



## Donald McElroy

March 3, 1939 - June 8, 2012

Services for Donald Wayne McElroy, 73, of Flint, will be held on Wednesday, June 13, 2012 at 11:00 AM at Stewart Family Funeral Home Chapel with Rev. Dennis Cable officiating. Burial will be held at DFW National Cemetery. Mr. McElroy passed away Friday, June 8, 2012 at his residence in Flint. Don was born March 3, 1939 in Alice to Fred S. and Annie Mae Watts McElroy. Don was introduced to the funeral home business in Alice. He drove an ambulance for his family's funeral home while still in high school. Don soon graduated from the Dallas Institute of Mortuary Science and after only two years of working for a Dallas funeral home, he was drafted into the US Army where he spent two years in Germany serving in the Army Mortuary Service. In 1972, Don founded the American Mortuary Service to meet a growing need to provide embalming services to area funeral homes. While working in the Dallas area, Don found himself providing mortuary services of several historic events, including the death of President John F. Kennedy, the private plane crash that killed singer Ricky Nelson, the 1985 crash of Delta Flight 191 at DFW International Airport, and the Branch Davidian fire in Waco. Don sold his business in 2000, moving to the Philippines where he taught mortuary science for two years moving back to the Dallas area in 2002. He and his wife Rita later moved to East Texas where Don came to work for Stewart Family Funeral Home where he mentored his fellow colleagues obtaining the status of "senior funeral director". After serving his communities for many years, Don was recognized for such and he received his 50 years pin as a licensed

funeral director. Earlier this Spring, Don received the coveted title of “Funeral Director of the Year” for the East Texas Region. Don touched many lives over the years. His passion for his work and the compassion he showed not only to the countless families he served but to his friends and colleagues cannot be measured but will be treasured. Don is survived by his loving family including his wife of 28 years, Rita McElroy of Flint; daughter, Michelle Debo of Grand Prairie; two sisters, Betty Harris and husband Marvin of Baytown and Phebe Alford of Temple; and by a niece, Jaquita Price and her children, Robby and Bobby, all of Grandbury. He is also survived by many loving friends who will miss his smiling face He is preceded in death by his parents, three sisters and two brothers. Honorary pallbearers will be his co-workers at Stewart Family Funeral Home. Visitation is scheduled from 5:00 –7:00 PM on Tuesday, June 12, 2012 at Stewart Family Funeral Home, 7525 Old Jacksonville Highway, in Tyler.

# Tribute Wall

BL

“ *It was such a pleasure to work with Don. We always had a good time, but Don knew when to cut up and when to be serious. I will certainly miss him.*

*Bob*

---

**Bob & Judy Logan** - June 08, 2012 at 12:00 AM

BH

“ *Don was a very outgoing person who devoted his life to people and their needs. He always had a smile. We will always miss him and loved him so much. God Bless him & Rita.*

---

**Bettye & Marvin Harris** - June 08, 2012 at 12:00 AM

JP

“ *Donald Wayne McElroy was an icon of caring and friendship to me and his classmate in Alice, Texas.*

*He exuded thoughtful compassion in his business and in his personal life. Always was he considerate and sincere.*

*May those of us who remember him be a kind, empathic, dedicated, helpful, and gentle as he was.*

*Certainly, the world is better because he lived. I extend my genuine condolences to his family and loved ones.*

*JD Pettit*

---

**JD Pettit** - June 08, 2012 at 12:00 AM

JA

“ We wanted to express our heartfelt sympathy and prayers to you and the family.

*Donald was a classmate and friend of mine growing up in Alice, TX. Have fond memories of those times with all our classmates.*

*May the Lord provide a peace for each of you as you carry on.  
Love, The Allens  
Jerry & Jimmie Pearl*

---

**Jimmie Pearl Zaplac Allen** - June 08, 2012 at 12:00 AM

SC

“ Don was a great person, fun to work with but he new when to be serious. We are sorry for his loss. He will surely be missed by all who new and loved him.

---

**Sue Boyd Clemens** - June 08, 2012 at 12:00 AM

RW

“ I worked for Don while in funeral school in Dallas. He was a good man and I had alot of respect for him. I know he will be missed. Keeping his family and co-workers in my prayers. ~ Ronnie Wilson

---

**Ronnie Wilson** - June 08, 2012 at 12:00 AM

PA

“ Mrs. McElroy and family, I am so heart broken over Don's death. He was such a special person to me. I could always count on him to make me smile at work. I enjoyed the times we would get to sit and talk in my office, he was like a "grandpa" to me. I will surely miss him everyday and my thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.

---

**Paula Allums** - June 08, 2012 at 12:00 AM

LK

“ So very sorry to receive this news. Don was a wonderful person and a treasured friend. My thoughts and prayers are with you at this time. Wish I could be there.

---

**Lelia Keliehor** - June 08, 2012 at 12:00 AM

CB

“ One of the great son of Alice, Texas.

---

**charles brownlee** - June 08, 2012 at 12:00 AM

JS

“ Don and I grew up together in Alice. I knew his family and have a lot of fond memories about them. I was a year ahead of Don in school. Upon graduation from High School, I left Alice and lost track of Don. The next time I saw Don was in Boot Camp in the US Army at Fort Carson Colorado. He and I were in the same unit and got reacquainted during a very cold training cycle. Upon completion of Boot Camp we went our separate ways again. There is more but this becoming too long,  
I rember Don as a good and depedable friend and was saddened to hear of his death. I pray for God to bless and comfort his family in your time of need. He is in God's hands now.

---

**Jerry Sparkman** - June 08, 2012 at 12:00 AM

SC

“ Don was a real inspiration to me as I served along his side at Stewart Family Funeral Home for seven years. Always had a smile and a kind word. He will be greatly missed. He had a passion for his work and people. I am praying for Rita and the family during this time of loss - may God provide His peace and healing.

---

**Shirley Crook** - June 08, 2012 at 12:00 AM

DM

“ Although I did not get to see my uncle as often as I liked over the years, I knew he was always serving others. He had a smile and a genuine concern for everyone. He gave of himself to others!

*Uncle Don, Rest in Peace and God Bless You!*

---

**Diane Morris** - June 08, 2012 at 12:00 AM

TE

“ I met Don while attending Dallas Institute in 1975 and he had a wonderful sense of humor. I recall the talent he shared with me in setting features, he was truly gifted in this area and taught me much. It was always good to see him and I looked forward to renewing our friendship. I have no doubt that he kept the Stewart staff entertained and the families served benefited from his skills. He had a great impact on the students he mentored and his skills vicariously live on and in that way so does he. Rest well Don, I will see you on the other side.

---

**Terry Edwards** - June 08, 2012 at 12:00 AM

JC

“ I am at a loss for words. I have missed you a great deal these last two years. It was an honor working with you, and when we were able to talk on the phone it was always good. For the short time we were together I grew very fond of you and your sweet wife. I wish now that I had called even more. You will be greatly missed. Love to you and your sweet family.

---

**JOHN H. CARTER** - June 08, 2012 at 12:00 AM

PA

“ To my most devoted and Special Brother and Uncle whom we all love dearly. For his dedication and dignity in life to all his family, friends and co-workers, he was a caring, encouraging, cheerful and happy inspiration to all. He kept us in good spirits all the time. With a sad and heavy heart, we will miss and treasure our memories with him forever.  
God Bless you Brother, Rita and Family.

---

**Phebe Alford** - June 08, 2012 at 12:00 AM

TD

“ I did my apprenticeship with Don at AMS in 1998. He was the only one in Dallas that gave me a chance, and for that, I thank him. I am not sure if he truly believed in me or if he took pity in my situation. That doesn't matter now because I am licensed emblamer.

---

**Troy Durrett** - June 08, 2012 at 12:00 AM

MR

“ I worked for Don back in 1995 and 1996 at American Mortuary Service while I was a student at D.I.F.S. He had a big influence on my career and will be truly missed. Prayers are with his family.

---

**Michael Ramage** - June 08, 2012 at 12:00 AM

BB

“ Our prayers for him & wife, Rita.

---

**Barry Lee Burton** - June 08, 2012 at 12:00 AM

GC

*“ Don was the consummate professional. He dedication to our profession was greatly admired and appreciated. He indeed always placed service first, whether it was at American Mortuary Service or at Stewart Family Funeral Home.  
Our deepest sympathies to his family.  
Gene and Phyllis Cottle*

---

**Gene & Phyllis Cottle** - June 08, 2012 at 12:00 AM

RR

*“ Donald McElroy*

---

**Richard Reed** - June 08, 2012 at 12:00 AM

RR

*“ I was saddened to learn of Don's death. I was a long time friend of Don's and worked for him during my apprenticeship.  
I was pleased to know he recieved Funeral Director of the Year Award earlier this year. It was well deserved. I will keep his family, as well as his co-workers in my thoughts and prayers during this time.*

---

**Richard Reed** - June 08, 2012 at 12:00 AM

TS

*“ Rita and family my thoughts are with you. Don tought me alot and will be missed by all in the industry.*

---

**Travis Swindell** - June 08, 2012 at 12:00 AM