



Frank Ayres Conner

July 11, 1933 - January 31, 2014

Frank Ayres Conner, Jr. passed away from cancer on Jan. 31, 2014. He is survived by a sister, Katy Conner of Peachtree City, GA, a brother, Tim Conner, of Austell, GA, four nieces, a nephew, and grandnieces and grandnephews. Never married, Frank led a most interesting life, and always seemed to be where the action was.

Frank was born in Englewood, NJ on July 11, 1933, to Southern parents, Frank and Viera Conner, both of Macon, GA lineage. The family moved back to Cornelia, GA during World War II. There, he saw the funeral train for Pres. Franklin Roosevelt go through town. Later, after the family moved to Newnan, GA, he rode the inaugural run of the "Man O'War" Central of Georgia train from Atlanta to Columbus. He was visiting in Atlanta when the Winecoff Hotel burned, and saw the aftermath of that disaster. As a young man, he sold peaches in Newnan, GA for Doc Moody, who instructed him that, in addition to selling the peaches, if a particularly good, juicy peach should come down the line, he was to eat it. If full, he should fill up a sack of the best peaches to take home to his mamma. Things were different back then.

He enjoyed a year at North Georgia College, and then transferred to study chemical engineering at Georgia Tech, long enough to learn that chemical engineering was not for him. He joined the Air Force in the Aviation Cadets training program, and was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant, as the Korean

War was drawing to a close. He served as a radar navigator-bombardier in the Strategic Air Command. He flew on B-50 bombers, which were basically WWII B-29 bombers with more-powerful engines. After the Air Force, he worked for a while for IBM, as a Customer Engineer, keeping punch card machines running for his clients.

He bought one of the initial scuba models that used compressed air, that were sold in this country. He was a gun enthusiast all his life. He learned to handload his own ammunition, and was proficient in quickdraw. In 1961, as a student at the University of Georgia, amidst the integration riot, and was deputized by Sheriff Huff to aid in restoring order.

He traveled the Southeast with Lucky McDaniel, teaching birdhunters to hit birds in flight with their shotguns, by using the Daisy air rifle with the sights removed., and teaching police departments to quickdraw and hipshoot their pistols for emergency self-defense.

Frank went to work for General Electric at their facility on San Salvador Island in the Caribbean, tracking Atlas Missiles fired from Cape Canaveral. He took leave-of-absence from GE and spent two years at the University of Georgia to earn his BBA degree. After that, he became a weapon systems planner for GE in New York.

Acting on his life-long love of motorcycles, he went to work for the U.S. importer of Bultaco motorcycles. He went to Detroit and persuaded the Ford executives to buy the Bultaco factory (which Frank would run), in return for which they would be licensed to build cars in Spain. But at the last minute, Generalissimo Franco changed his mind and killed the deal. Frank then imported Ossa motorcycles into Houston, to distribute to dealers around the U.S.

Frank was hired as Feature Editor of Cycle Magazine, where he did road tests, and long-travel articles. He then became Editor of Cycle Guide Magazine. There, he did a road test of a popular Japanese street bike which—unbeknownst to him—was dangerous. It put him in the hospital. They analyzed the deficiencies of that model, and he wrote the road test, urging the reader not to buy it. The manufacturer immediately redesigned that model to eliminate the deficiencies, but Frank ended up fired and blacklisted from the motorcycle magazine business.

He then went to work for J. Walter Thompson Advertising in Los Angeles, writing TV commercials and print ads. His last outside employment was for Hughes Aircraft, writing technical manuals. Frank then retired to Newnan, Georgia, where he wrote a book, “South Under Siege, 1830-2000” and a yet to be published book, “End Run”.

The memorial service will be Monday, February 3 at 2 o'clock at Central Baptist Church with Dr. Joel Richardson officiating. The visitation will be from 1 o'clock until service time on Monday at the church.

Condolences may be expressed online at www.mckoon.com.

McKoon Funeral Home 38 Jackson St. Newnan GA, 30263 770-253-4580

Cemetery Details

McKoon Funeral Home & Crematory

38 Jackson Street
Newnan, GA 30263
(770) 253-4580
care@mckoon.com
<http://www.mckoon.com>

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 3. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (ET)

Central Baptist Church
14 West Broad St.
Newnan, GA 30264

Service

FEB 3. 2:00 PM (ET)

Central Baptist Church
14 West Broad St.
Newnan, GA 30264

Tribute Wall

GW

“ *Mr. Conner got me started in Civil War studies by giving me an autographed copy of THE SOUTH UNDER SIEGE 1830-2000. From that, I got to know Greg Loren Durand and toured the Civil War circuit for 4 years 2004-2008, when my dad died of cancer.*

Since then, I run Confederate Pictures Reenactment Films, and Mr. Conner gave me a great review on Amazon for my video, WHAT REALLY HAPPENED AT FORT SUMTER, which he inspired, and which was filmed on location in the Charleston harbor. I used his book in the movie as a reference book. He was the one who got me into the Anglo-Saxon and Celtic fight between North and South and I am ever grateful to him for his help.

I pray he may rest in peace.

George Wills - August 04, 2018 at 09:19 AM

RW

“ *Knew Ayers (Frank) since early days in Newnan through lazy weekends visiting between FSU and Sundays home in Newnan. In Jr High we mixed nitroglycerin which we detonated using perfume bottles "borrowed" from our sisters. Experimented with jets using gun powder and later on heated alcohol. Always the consummate Southern Gentleman, Frank and his roommate at Ga Tech, Lee Spruill swapped stories about guns and later his experiences with Intercontinental Missels. Enjoyed his book and look forward to release of the second, thanks to Tim. The three if us went separate ways in the military, but I would have loved to ride in one of those Strategic Bombers with Frank. Talked to him on the phone just a few days before the end. Will always miss you, Ayers. Bobby Wright*

Robert (Bobby) Wright - March 07, 2014 at 12:46 PM

RS

“ My Dear Frank... This note to you is long overdue..we last spoke about 8 years ago and that meeting was a joyful reunion as I recall. We traveled the southern heritage road together many years ago and while we may have disagreed over methods we never disagreed over principles. I will never forget you and I going to Marietta to visit an SCV meeting..Governor Lester Maddox was speaking as you will recall, now there was a character..now I had heard every story that you had told Frank, and I always enjoyed them..but when you said that you knew the Governor, well I just wondered what "knew" really meant..I never doubted you, but I wondered if maybe if as we all did with a good story,, you know..embellish it a bit..no sooner had the Governor entered in his usual whirlwind way..but he stopped shaking hands, walked across the room..and boomed, "well hello Conner..how's you dear mother!"...I just smiled to myself..if you said you had been there and done that..then you had indeed..we spent so many fine afternoons on the porch drinking sweet tea and coffee settling the world's ills and troubles..you were never short of ideas or an opinion..but ever the gentleman..and never did I hear an impolite remark about someone..though there were those who did not reciprocate..Frank you always took the high road and were always the gentleman.. I learned a lot from you...aside from local southern history and the art of motorcycle maintenance..I watched your examples of patience and the gentlemanly art of suffering through the poor argument..you were the master at that..now Frank, I know how much you shrink from laudatory homages..and how gracefully you always accepted a compliment..so let me just say this..you have been one of the most interesting and original human beings I have ever met in a world of travels..I enjoyed every conversation and debate we ever had..and as I close my eyes, I can see your smile and feel your handshake as you say, "well..thank you kindly..I'll be seeing you soon"....I look forward to that day..we'll have a lot to talk about..and the next time..the glasses of tea will be bottomless and the conversations will be endless and the sun will never disappear from the porch..God Bless you Frank..my old conspirator and friend...and..see you again soon.. all the best, Russ

Russ Stayanoff - February 04, 2014 at 09:51 PM

SJ

“ I worked with Frank for a short time at a small book store in Newnan. I was still a teenager but he always treated me like an adult. I will always remember him as incredibly smart and genuinely warm and caring. I will miss you, Frank.

Sarah Johnson - February 03, 2014 at 02:33 PM

LC

“ I will so miss Frank. He was one of the most interesting people I have ever known. I send my condolences to Kate and Tim and will remember you in prayer. With love, Lanell

lanell chapman - February 02, 2014 at 05:26 PM

SH

“ I was Mr. Frank's mailman for many years and more than once took my break with him. We have talked politics, motorcycles, Abe Lincoln, and lawn mowers to the fullest. Last time I saw him he brought me an autographed book before he went to the hospital. What a fun friend to have and to know. God bless you Mr. Frank!!!

Scott Horne - February 02, 2014 at 12:08 AM

MK

“ Frank was a character. We knew each other since 1961 in Athens, Ga. He was always happy to get together and "swap lies" about guns and motorcycles. He also was a skydiver. My condolences to his family. A nice Christian man will be missed.

Mike Kiefer - February 01, 2014 at 11:58 AM