



Obituary

Born: Thursday, April 5, 1923

Died: Friday, February 18, 2011

Jesse Lee Strickland Jr., 90, of Shelbyville, died Friday, Feb. 18, 2011, at his residence.

Born April 5, 1923, in Philadelphia, Pa., he was the son of Jesse Lee Strickland Sr. and Addie Mae (Charlton) Strickland Fields.

He married Judith Spurlin, and she survives.

Other survivors include a son, David (wife, Ruth) Strickland; daughters, Anita Pratt and Loreena (husband, Roger) Phillips; grandson, Jordon Strickland; brothers-in-law, Arthur (wife, Beverly) Claridge and Carl (wife, Joann) Claridge; sister-in-law, Brenda (husband, Tim) Cooney; and nieces and nephews.

Service Summary

Visitation

4:00 PM to 8:00 PM, Wed Feb 23, 2011

Location: - *Not available* -

Funeral Service

10:00 AM Thu Feb 24, 2011

Location: - *Not available* -

Mr. Strickland earned a bachelor of arts degree in architecture from NYU Buffalo, Case Western University.

He was a U.S. Army Air Force veteran, serving in the African-American unit during World War II and from 1946 to 1952 in the reserve.

Mr. Strickland joined NACA (now NASA) in 1950 at the Lewis Research Center in Cleveland, launching a 33-year career there, eventually becoming the chief architect and head of design. His work included designing Plumbrook, a nuclear facility in Sandusky, Ohio, NASA's primary facility for research and development of nuclear energy for space application; NASA's first solar energy housing; and all the buildings at the Lewis Research Center. He also designed hospitals for eye surgery in both India and Africa.

He was the first black president of the Construction Specification Institute, Cleveland Chapter, in 1972. During the early '60s and '70s, he helped establish the Madison International Architectural Group, a worldwide group of architects and engineers.

His civic activities included 20 years of service on the Cleveland Board of Education.

He was particularly involved with special needs and handicapped children, counseling high school seniors on careers and served in a number of positions with the YES Group (Youth Enrichment Service) for over 15 years. He was awarded a commendation by President Nixon in 1970 for his services in education and as a child motivator.

After retirement, Mr. Strickland worked on several

architectural projects including the design of a new physical therapy department for St. Alexis Hospital Cleveland.

He travelled nationwide as a lecturer, including as guest lecturer for NASA on 'Life Beyond Earth' giving children and adults a window to things to come in life in space.

Many of his statements have come about, such as the international space station, the possibility of a base on the moon, travel to Mars and more. His desire was to inspire children in the fascination of space and the wonder of God's work.

In the early '80s, he joined the First United Methodist Church of Cleveland and helped refurbish the 150-year-old church to its original beauty. In 2007, he and his wife moved to Indiana to join her family.

Jesse had a love of architecture inherited from his father, also an architect. Jesse's view of life was "If you dream it and believe it, you can do it," and he lived all his life that way.

Visitation will be from 4 to 8 p.m. Wednesday at Murphy-Parks Funeral Service, 703 S. Harrison St.

Funeral services will be at 10 a.m. Thursday at the funeral home, with Dr. Kenneth Chalker officiating.

Burial will be in the Heroes of Honor & Glory Veterans Garden at Whispering Hope Memorial Gardens with full military honors.

Memorial contributions maybe given to the YES Group in care of Murphy-Parks Funeral Service 703 S. Harrison St., Shelbyville IN 46176.

An online guest book may be signed at
www.murphyparks.com.