



## Ernest Frederic Smith

August 1, 1931 - December 28, 2023

Ernest Frederic Smith was born August 1, 1931, and passed away peacefully on December 28, 2023, in Sarasota.

Ernest is survived by his wonderful wife, Barbara, of 42 years and his daughter, Rebecca Rochelle Smith, who he treasured and his niece Charlotte Strader Cubbage.

Ernest was predeceased by his brother Peter Wilson Strader IV, who was artistic director of The Players for many years.

Ernest lived in Sarasota his entire life going to McClellan Park School (which his mother Charlotte S. Smith and Sally Teate started) through the 6th grade and then Sarasota High School, graduating in 1948. At the start of his second year at the University of Florida, his father died suddenly at age 48. Ernest finished out that year at Florida and then joined his mother at the insurance agency his father had started in 1938, Ernest Smith Insurance Agency. While at Florida, Ernest was in the Gator marching band.

In 1953, Ernest went on active duty to U. S. Army from the Florida National Guard and was stationed at Ft Jackson, S.C., Ft Benning, Ga., and on Okinawa for a year. On separation from active duty on August 9, 1955, as a Sgt First Class, Ernest rejoined the insurance agency and purchased it from

his mother on January 1, 1956.

Ernest decided to retire at age 59 and enjoy the cabin for six months each year his father had built in 1947 in the mountains of western North Carolina, which he and Barbara were able to do for over 20 years. Some of his local involvement over the years included: President of Sarasota University Club in 1980; President of the Players Community Theatre 1985-1989; member of Argus Foundation; President of Sarasota Association of Independent Insurance Agents; Chairman of Sarasota Memorial Hospital Foundation; Trustee of Ringling College of Art & Design for 15+ years; director of United First Federal Savings and Loan Association (which is now Bank of America); Director of Kiwanis Club; Director of Sarasota County Chamber of Commerce; Director and 60-year member of the Field Club; member of Laurel Oak Country Club for over 30 years.

In addition, Ernest was Chairman of the Florida Association of Insurance Agents, Tallahassee, Florida; President of Wildcat Cliffs Country Club in Highlands, North Carolina; Director of Seibels-Bruce Insurance Companies, Columbia South Carolina.

The Smith clan, William E. Smith, his brother, Ernest Arthur (E.A.) Smith (Ernest's great-uncle) and Ernest C. Smith (Ernest's father who graduated from Dartmouth in 1923) all moved to Sarasota in the 1926, whereas his mother Charlotte Swain Smith moved to Sarasota in 1910.

Ernest's family was always involved in Sarasota: his great uncle, E. A. Smith was Mayor of Sarasota for 12 years during the 1930's and 1940's and was responsible for the (now demolished) Lido Casino, the Municipal Auditorium and owned Sarasota Abstract Company and developed Harbor Acres. E.A. Smith's wife, Jean, was one of the founders of the original Sarasota Hospital in the 1920's. His grandfather, W. E. Smith, was Chairman of the Ration Board

during WW II and his great-grandfather, A.B. Smith, donated land for the A.B. Smith Park on Oak Street. Ernest C. (Ernest's father) started Smith Candy Company and later Ernest Smith Insurance Agency.

In March 2015, Ernest was diagnosed with Parkinson's, which slowed him down considerably; however, due to Parkinson Place and Neuro Challenge, Parkinson's support groups (which Sarasota is so lucky to have), life with Parkinson's was easier to handle.

Funeral services will be at The Episcopal Church of The Redeemer Church on January 10, 2024, at 11:30 followed by a reception at Gillespie Hall at the Church.

Burial will be at Sarasota National Cemetery on January 10, 2024, at 2:00.

In lieu of flowers, Ernest asked that any donations be made to Neuro Challenge for Parkinson's Foundation, 722 Apex Road, Unit A, 34240: Ringling College of Art and Design, 2700 N. Tamiami Trail 34234 or The Church of the Redeemer, 222 S. Palm Avenue 34246.

# Previous Events

## Funeral Service

JAN 10. 11:30 AM (ET)

Church of the Redeemer  
222 S. Palm Ave  
Sarasota, FL 34236

## Burial Service

JAN 10. 2:00 PM (ET)

Sarasota National Cemetery  
9810 State Rd 72  
Sarasota, FL 34241  
(941) 922-7200