



Daniel S. Dearing

April 14, 1931 - February 4, 2017

With tears in our eyes and sadness in our hearts we regret to write of the passing of our dear father Daniel Sears Dearing, who died February 4, 2017, surrounded by his children, at his home on Lake Jackson.

Dan was born in Tampa Florida on April 14, 1931, the eldest of the three children of Reed and Dorothy Dearing. He was raised in Jacksonville and upon graduating from Robert E. Lee high school enrolled at FSU, where he began his college education. After a year as a Seminole he transferred to the college of his father and uncles, The University of the South at Sewanee. In January of his senior year he along with his younger brother Reed Jr. joined the United States Marine Corps. After paying his dues at Parris Island he was sent to Korea, where the conflict was coming to an end. In Korea he froze to death daily, finding solace in the warmth of the Marine Corps Choir, which he directed. After Korea, he was stationed with the rank of staff sergeant at the NAFB in Jacksonville, where he met, "the girl that made his eyes sparkle and his heart pound," the true love of his life, Betty Jean Bessent. They married and she stood by his side for 59 years, until her death in 2015. The young couple moved back to Tallahassee, where Dan finished college and they had their first child. With degree in hand, Dan and Betty moved down to Coral Gables where Dan had taken a job as a staff writer for Field and Stream Magazine. Creative writing was in his blood. They would stay in the Gables for 14 years, they would have five more children, all the while Dan was wearing a number of different hats to support his ever growing family. He eventually

deciding on taking the LSAT and attend law school at the University of Miami. Dan ripped through law school, finishing in two years, he entered private practice with a large firm in Miami where he was sought after by Attorney General, Bob Shevin. Dan and Betty moved their tribe to Tallahassee and set up camp. After four years as Chief Trial Council for the Attorney General, during which he argued before the United States Supreme Court, he moved into private practice. There he would remain until returning to the Attorney General's office at the end of a satisfying career. Although he was a respected adversary at the courthouse, in his heart and for those who knew him, he was more like Picasso than Darrow. He was an artist in the purest sense. His home was his gallery and accordingly his works of art grace its walls throughout. When Dan wasn't painting, he was writing his short stories, original screenplays, or one of the several books he authored. He, along with his good friend Hank Warner wrote the music, the story and the songs for a musical they produced while in college at Florida State. Right up to the end of his life he was working on his last novel, and painting. He never stopped creating for he was an artist.

Dan's favorite place in this world was at "the Nutshell", the family house atop Sugarloaf Mountain in North Carolina. A special family home, where since its conception in 1902, generations of Dearing's, relatives, cousins and friends have embraced and relished in its magical qualities. It was in the clouds atop Sugarloaf where, as a boy and young man, Dan spent his summers with his extended family. In turn, he shared its joy with his family as an adult. The Nutshell served to refresh his soul, rejuvenate his senses and remind him of his past. Next to "the Nutshell" Dan immensely enjoyed being with his bride's family, at the annual Bessent Thanksgiving Reunion, where brotherhood and love are served as the first course, and turkey and dressing the second. Dan filled up on both, for he loved nothing better than good food, family, and fellowship.

Dan was preceded in death by his wife of 59 years Betty Jean Bessent. He is survived by his six children, Mark Dearing (Carol), Sears Dearing (Wanda

Kaye), Chris Dearing (Beckie), Leslie Dearing Fleming (Jim), Andrew Dearing, Mallory Dearing McCall(Mike), fifteen grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

A funeral service is planned for 3 P.M. on Friday, February 17th at St. John's Episcopal Church in Tallahassee. Following the service, a reception will be held in Alfriend Hall. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in his memory to St. John's Church or Big Bend Hospice. Susie Mozolic of Bevis Funeral Home is assisting the family with their arrangements(www.bevisfh.com).

Tribute Wall



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Daniel S. Dearing.*



February 15, 2017 at 02:58 PM



“ *It was an honor and a pleasure to team with Dan in a few cases during the conclusion of my 35+ year government lawyer career, I garnered a scholarly, modest, and dignified friend and I became a better lawyer at that time. The Department of Legal Affairs and its clients would benefit from a Dan Dearing clone in a litigation lawyer mentoring process. Jim Peters*

Jim Peters - February 08, 2017 at 09:51 PM