on Sunday, April 30th, 2023, in Summerville, SC. He enjoyed a long and happy life full of adventure, joy, family, and love.

Sam was born to Carl and Delphia Peek on May 17th, 1935, in Franklin, NC. He was raised in the Great Smoky Mountains alongside six siblings: Martha Louise Southards, Hallie Lenoir Southards, Helen Irene Southards, Bertha Southards, Annie Christine "Teen" Southards, and Billy Lee Peek.

Sam enlisted in the U.S. Navy in September 1952, becoming a Signalman First Class and serving twenty years of active duty and ten years in the Reserves. While on leave in 1956, he met Vickie Anne Wilson, and the two married on July 16th of that year. The couple traveled the United States, making home wherever the Navy sent them. They added four children to their fold and ultimately settled down in Summerville. There, the Peek family continued to grow via the additions of sons- and daughters-in-law, grandchildren, and finally a great-grandchild.

Sam is survived by his children, Sanford Peek, Jr. (Valerie), Melisa Clemmons (Raymond, d.), Sharon Mooring (Michael), and Michael Peek (Debbie); many beloved grandchildren; a great-granddaughter; and numerous extended family members and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents; his wife

Vickie; his siblings; and his son-in-law Raymond Clemmons, among other cherished friends and family.

Sam was a loving, generous, humble, and heroic man who loved to share a story with anyone who would listen. Each and every story was a treasure to hear.

He was an honored, respected, and decorated sailor, serving in the Korean and Vietnam Wars among other conflicts. On May 1st, 1967, while on board the Haven-class hospital ship USS Sanctuary, Sam performed a distinct feat of heroism when he saved the lives of two injured men (pilot and co-pilot). Just off the shores of Vietnam, a MEDIVAC helicopter carrying thirteen patients and four crewmen crashed into the turbulent, snake-infested waters below. Upon spotting two injured men struggling to stay afloat, Sam voluntarily dove into the dark, dangerous “brown waters” to rescue them, keeping both men afloat until he could bring them alongside a rescue boat to safety. Sam was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Medal for Heroism. The citation for his award reads: “By his prompt action in the face of grave personal risk, he undoubtedly saved two men from drowning. His heroic efforts were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.”

Sam loved spending time with his family, watching old Western films and TV shows, and Atlanta Braves baseball. He also loved nature and the outdoors, enjoying such interests and hobbies as gardening, fishing, boating, golfing, taking nature walks, etc. Until the time of his death, Sam was a standing member of the Junaluskee Masonic Lodge and the Oasis Shriners. To each person he met, he was a fast and loyal friend. To his family, he was a true hero and an icon of love and affection. He will be greatly missed by the many people who loved him.

A local memorial service and visitation with the family is scheduled for

Saturday, May 6th, 2023, at 3pm at Grace Lutheran Church (1600 Trolley Rd. Summerville, SC 29485). Funeral services will take place at Ellijay Missionary Baptist Church in Franklin, NC (16 Little Ellijay Road, Franklin, NC 28734), on Saturday, May 13th, 2023. Arrangements have been made with assistance from James A. Dyal Funeral Home in Summerville, SC, and Macon Funeral Home in Franklin, NC.

All are welcome to attend to celebrate, remember, and honor Sam. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in his name to Shriner's Children's Hospital (2900 Rocky Point Dr. Tampa, FL 33607), Wounded Warriors (P.O. Box 758516, Topeka, KS 66675-8516), or Intrepid Hospice Group (201 Sigma Dr. Ste. 130 A & B, Summerville, SC 29486).

Previous Events

Visitation and Service

MAY 6. 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM (ET)

Grace Lutheran Church
1600 Old Trolley Road
Summerville, SC 29485

Funeral Service

MAY 13. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

Ellijay Missionary Baptist Church
16 Little Ellijay Road
Franklin, SC 28734

Rites of Committal, Military Honors and Masonic Rites

MAY 13. 3:00 PM - 3:30 PM (ET)

Ellijay Missionary Baptist Church Cemetery
16 Little Ellijay Road
Franklin, SC 28734

Tribute Wall



“ 1 file added to the album *Life Tributes*



James A Dyal Funeral Home - May 05, 2023 at 02:21 PM



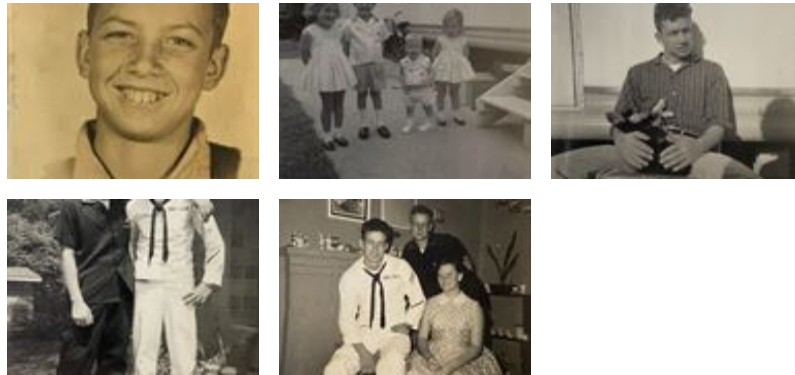
“ *Emerald Garden Basket* was purchased for the family of Sanford Erastus " Sam " Peek, Sr..



May 05, 2023 at 11:18 AM



“ 100 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



James A Dyal Funeral Home - May 04, 2023 at 08:35 PM

DP

Sam and his brother Bill were the best of friends. They enjoyed one another's company hunting, fishing, being on leave together. Sam's family has always been special to me. God's peace to all of you. Love, Diane

Diane Peek - May 05, 2023 at 10:56 AM

DC

Sam(aka Papaw) was a precious friend! My brother married into the Peek family. He loved Sam and they became instant friends. Our families celebrated many fun times and sad times together. I will always remember his infectious laugh. I will miss him. Rest in peace sweet Papaw!❤️

Dede Carter - May 06, 2023 at 04:47 AM