



Ermon N. Foster

May 9, 1918 - December 24, 2009

Ermon Nelson Foster, long time educator and college administrator, died in the early morning on December 24, 2009, after a brief stay at Chester River Manor.

He was born to Capas Wellons Foster and Amy Catherine Ludwig at home on May 9, 1918, in Hopewell, VA, sixth in the line of eight other children.

Ermon spent most of his early childhood in the Wilmington/Carolina Beach, NC area. After graduating from high school in Petersburg, VA. he first attended Ferrum Junior College in Ferrum, VA. for a two year program. He then continued his studies at Bridgewater College, where he met his future wife, Wilma June Butterbaugh Hoover. He earned an English degree and a teacher's certificate, and in September of 1942 accepted a job teaching English and Biology at Ferrum Junior College, where he was also designated Dean of Men. He and June were married there on June 14, 1943. In June, 1944, they left Ferrum for Peabody University (Vanderbilt) in Nashville, TN. Their son Andy was born there while Ermon was working on his master's degree, which he completed in March, 1945. While at Vanderbilt he was a member of Phi Delta Kappa. He accepted a teaching position at Georgia State College for Women in Milledgeville, GA. for two semesters, filling in for an ill professor. The following year was spent as principal of Crab Bottom(Blue Grass) School in Monterey, VA. In 1946 Ermon returned to Nashville to work

on his PhD in education. His daughter Bonnie was born there on April 17, 1947. Ermon next accepted a teaching position at Concord College in Athens, W.VA.

In 1949, at age 31, he was employed by Washington College in Chestertown, MD. to teach Education and Psychology, which was the beginning of a long and rewarding relationship with this institution. A year later, Dr. Livingood, dean of the college, asked Ermon to become registrar in addition to his teaching. He became full-time registrar in the early 1950's and held that position (along with many other responsibilities) until his retirement in 1986. He still continued a part-time role in the registrar's office until 1993. Ermon was considered an "institution" at the college. He served as Director of the Faculty Tuition Exchange Program, and was the Director of the Freshman Testing Program and the College Board. He is especially remembered for his work in organizing convocation and graduation ceremonies and his role as Grand Marshal of these public events. He had the honor of "hooding" many dignitaries during the conferring of honorary degrees to visiting speakers, including that of President Eisenhower. He marshaled his last commencement in 1995 in honor of the graduation of his granddaughter, Tonya Howell and niece, Amy Bortmes.

After settling his family in Chestertown, Ermon and June became actively involved with Christ United Methodist Church. They were long-standing members of the choir; Ermon was Superintendent of Sunday School for a number of years; and he and June organized what has become a tradition now--the annual Cookie Walk. In addition to his church work, Ermon was also active in the Chestertown Lions Club where he served as a past president and zone chairman.

While Ermon had a way of seeming formal and business like, he was passionate about gardening. He loved sharing his produce with his neighbors and planned each season to also have beautiful flower gardens. Even in his

last year at the age of 90, he still had a small vegetable garden which he said was for his neighbors to pick from.

After his retirement from Washington College, Ermon learned the art of Stained

Glass. While spending the winter months in Naples, Florida, he worked in a studio that taught him to make Tiffany lamp designs. He spent countless hours in his home work shop making lamps and many other glass panels which June designed. Many of his work can be seen in the windows of the church school and office wing of Christ Church in Chestertown.

Ermon is survived by two sisters, Miriam Smith of Colonial Heights, VA and Ruby Whitley of Hopewell, VA; two children of Chestertown, his son, Andrew Foster and wife Shirley; and his daughter, Bonnie Howell and son-in-law Jed Howell; five grandchildren, Dax Foster of Charlottesville VA, Jennine Zebroski of Pittsburgh, PA, Scott Foster of Chestertown, Tonya Howell Preston and Adam Preston of Warren, VT. and Torr Howell and his wife Erina of Chestertown MD; five great grandchildren, Phineas Howell, Wyatt Howell, Ingrid Lackey Howell, Omri Monroe Howell, and John Richard Zebroski.

Friends and family are invited on Thursday, December 31st. to a viewing at 12 noon followed by a service at 1 pm at the Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home, 130 Speer Road, Chestertown, MD. A reception will follow the service. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to Washington College.

Tribute Wall



“ I have just now learned of the passing of a dear, kind gentleman whom I learned to know when I (as a young widow with a college-age son) worked at Washington College. I already knew and greatly respected his dear wife (and I just now learned of her passing as well). I know he is greatly missed! I am remarried and have lived in Newark DE now for 35 years. Recently I typed the life story of a dear friend - much older than I - and in her story, she gave great memories of Mr. Foster. I was glad to see that we shared the same respect for this dear man. I know he and his wife are together and enjoying Heaven - which they so deserve. What a loss for Washington College and the entire Chestertown neighborhood! (but our loss is Heaven's Gain!) Cathy Middleton Raphael

Cathy Middleton Raphael - September 26, 2024 at 10:29 PM



“ *Ermon N. Foster*

October 26, 2023 at 06:42 PM



“ *Ermon N. Foster*

January 28, 2023 at 12:44 PM



“ *Ermon N. Foster*

January 28, 2023 at 08:03 AM