

Russell Beard

September 1, 1919 - February 28, 2016
Obituary

Russell of New Bern, NC was born in Karnes City, TX on September 1, 1919 to struggling tenement farmer Wesley Elijah Beard and his wife, Bertie Jordan Beard. Motivated by a life of hard labor and deprivation as well as a pledge to one day move his parents and siblings off the farm, Russell worked his way through college, attained a bachelor's degree in biology from Sul Ross University in Alpine, TX, and in 1941 married the love of his life, Mildred Jeanne Crawford. In 1943, he was commissioned at Harvard Business School into the Army Air Corps and completed his military service in 1946.

Following his military service, he and Jeanne settled in the Washington, DC area. His civilian career began at the Veterans Administration; led him to the Navy Polaris program as principal analyst on the very first undersea launch of a ballistic missile; and ended with retirement as Director of Program Management for the Advanced Research Projects Agency, known more recently as DARPA. As a measure of the man he became, his first act when he had saved enough money was to move his parents off the farm and into their own home.

Russ and Jeanne retired to Emerald Isle, NC and later to Pine Knoll Shores. He was active in civic affairs as a member of the County Planning Commission, President of the Pine Knoll Association, and President of Bogue Banks Country Club. Always a religious and church-going man, he was an active and productive member of First Presbyterian Church in Morehead City, serving in several capacities.

Russell is survived by Jeanne, his loving wife of 75 years, and by five daughters, Shirley Bolish of Fairfax Station, VA; Lorraine DiJoseph, New Bern, NC; Barbara Snow, Boise, ID; Sandra Beard, Emerald Isle, NC; and Mary Sinkay, Cedar Edge, CO. Their families include eleven grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

A service for the family will be held at a later time at Arlington National Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the First Presbyterian Church in Morehead City or to the American Red Cross.