



## James R. Kerr

July 12, 1920 - August 23, 2018

James R. Kerr died peacefully on August 23 at home in Easton, MD. He was 98.

He is survived and greatly loved by Virginia, his wife of 73 years, and their children: Rea (Tom) Howarth, Melanie (Marty) Wieland-Walsh, Kathryn Kerr, James R. Kerr II, and Virginia Kerr. He is also cherished by his eight grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews and their parents.

A native of Harford County, MD, Jim's parents were James and Sarah Kerr. He grew up on the family farm with his older sisters, Marguerite and Romaine, where he relished riding his horse and sledding with friends in winter. He discovered the Eastern Shore while at Salisbury State Teachers College.

On graduating in 1942, he joined the Navy and served in a drone combat research program and as an Aerographer in the Pacific Islands—collecting weather data from planes to support combat operations.

By spring 1945, things had improved in the Pacific and word went out that 400 sailors would transfer to work on a classified project Stateside. Jim's commanding officer asked if he and a buddy were interested. Both jumped at the chance. But as Jim recalled, "Admiral Nimitz raised a ruckus, and cut that

number in half.” The buddies watched from bleachers the day the lucky chosen were boarding a ship. By some fluke, they numbered two men shy of 200. The ship’s Exec. Officer reached in his pocket for the list of other approved names. Jim and his buddy were at the top.

Upon returning, Jim was granted leave to marry his fiancée. He and Virginia wed at Grace Lutheran Church in Easton, the same weekend that victory was declared in Europe. After completing his service that fall, they settled in Talbot County.

Jim began his career teaching in Cordova (1946-49), earning a Master's Degree in Education at the University of Kentucky on the GI bill (1950), and serving five years as elementary principal in Sudlersville, MD. He spent the next 35 years in Milford, DE, as Principal and Assistant Superintendent. During that time he completed 60 hours at the Doctoral level at the University of Delaware, and introduced innovative educational practices to meet changing student and faculty needs.

An avid reader and student of history, Jim was devoted to addressing social justice issues and effective at bringing people together. He quietly served the communities where his family lived and in churches they attended. He enjoyed baseball and jazz, travels in Great Britain and Europe, and many happy weekends with family, fishing and crabbing on the Eastern Shore. Having inherited his parents’ green thumbs, he also raised a bounteous garden wherever he lived.

Jim and Virginia lived most of their retirement at the Kerr farm, and moved to Easton in 2010. He remained remarkably engaged until his death, delighted in his family and grandchildren, closely followed national politics and world events, and often asked young adults he met, “Do you vote?”

The memorial service to celebrate Jim's life will be at 11AM, Saturday, October 20, 2018, at Grace Lutheran Church, 111 Brooklets Avenue, Easton, MD.

# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

OCT **20**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Grace Lutheran Church  
Easton, MD

# Tribute Wall



“ *James R. Kerr*

October 26, 2023 at 06:42 PM



“ *James R. Kerr*

January 28, 2023 at 12:44 PM



“ *James R. Kerr*

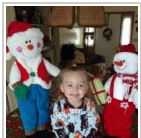
January 28, 2023 at 08:03 AM



“ *Pam Teat lit a candle in memory of James R. Kerr*



**Pam Teat** - August 27, 2018 at 09:42 PM



“ *Prayers to your family and friends. Rest in peace*



**Pamela Morgan** - August 26, 2018 at 04:03 PM