



Herbert Fentriss Colenda

February 21, 1929 - May 24, 2023

Herbert Fentriss Colenda of Alexandria, VA., passed away at home on Wednesday, May 24th at the age of 94. Herb was born in Morehead City, N.C. to Gladys and Frank Colenda. He was the youngest of 5 boys. His brothers were Frank, Allen, Joseph, and Ezekiel who all predeceased him. Due to the untimely death of his father when Herb was 18 months old, his mother placed all five boys at the Masonic Home for Children in Oxford, N.C. There he received an education and learned farming and industrial shop skills. He graduated from the orphanage high school and attended Duke University on a Naval ROTC scholarship. He met his first wife Carolyn Ann Southerland, a nursing student, at a dance his senior year and fell in love. He graduated from Duke with a degree in Mechanical Engineering, matriculated into the Navy, and got married all on the same day, June 4, 1951. He served his country for the next 30 years as an aviator, flying anti-submarine planes from aircraft carriers. He served during the Cuban Missile Crisis, helped recover astronaut Alan Shepard and John Glenn, and served in the Pacific Fleet during the Vietnam War. He was the last CO of VS-23 "The Black Cats" and Air Boss on the USS Bennington. Captain Colenda finished his naval career at the Board of Inspection and Survey in Washington, D.C. as deputy of Vice Adm. John D. Bulkeley.

Herb and Carolyn raised 3 children Lyn, Scott (Cindy), and Leigh. When he and Carolyn moved to Northern VA in the late 60's, he became a licensed tax

preparer. After he retired from the Navy in 1981, he worked in this profession full-time. After the untimely death of Carolyn from cancer in 1988, he fell in love with Betty J. Lacey. They blended their families of adult children when they married on November 4, 1989. He became the proud stepfather of Michael (Patti), David, and Theresa (Mark). With the help and support of Betty he grew his tax business into a thriving enterprise which he continued until he was in his late 80's. He formally retired on November 1, 2015.

Herb was a voracious reader his whole life and always had books stacked beside his recliner. A dedicated "night owl" Herb would often stay up most of the night reading. He loved watching TV, rooting for the Washington Redskins and his Duke "Blue Devils." Herb was known for his love of chocolate, Coca-Cola, peanut butter and molasses sandwiches, and his favorite dessert which was vanilla ice cream with chocolate syrup and peanuts. He was a kind and generous man, the "last of the good guys."

Herb is survived by his beloved wife Betty, his children, and two of his stepchildren. He is the grandfather of seven, great-grandfather of 8 and has nieces and nephews too numerous to count.

Relatives and friends may call Jefferson Funeral Chapel, 5755 Castlewellan Dr., Alexandria, VA Saturday June 3 from 2:30PM until time of service at 3:30PM. Interment Arlington National Cemetery on a later date. In lieu of flowers, please consider making contributions in Herbert's name to the Oxford Orphanage at [www.mhc-oxford.org/]

Cemetery Details

Arlington National Cemetery

1 Memorial Drive
Arlington, VA 22211

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN 3. 2:30 PM - 3:30 PM (ET)

Jefferson Funeral Chapel
5755 Castlewellan Dr
Alexandria, VA 22315-5516
(703) 971-7400

Funeral Service

JUN 3. 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM (ET)

Jefferson Funeral Chapel
5755 Castlewellan Dr
Alexandria, VA 22315-5516
(703) 971-7400

Tribute Wall



“ *RIP Herb.* ”



Frank Titus - May 29, 2023 at 03:54 PM



*Rip my Uncle Herb.From
Andrew W King Jr*

Andrew King Jr - August 06, 2023 at 03:04 PM