



William Landis Turner

April 21, 1940 - March 17, 2020

Local attorney William Landis Turner, age 79, passed away Tuesday, March 17, 2020 at Maury Regional Medical Center in Columbia following a brief illness.

From 1967 until Landis's retirement in 2007, he practiced law in the Hohenwald firm founded by William C. Keaton. All his career, he served the Tennessee Bar Association, holding many positions including speaker of the house of delegates and rising to the presidency of the association. Under his leadership, the TBA instigated creating the statewide office of public defenders, the client security fund and negotiated an agreement between the medical and legal professions covering the contents of medical reports for use in legal proceedings and testimony of medical professionals in court appearances and depositions.

Turner also served on the boards of directors of the Tennessee Trial Lawyers Associations, the Tennessee Justice Center and was honored to be invited to become a member of the American Board of Trial Advocates and a fellow of both the American and Tennessee Bar Foundations. He was a member of many professional organizations, including the Tennessee County Attorneys Association, the Tennessee Municipal Attorneys Association, Association of Criminal Defense Attorneys, and Tennessee Defense Attorneys Association and the American Bar Association. He was admitted to the bar of the United States Supreme Court. On two occasions, he was nominated for appointment to a circuit judgeship. He was on the board of directors of the Clement Museum in Dickson.

Mr. Turner was a creator of the first railroad authority by which cities and counties were able to save railroad branches abandoned by large railroads. He served as attorney for South Central Tennessee Railroad Authority for thirty years, followed by years as chairman of both his local railroad authority and the Tennessee Short Line Railroad Alliance, which represents 18 railroads.

He was a communicant of St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Columbia where he was a lay reader, chalice bearer and taught an adult Sunday school class. He led fund raising for many charities, including the Girl and Boy Scout programs and the cancer society.

Active in politics, he managed over 20 campaigns in Lewis County, mainly for Democratic candidates for national and state offices. He was elected a member of the Lewis County

Commission. For many years, he served on the board of directors and became president of the Tennessee County Commissioners Association. He was a contributing writer to Validity Magazine and the Lewis County Herald.

For forty years, he was City Attorney for Hohenwald, County Attorney for Lewis County, City Attorney for Lobelville in Perry County for over twenty years, and Attorney for the Lewis County School System.

He was a Shriner and a Past Master of his Masonic Lodge. he received the Long Rifle Award from Boy Scouts of America.

Born April 21, 1940, he was the son of the late Roy McKeel Turner and Elizabeth Landis Turner. Raised in Waverly where he attended elementary school, he graduated from West End High School in Nashville, the University of the South at Sewanee, and the School of Law at Vanderbilt University. He belonged to the Delta Tau Delta Fraternity at Sewanee and Phi Delta Theta Legal Fraternity at Vanderbilt.

Mr. Turner is survived by his wife of 54 years, Janet Cameron Turner, formerly of Atlanta; daughter, Leslie Cameron Schuster; son, Donald Landis Turner; and grandchildren, Lucy and Daniel Schuster and Cyril Turner.

Mr. Turner was an organ donor and his remains will be cremated. A memorial service will be announced at a later date.

A private burial of his cremains will take place in the Lewis County Memorial Gardens.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests gifts may be made to the University of the South at Sewanee or St. Peter's Church in Columbia.

Comments



“ Jerry/Betty Risner lit a candle in memory of William Landis Turner



Jerry/Betty Risner - March 21 at 12:56 AM



“ John M. Wilson lit a candle in memory of William Landis Turner



John M. Wilson - March 19 at 06:20 PM



“ Jerry & Diane Harper lit a candle in memory of William Landis Turner



Jerry & Diane Harper - March 19 at 12:06 AM



“ I remember when Donald and my boys played baseball together. Donald was a good player. My boys not so much. William Earl was their coach and he let everyone play. Janet was really in it. She watched every play and discussed it loudly. Land is would come, sit on the bleachers quietly eating his popcorn. Never said a word. It's no telling how much popcorn he eat. I will never forget that. He was a good man

wanda churchwell - March 18 at 04:09 PM



“ I first came to know Landis and Janet in the late 80s, primarily through the Democratic Party. Landis had a great passion for the poor, the disenfranchised, and working people. His values and commitment to them were an inspiration to me and to my late Mother, who was very fond of him.

Buck Lewis - March 18 at 11:09 AM



“ Every time he came to my office, he always had a court story to tell & I enjoyed every minute of it. He was so interesting! Landis was more than a story teller of court stories, he was also a good listener, he cared about your thoughts and opinions on the matter as well. Landis & Janet made a good team, just look what all they have done for our fellow Lewis Countians. Heartfelt sympathy to Janet and family.

Donna Couch

Donna Couch - March 18 at 10:26 AM



“ Thought the world of him. I never will forget the first time I met him he had a hat on that reminded me of the Mary Poppins film and I told him ever since then he would remind me. Was a good friend to Billy

phyllis Townsend - March 18 at 09:57 AM



“ Patricia Middleton lit a candle in memory of William Landis Turner



Patricia Middleton - March 18 at 09:34 AM



“ Landis was a friend for many many years. Susan and I will miss his quick wit and insights. We loved his ability to recount tales from his past. Our sympathy to Janet and his family.



“ Dr. Charlotte Staggs lit a candle in memory of William Landis Turner



Dr. Charlotte Staggs - March 18 at 02:36 AM



“ What a man! (Interesting, intriguing, intelligent & very knowledgeable) Getting to share the same building that housed both our offices was a great experience for me. The love he had for his clientele, the railroad & the many organizations he was affiliated with could be seen in great expressions he had as he spoke of each. I will forever be grateful that we became friends & colleagues. He was an awesome asset to our community. Thank you Mr. Turner for your service! Shelia

Shelia Carroll - March 17 at 11:08 PM



“ This dapper gentleman with the quick sense of humor tempered by calm demeanor will be missed by many. He was always professionally dressed befitting his position and carried himself with distinguished class. Thank you Barrister Turner for all the years that you assisted our County and City with legal issues. May God bless your family as they go through these difficult times.



Alice M Tubbs - March 17 at 10:16 PM



“ Gary & Debbie Carroll lit a candle in memory of William Landis Turner



Gary & Debbie Carroll - March 17 at 09:42 PM



“ Janet and family, I am so sorry for your loss. Prayers for comfort and peace during this difficult time.



Brenda Mash - March 17 at 07:35 PM