

RINGGOLD'S WILBUR WIMPY: LIFE AT 100

By Tamara Wolk TWolk@CatoosaNews.com Jul 31, 2020

On July 4 of this year, the USA turned 244 years old. Our country was only 144 years old when Ringgold resident Wilburn "Wib" Wimpy was born. Wimpy celebrated his 100th birthday this year, on July 3, at a family gathering in Michigan where he stayed with a sister 10 years his junior. It was just last year that he drove to Michigan himself, pulling his camper, and spent three weeks camping and visiting relatives, including another sister 11 years his junior.

"I would have driven again this year," says Wimpy, "but with COVID-19, the campgrounds aren't open like they used to be." Driving, usually day trips to places like Blairsville, Young Harris, and Dayton, Tennessee, is something Wimpy enjoys doing. "When I arrive where I'm going," he says, "I'll have lunch then drive a different route home." He received 175 cards for his 100th birthday and honored by fellow veterans in Michigan.



Ringgold resident Wilbur Wimpy (seated center) celebrated his 100th birthday in Michigan with his son (seated right), his daughter (seated left) and his grandchildren.

A CHANGING WORLD OVER 100 YEARS

Wimpy has seen a lot of change in his lifetime. The year he was born, 1920, the population of the U.S. was 106 million; it has more than tripled in his lifetime. There were only 48 U.S. states when Wimpy was born. Alaska and Hawaii would not become states until the year he turned 39.

Woodrow Wilson was president in 1920, and it was an election year: Warren G. Harding vs. James M. Cox. Cox's running mate was Franklin D. Roosevelt. Cox took Georgia in the election, but Harding, whose running mate was Calvin Coolidge, won the election. Both running mates would eventually become president, Coolidge the year Wimpy turned three and Roosevelt the year he turned 13.

The first World War had ended just one and a half years before Wimpy was born. When he was 22 he found himself drafted and fighting in the second world war, stationed on the tiny Aleutian island of Attu working anti-aircraft.

But of all the changes Wimpy has seen over the years, he says the most astounding was the sight of planes flying over his childhood home. "They were little, single-engine planes," he says. "We would stand outside and watch until the plane disappeared. We wondered

how they got up there and what kept them up there. Everything was really amazing back then." Jobs and career. Before his stint in the Army, Wimpy held a variety of odd jobs. He quit school at the age of 15 and worked operating a cotton gin for 50 cents a day.

Wimpy's next job was at Ross Meehan Foundry in Chattanooga. From there, Wimpy, along with some buddies, took off for Cleveland, Ohio, and worked in a steel mill until he was drafted. Once out of the Army, Wimpy decided there would be more job opportunity in Detroit than in Chattanooga. After his mother had died in 1942, Wimpy's father and sisters had moved back to Detroit where the family had lived for a short time during his childhood.

In addition to what became a 30-year career with General Motors, Wimpy found his wife Doris, whom he had known from living in Ringgold years before. The two married and raised their children in Detroit until their son was a teenager and they moved back to Ringgold. Wimpy remembers one unusual job he had when he lived in "Motor City," before he started with General Motors. "There was a man who transported taxis from Detroit to New York. Six of us would deliver the taxis to New York, driving one and towing another. One man would tow a drive-back car and we would all cram into it, three in the front and three in the back, to go home."

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TELEPHONES AND MOONSHINE

Many people today can recall “back in the old days” when they had three-digit phone numbers: 365 or 874. Wimpy’s memory of early phone numbers is ring-lengths. “Your phone number might be one long and two shorts,” says Wimpy. “You turned the crank longer for a long ring and less for a short ring.” Not that it mattered, says Wimpy. There was one telephone line and it was likely most of your neighbors would be in on your call even though their numbers were different.

One fun memory, says Wimpy, is of him and a friend watching his dad make moonshine in the woods. The year of Wimpy’s birth was also the year Prohibition passed in the U.S. “It’s not what he did for a living,” says Wimpy, “but I guess he sold it. Sometimes someone would call the sheriff and he would come out, but my father never had any trouble. He made sure the sheriff got a gallon of moonshine from time to time.”

BACK TO THE PRESENT

One thing that doesn’t make Wimpy too happy about the modern world is COVID-19. “I mostly stay at home and no one visits me. I think I’ve gotten older during COVID than any other time.” Before COVID-19, Wimpy could be found at Hardee’s in Ringgold three or four mornings a week, hanging out with six to ten buddies. He visited other people and they visited him. He now dons a mask when he leaves his house.

Eating out has been drive-thru and take-home for months. Walmart trips for groceries are quasi-social outings. Wimpy does still visit and help out at North Georgia Tire on Battlefield Parkway, where he held a job stacking tires and helping in other ways until four years ago.

Recently, Wimpy went to the tax office in Ringgold to renew his tags. For reasons he didn’t understand he had not been charged any tax on his Toyota. Tax Commissioner Gary Autry also could not explain it when Wimpy summoned him from his office. Wimpy owns two cars and a small RV. He drives his Toyota for personal use and keeps his Buick for lending out. “I can’t get rid of the Buick. I wouldn’t have an extra car if someone needed it,” he says.

A FUN NAME

Has it been difficult living with the name Wimpy? People often associate it with the cartoon character J. Wellington Wimpy in the Popeye comic strip, someone Wimpy shares almost no characteristics with but enjoys anyway. Wimpy’s home sports stuffed J. Wellington Wimpys, ceramic Wimpys and even Wimpy pulls on the chains on his ceiling fans. At one time, he had a Wimpy license plate on his car. “I never had any trouble with my name,” says Wimpy. “There were a lot of Wimpys where I grew up and I had fun with the name.”

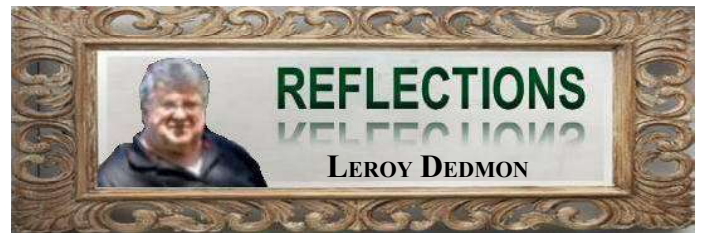
ON AGE AND LIFE

Wimpy says he would like to be 10 or 12 years younger. “It’s good to live this long, but it’s getting to me,” he says. “The good part is you remember a lot of things. The bad part is that people your age keep dying off.”

Wimpy says he’d like to meet other people in the area who have reached the century mark. “My greatest satisfaction in life,” says Wimpy, “is my children and grandchildren. I’m proud of them.”

Does Wimpy have any secrets to help people live long? No, but he does have some general advice: “Mind your own business. Don’t worry about what other people are doing.” Wimpy says if he had his life to live over he can’t think of anything he’d do differently. “I have a lot of good memories and good friends.”

Tamara Wolk is a reporter for The Catoosa County News in Ringgold, Ga., and Walker County Messenger in LaFayette, Ga.



Wib Wimpy and I are second cousins. His mother was Alice Dickson a sister to my mother’s father. Alice passed away when Wib was around 21 years old and his father remarried about 3 years later and moved the family to Michigan. This was probably while Wib was in the Army. Wib lived in Michigan several years after he was discharged. He married Doris Vereda Jones on December 30, 1947 in Whitfield County, GA. She passed away on August 21, 1993 and is buried in the Dunagan Cemetery, Rocky Face, Whitfield County, GA. **(Find A Grave Memorial# 94466830)**. They had two children: Sharon Ann, born on November 28, 1950 and Gary Lee born on November 16, 1959.

Since Wib and his family lived in Michigan we were not acquainted with each other growing up. The first time I met him was when my father died in 2002. He came to the funeral home to see mom as they were, of course, first cousins. After that we were together several times. He came to the house to see mom while she was sick prior to her passing away. He also attended several family gatherings after that. The last time I saw him was at Hardees in Fort Oglethorpe as he often ate breakfast there. I moved away seven years ago and we have not see each other since. I had planned to visit him several times but my health issues have prevented me visiting. I hope he lives several more years as he may be the only family member keeping me from being the “older generation”. He is an amazing man.



SEVEN DECADES OF SUCCESS: A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE VA HOME LOAN...BY CHRIS BIRK

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA)

The United States has the most comprehensive system of assistance for Veterans of any nation in the world, with roots that can be traced back to 1636, when the Pilgrims of Plymouth Colony were at war with the Pequot Indians. The Pilgrims passed a law that stated that disabled soldiers would be supported by the colony. Later, the Continental Congress of 1776 encouraged enlistments during the Revolutionary War, providing pensions to disabled soldiers. In the early days of the Republic, individual states and communities provided direct medical and hospital care to Veterans. In 1811, the federal government authorized the first domiciliary and medical facility for Veterans. Also in the 19th century, the nation's Veterans assistance program was expanded to include benefits and pensions not only for Veterans, but for their widows and dependents.

Following the Civil War, many state Veterans homes were established. Since domiciliary care was available at all state Veterans homes, incidental medical and hospital treatment was provided for all injuries and diseases, whether or not of service origin. Indigent and disabled Veterans of the Civil War, Indian Wars, Spanish-American War, and Mexican Border period, as well as the discharged regular members of the Armed Forces, received care at these homes.

As the U.S. entered World War I in 1917, Congress established a new system of Veterans benefits, including programs for disability compensation, insurance for service personnel and Veterans, and vocational rehabilitation for the disabled. By the 1920's, three different federal agencies administered the various benefits: the Veterans Bureau, the Bureau of Pensions of the Interior Department, and the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers.

The first consolidation of federal Veterans programs took place August 9, 1921, when Congress combined all World War I Veterans programs to create the Veterans Bureau, Public Health Service. Veterans' hospitals were transferred to the bureau, and an ambitious hospital construction program for World War I Veterans commenced.

World War I was the first fully mechanized war, and as a result, soldiers who were exposed to mustard gas, other chemicals and fumes required specialized care after the war. Tuberculosis and neuro-psychiatric hospitals opened to accommodate Veterans with respiratory or mental health problems. A majority of existing VA hospitals and medical centers began as National Home, Public Health Service, or Veterans Bureau hospitals. In 1924, Veterans benefits were liberalized to cover disabilities that were not service-related. In 1928, admission to the National Homes was extended to women, National Guard and militia Veterans.

The second consolidation of federal Veterans programs took place July 21, 1930, when President Herbert Hoover signed Executive Order 5398 and elevated the Veterans Bureau to a federal administration—creating the Veterans Administration—to "consolidate and coordinate Government activities affecting war veterans." At that time, the National Homes and Pension Bureau also joined the VA.

The three component agencies became bureaus within the Veterans Administration. Brig. Gen. Frank T. Hines, who had directed the Veterans Bureau for seven years, was named the first Administrator of Veterans Affairs, a job he held until 1945.

Dr. Charles Griffith, VA's second Medical Director, came from the Public Health Service and Veterans Bureau. Both he and Hines were the longest serving executives in VA's history.

Following World War II, there was a vast increase in the Veteran population, and Congress enacted large numbers of new benefits for war Veterans—the most significant of which was the World War II GI Bill, signed into law June 22, 1944. It is said the GI Bill had more impact on the American way of life than any law since the Homestead Act of 1862.

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We published the above article in order to "set the stage" for the following articles on page 4

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(Dayton, Ohio)

THE BEGINNING: 1944-45

Service members sacrifice so much to serve our nation. The government sought a way to help veterans catch up with their civilian counterparts when it came to establishing credit and building a strong financial future. Home ownership was at the heart of that foundation. Rather than provide veterans with a cash bonus to help with purchasing a home, the government decided a loan guaranty was a more powerful and viable long-term solution.

Rather than actually make home loans, the VA basically insures them. The guaranty is a financial pledge from the government to repay a portion of the loan should the borrower default. That promise gives lenders confidence to extend financing to veterans who might not otherwise be able to land a home loan. At the outset, the VA guaranty was limited to 50 percent of the loan amount, not to exceed \$2,000. The average home price in 1944 was about \$8,600. Loans had a 4 percent interest rate cap, and the term couldn't exceed 20 years. All loans required VA approval.

The first set of eligibility requirements for the VA loan program focused exclusively on World War II veterans. Prospective home buyers must have served at least 90 days between Sept. 16, 1940, and Sept. 2, 1945, the official end of World War II. Veterans could apply anytime within two years of separating from the military or two years of the war's end. The VA wouldn't guaranty applications received after Sept. 16, 1950, giving World War II veterans a five-year window to use the benefit.

Problems with the loan program's initial version appeared relatively quickly. Rising home prices rendered the VA's \$2,000 loan guaranty inadequate, putting veterans at a market disadvantage. There were also concerns about high monthly payments because of the maximum 20-year loan term. Others also worried about the potential flood of applicants and impact on inflation given the program's two-year purchase window.

Congress amended the program in 1945, increasing the guaranty to \$4,000 and extending the loan term, among other changes. Perhaps more importantly, the legislative update expanded the purchasing window from five years to 10. The VA loan program was now more than just a readjustment tool in the immediate aftermath of the war.

"It was now a long-range housing program for veterans," notes the VA's official history of the program. "Nearly all changes have been designed to help the veteran become a homeowner by extending the terms, making mortgage money available, protecting him/her from excessive charges and faulty construction."



https://www.va.gov/about_va/vahistory.asp NAACP ASKS U.S. TO MAKE LOANS AVAILABLE TO VETERANS

WASHINGTON, Oct,19, 1945 (AP)

The NAACP is advocating the establishment of a government agency to make loans to veterans rather than leaving this matter to private lending institutions. This is the only reasonably certain way, the association contends, of assuring a minimum of discriminatory treatment of Black veterans.

Jesse O. Dedmon, secretary for veterans affairs, for the association, announced last week that the organization is in agreement with one of two recommendations advanced by the American Legion. The favored proposal calls for the issuance of certificates of loan eligibility to veterans immediately on discharge, rather than having the veteran apply for it from the Veterans Administration.

Opposed is the recommendation that recognized lending agencies be permitted to make loans without waiting for approval by VA.

"Our position is based upon the practice of lending agencies in most communities of discriminating against Blacks," Dedmon said. "We further believe that if lending agencies are not circumscribed by law when discriminatory practices are exercised by them, the Black veteran would have no recourse."

"We do not advocate the entrance into the loan field by the government in competition with private enterprise but we believe that all veterans would receive greater benefits from an agency established by law under government supervision."

The daily bulletin. October 19, 1945,

This Nation throughout its history has been more willing to fight a war for democracy than to actual practice it.

---Jesse O. Dedmon, Jr., 1945



SPENCER M. BROOME

Spencer M. Broome, 60, of Valdosta, GA, passed away suddenly on Thursday September 10, 2020 at South Georgia Medical Center. He was born on January 18, 1960 in Daytona Beach, Florida to Thomas Spencer and the late Betty Duene Smith Broome. Spencer



was a true man of faith. He was the coordinator for many Latin American Missions YES II trips and loved working with the youth and served as the Youth Minister for many years at the Forest Park Church of Christ, where he was a member. He enjoyed attending polishing the pulpit and he led Vacation Bible School for many years. He served as Master of Ceremonies for Lads to Leaders for the Atlanta Conventions. He loved working with young people, leading singing and teaching God's word. Spencer will always be remembered as Pop by his beloved grandchildren.

Spencer is survived by his wife of 41 years, Renee Broome; children and their spouses, Kevin and Lindsey Broome, Amber and Benjamin Nelson, Christi and Dillon Swilley, all of Valdosta; grandchildren, Lillian Woodring, Lainey Broome, Henley Broome, Addley Broome, Brexton Swilley, and Sutton Nelson; father and his wife, Tommy and Margie Broome, of Lyerly, GA; sister and brother in law, Yvonne and Barry Allen, of Carrollton, GA; brothers and sisters in law, Terry and Kathy Broome, of Scottsboro, AL, Marty and Beverly Broome, of Dasher, GA, and Hillary and Deborah Broome, of Murfreesboro, TN; and father in law, John William (JW) Spake, of Bremen, GA.; brother in law and sister in law, Scotty W. and Tammy Spake of Nacogdoches, Texas. He was preceded in death by his mother, Betty Duene Broome, his mother in law, Eva Mae Spake and sister in law, Sandra Spake Parker.

Funeral services for Spencer will be held Sunday at 2:30 p.m. at the Forest Park Church of Christ with Mr. Wes Hazel officiating. A private burial will be held at McLane Riverview Memorial Gardens on Monday. The family will receive friends at the church Saturday from 5 – 8 p.m. In lieu of flowers the family requests that donations be made to Latin American Missions YES II, in care of Forrest Park Church of Christ. Condolences to the family may be conveyed online at www.mclanecares.com. Carson McLane Funeral is serving the Broome family.

(Find a Grave Memorial 215482714)

THOMAS SPENCER BROOME

Monday, October 12, 2020

Thomas Spencer "Tommy" Broome, age 91, of Neal Gap Road, Summerville, Georgia, passed away Friday afternoon, October 9, in a Rome hospital.

He was born in Chickamauga, Ga. on Jan. 17, 1929, to the late William M. and Ola Tinney Broome. Tommy Broome was a retired Church of Christ minister. He served numerous congregations throughout the State of Georgia, and was presently a member of the Pennville Church Christ.

He was preceded in death by his first wife, the late Duene Broome in 2012, and a son, Spencer Broome, on September 10, 2020

Surviving are wife, Margie Conner Broome; children, Terry (Kathy) Broome, Yvonne Broome (Barry) Allen, Marty (Beverly) Broome, Hillary (Deborah) Broome and Renee Broome (daughter in law); 10 grandchildren, 20 great-grandchildren, one great-great-granddaughter and several nieces and nephews also survive.

Funeral service will be held Monday, Oct. 12, at 2 p.m. from the graveside in Greenhills Memory Garden with Minister Charles Williams and Minister Robby Eversole officiating. Pallbearers will be grandsons. The family requests face coverings be worn by everyone attending the funeral service.

There will be no formal visitation.

Earle Rainwater Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

Find a Grave Memorial 216564372

I met Tommy Broome when I was a young teen ager when he was staying with a neighborhood family while he was working for the Peerless Woolen Mills in Rossville, GA. At the time I did not realize Tommy and the Crane family where he was staying were kinfolk. I met him again after we both began preaching and he was always an encouragement to me. Our paths crossed often and eventually I met all his children. His daughter, Yvonne, was a member at Bremen, Georgia when I preached there and was one of our children's bible class teachers. His son Spencer served as the deacon over the youth at Bremen, GA, when I preached there and after I moved to Woodstock, GA, he drove over there several Sundays to lead the singing. I also got to know his other three sons, Terry, Marty and Hillary, who are also peachers. Tommy leaves behind a great legacy

-Leroy

KATHRYNE B. DEDMAN

Mrs. Kathryn Bingham Dedman, age 88 of Lebanon passed away Tuesday, March 3, 2020, at her home. Born February 8, 1932, in Wilson County, she is the daughter of the late John Wilson Bingham and Willie Puryear Bingham. She was a 1949 graduate of Lebanon High School. She was a homemaker and a member of Cedar Creek Baptist Church. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband of sixty six years, Houston Dedman; son, Ronnie Houston Dedman; and a sister Mary Josephine Dedman.



She is survived by four children, Jerry (Carol) Dedman, Sandra Kay (Mike) Montgomery, Ricky (Dewanda) Dedman, and Lisa Mae Lokey; thirteen grandchildren, Brian Dedman, Kim (Kerry) Weiser, Ronda (Derrick) Whitley, Brad (Michelle) Dedman, Stephen (Liz) Dedman, Jeff Dedman, Jessica (Brandon) Smith, Casey (Zach) Rowe, Kyle (Stefanie) Dedman, Patrick (Audrey) Dedman, Kristen Dedman, Brandon (Cara) Lokey, and Brooke (Jake) Weldy; and 22 great grandchildren.

Funeral services for Mrs. Dedman will be 2:00 P.M. Friday, March 6, 2020, at Cedar Creek Baptist Church with Bro. Mike Shelby officiating. Interment will follow at Wilson County Memorial Gardens. Visitation Thursday 3-8 PM at Ligon & Bobo Funeral Home and Friday after 12 Noon at the church. Grandsons will serve as active pallbearers and great grandchildren will serve as honorary pallbearers.

Ligon & Bobo Funeral Home of Lebanon
(615) 444-2142 www.ligonbobo.com
Find a Grave Memorial 207632781

CAROLYN L DEDMON

Carolyn L. Dedmon, 76, passed away Wednesday, January 10, 2018 in Jacksonville, FL. She was born November 18, 1941 to William and Opal Robinson in Catawba, SC. Carolyn loved going to the beach and sticking her toes in the sand. She also enjoyed going to her church and collecting angels but her passion was spending time with her family. Carolyn is preceded in death by her husband of 35 years Charles Dedmon. She is survived by her children Charlotte (Bryan) Minor, Charlene McCarthy, Bruce Dedmon, sisters Lucille Deal, Priscilla Stover, Guynell Patterson, Helen Chappell, Ruth Marthers, Anna Webb, Martha Vess, grandchildren Amanda, Rachel, Michael, Destiny, Gabriel, great-grandchildren Jadyne, Brylynnne, Jakob, Jaylee, Jace as well as numerous nieces and nephews. Hardage-Giddens Riverside Memorial Park & Funeral Home is serving the family. A visitation for friends will be held on Sunday, January 14, 2018 from 5pm-7pm at the funeral home. Graveside services to be held on Monday, January 15, 2018 at 11am at Riverside Memorial Park cemetery.

Find a Grave Memorial 186590299

JESSE O. DEDMON



Jesse O. Dedmon, 78, a Washington lawyer who had been active in politics and in civic and business organizations here, died of cancer Aug. 18, 1986 at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

Mr. Dedmon was born in Pine Bluff, Ark. He graduated from Howard University and Howard Law School. He was a lawyer in Tulsa before World War II. During the war he served in the Army, then came to Washington. He was veterans secretary for the NAACP before he opened his law practice in 1950.

Mr. Dedmon was a founder and general counsel of the Uptown Progress Committee, a group of Shaw area businessmen concerned with urban renewal in the late 1960s, and he was a former president of the D.C. Chamber of Commerce. In 1964 he ran unsuccessfully for D.C. Democratic National Committee.

He was a member of the board of directors of the YMCA and the United Planning Organization, legal adviser to the Columbia Elks lodge, and a member of the Pigskin Club and the Washington Board of Trade. For 30 years he was senior warden of St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Washington.

Survivors include his wife, Dorothea S. Dedmon of Washington; his stepmother, Beatrice C. Dedmon of Tulsa; and a brother, Algernon, of Muskogee, Okla.

Find a Grave Memorial 58659775