



Robert Graham "R.G." Wagoner

July 12, 1918 - July 7, 2015

Robert Graham "R.G." Wagoner, 96, of Cape Girardeau died peacefully Tuesday, July 7, 2015, at his home, five days before his 97th birthday.

Graham was born July 12, 1918, at the home of his parents, Earl and Helen Wagoner, on a 300-acre farm in Johnson County outside Odessa, Missouri.

During his pre-teen years, that loving home didn't have electricity or indoor plumbing, and Graham walked and rode a horse to a one-room country school two miles away. As a teenager, he lived during the Great Depression and did his share of hard farm labor, throwing bales of hay or bundles of head-high corn onto horse-drawn wagons.

After earning his diploma from Odessa High School and spending a year at what is now Park University in Parkville, Mo., Graham transferred to the state college in Warrensburg, Missouri, where he earned a 60-hour teaching certificate. He began teaching during the school year and attending college during the summer months. Of the five jobs he had during his long teaching career, he only had to apply for the first one. By the time he retired, he had taught everyone from first graders to graduate students.

In his first position, he taught all eight grades in a group of about 16 students in a one-room country school. He already had taught in two one-room schools

and taught industrial arts at a high school by the time he earned his undergraduate degree in industrial arts from what is now called the University of Central Missouri in Warrensburg.

Graham married Justine Evonne Wagoner, an elementary schoolteacher, May 1, 1942, at her family home near Bates City, Missouri. They were married 71 years.

After Graham earned his master's degree from the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley in 1949, he and Evonne moved to Cape Girardeau where he began 31 years on the faculty of Southeast Missouri State University. He taught generations of future high school "shop teachers" and other students woodwork and metalwork. He also established courses in leather carving and plastic carving.

Graham and Evonne were faithful members of Centenary United Methodist Church, where Graham was active in Methodist Men, Wesley Foundation and many church committees. He sang in the choir 65 years and never stopped. He performed with the community choral group called the Cape Choraliers, which sang on Missouri Day at the 1962 World's Fair in Seattle, Washington. He later sang in barbershop quartet groups. Now the choir in Heaven has a new tenor.

Survivors include two sons, Phil (Leta) Wagoner of Cape Girardeau, Daryl (Ellen) Wagoner of Fort Worth, Texas; two granddaughters, Laura (Lance) McClard of Jackson, Leslie Wagoner of St. Louis; and two great-grandchildren, Ainsley and Finn McClard of Jackson.

Visitation will be from 4 to 7 p.m. Friday at Ford and Sons Mount Auburn Funeral Home.

The funeral will be at 10 a.m. Saturday at Centenary United Methodist

Church, 300 N. Ellis St., with the Rev. Dave Conley officiating. Entombment will be in Cape County Memorial Park Mausoleum.

Memorial contributions may be sent to Centenary United Methodist Church or Southeast Hospice.

Cemetery Details

Cape County Memorial Park Cemetery

2315 Highway 61 North
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701
(573) 334-1909
<https://www.fordandsonsfuneralhome.com/>

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 10. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Ford & Sons Mt. Auburn Funeral Home
1001 N. Mt. Auburn Rd.
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701
(573) 334-1313
info@fordandsonsfuneralhome.com
<https://www.fordandsonsfuneralhome.com/>

Service

JUL 11. 10:00 AM (CT)

Centenary United Methodist Church
300 N. Ellis
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

Tribute Wall



“ I deliver meals for the Senior Center and have been gone for a couple of weeks. I was so sorry to hear of Mr Wagoner's passing. He was a pleasure to visit, always visited with me, talked about his son in Texas, tending his yard, waved to me from his chair in the sun room when we pulled up. I know you will all miss him, I certainly will.

Madeline Gieselman

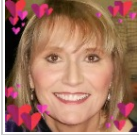
Madeline Woods Ehling Gieselman - July 16, 2015 at 06:33 PM

AC

“ How wonderful it has been to know R.G.! I always looked forward to Wednesday night choir practice and Sunday morning rehearsals with him. He was always such a positive person with a great attitude and a bright smile and I loved his sense of humor! Choir will not be the same without him. My thoughts and prayers are with you at this sad time.

Avon Crocker

Avon Crocker - July 11, 2015 at 07:25 AM



“ It does not take long for a bond to form between people. This happened in my case. Although our friendship was very brief, it was meaningful and impactful. I became immediately aware of his gentle spirit. I knew beyond a shadow of doubt that he loved his wife and missed her very much. He was very proud of his sons and their families. He gleamed with that fatherly pride as he shared their successes in life. He recounted his own memories of growing up on the farm and how he came to begin his educational career. He loved teaching and it showed by the obvious success that so many of his students now enjoy. His home was a real source of pride. He touted that "if Evonne could think it up ... I could build it!" And together they built that home. To his family I would say, what an honor it was for your Father to have crossed my path, even for that brief moment. Although I am saddened, because he will surely be missed, I also know that he "lived large" in his life by taking in life in so many different ways; be it music or the magic of creating. May the coming days be filled with the glorious memories he and your mother have left as their legacy to you. My thoughts are with you.
Charlie Harrison

Charlie Harrison - July 09, 2015 at 07:51 PM



“ Graham was the type of man I aspire to be. He was knowledgeable on virtually every subject, willing to help with anything anyone needed, he never met a stranger, very active and always had love in his heart. In all the time I have known him, I never saw him get upset. He always thought of others first and was willing to do what he could (and beyond) to help anyone. I have no doubt that he is with the good Lord smiling down on us!

Lance - July 09, 2015 at 04:17 PM