



## Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired

April 17, 1937 - October 27, 2020

Dr. Donald Dean Dunton was born April 17, 1937, in Overland, Missouri, and was welcomed home to the comfort of our Lord on October 27th, 2020, at 83.

He spent his youth in Missouri where he attended Ritenour High School. His activities included playing football and participating in social and class leadership roles. He attended St. Louis University as an undergraduate in preparation for optometry school at the Illinois College of Optometry in Chicago. While in optometry school he held positions of President and Vice President of the Omega Delta optometry fraternity.

He retired from the Air Force after 24 years in 1985. His distinguished career was spent serving our military personnel during his time at bases in Nebraska, Spain, California, Texas, Virginia, and Washington DC. His time was highlighted by his assignment as Chief of Optometry under the Surgeon General, with command of over 225 military optometrists stationed in 114 locations around the world. He also served as President of the Armed Forces Optometric Society. Colonel Dunton received the Meritorious Service Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, National Defense Service Medal, Air Force Longevity Service Award, and Legion of Merit Award. Additionally, he is honored annually by the presentation of the: USAF Col. Donald D. Dunton Ophthalmic Senior NCO of the Year award; and USAF Col. Donald D. Dunton Outstanding Civilian of the Year award.

Upon retirement from the Air Force, he embarked on his second career in the city of Hartsville, SC as a practicing Optometrist and a community servant. He worked passionately to ensure that his patients received the best care and advice, and always made time to provide a personal touch. This endeared him to the generations of families that he cared for.

His personal life was one of many passions including traveling, flying, and collecting (tinkering with) antique automobiles. Each could be observed in his actions. Be it yearly trips abroad with friends, enabling the expansion of the Hartsville airport and flying the “Mooney”, or spending time in “the Barn” with his Model A’s and prized collection of memories. But none of these memories were more important to him than the ones that are carried on by his family and friends as we recall all the smiles, laughter, and lessons that will last forever.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Algernon P. and Leona Dunton, and sister, Clara Jo Heck. Don is survived by his wife, Carla Jean Dunton of Hartsville, SC; his son, Dean Dunton and his wife, Kirsten, and their children, Dow and Redford of Wake Forest, NC; his daughter, Carrie Kittrell and her husband, Christopher, and their children, Kate and Chloe of Chamblee, GA. His brother, William S. Dunton of Saratoga, CA survives him as well.

To honor his life, his memorial service will be on the grounds at the First Presbyterian Church of Hartsville on Friday, October 30th, 2020, at 2:00 pm. The Rev. Ashley Cheek will officiate.

The family kindly requests that no flowers be sent. Please consider making memorial donations to the Darlington County Humane Society, Box 1655, Hartsville, SC 29550.

Brown-Pennington-Atkins Funeral Home is caring for the family.



## Cemetery Details

**Private**

## Previous Events

### Service

OCT **30**. 2:00 PM (ET)

First Presbyterian Church  
213 West Home Avenue  
Hartsville, SC

# Tribute Wall

SJ

“ *Carla, Carrie and Dean*

*We are so very sorry for your loss. Don was a wonderful man and will be greatly missed. We will always fondly remember him being the Auctioneer at the Newcomers Club fundraisers. You are in our thoughts and prayers.*

*Melanie and Scott Jackson*

---

**Scott Jackson** - November 09, 2020 at 06:10 PM



“ *Jay Benson lit a candle in memory of Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired*



---

**Jay Benson** - November 09, 2020 at 09:01 AM

LL

“ *Lori And Randy Lowe lit a candle in memory of Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired*



---

**Lori and Randy Lowe** - November 04, 2020 at 08:46 PM

TR

“ *Tru lit a candle in memory of Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired*



-----  
**Tru** - October 31, 2020 at 09:00 PM

SW

“ *Shirley Wilkes lit a candle in memory of Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired*



-----  
**Shirley Wilkes** - October 31, 2020 at 10:28 AM

LP

“ *Linda Parker lit a candle in memory of Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired*



-----  
**Linda Parker** - October 30, 2020 at 09:18 PM

JH

“ *Jim Haffenden lit a candle in memory of Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired*



-----  
**Jim Haffenden** - October 30, 2020 at 09:04 AM

LE

“ *Larry Easterling lit a candle in memory of Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired*



Larry Easterling - October 30, 2020 at 06:04 AM

DC

“ *As a fellow Optometrist, I have always admired Don's love for his country and for our precious profession. We always joked around about our legislative efforts of 1993 and other things at our annual conventions in Hilton Head. Our deepest sympathies to the family and close friends. Outstanding job, Dr. Don Dunton!*

Dr. Dorothy Park, Columbia, S C - October 29, 2020 at 07:59 PM

CT

“ *Carolyn D Taylor lit a candle in memory of Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired*



Carolyn D Taylor - October 29, 2020 at 06:37 PM

CT

*So very sorry for your loss. Thank you Sir for serving our great country. Prayers for the family.*

Carolyn D Taylor - October 29, 2020 at 06:38 PM

AW

“ *Dr. Dunton..such a wonderful man and just the best EYE DOCTOR. Prayers and love for all of his family. I will miss that huge smile.*  
*Anna Williams*

anna williams - October 29, 2020 at 05:09 PM

MS

“ *Mary And Bill Suski lit a candle in memory of Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired*



Mary and Bill Suski - October 29, 2020 at 04:44 PM

SA

“ *Brothers and friends from the Clemson University alumni chapter of the Sigma Chi Fraternity proudly honor the family of “Dr. Don” with a \$500 donation made in his memory to the Darlington County Humane Society. Sending strong arms and love to Carla, Carrie and Dean.*

*Your friends, the Alfaros, Berrys, Buehlers, Hughes’, Linebergers, Smiths, Sturkeys, Thurmans, Weeks, and Wilsons*

Steve A - October 29, 2020 at 03:44 PM

VP

“ *Vickie Parker lit a candle in memory of Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired*



Vickie Parker - October 29, 2020 at 03:08 PM

AF

“ *Ann Fulcher lit a candle in memory of Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired*



Ann Fulcher - October 29, 2020 at 01:43 PM

DB

“ *Debbie Bullard lit a candle in memory of Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired*



Debbie Bullard - October 29, 2020 at 01:40 PM

VB

*Fond memories of Dr. Dunton.*

vernon boyd - October 31, 2020 at 05:09 PM

 Sarah Turbeville

“ *Sarah Turbeville lit a candle in memory of Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired*



Sarah Turbeville - October 29, 2020 at 12:26 PM

JG

“ Jean And William Gullede lit a candle in memory of Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired



Jean and William Gullede - October 29, 2020 at 12:20 PM

KE

“ Over the last 2 years, Don and Carla have not only been my clients but have become my friends. Don always had a smile and a hug when I was in their home. He was such a wonderful husband, father and friend. He also loved his fur child, Duncan. He is certainly going to be missed.

Kelly Elvington - October 29, 2020 at 09:54 AM

SE

“ Sam Elgin sent a virtual gift in memory of Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired



Sam Elgin - October 29, 2020 at 09:43 AM

RS

“ Ron & Sherron Skipper sent a virtual gift in memory of Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired



Ron & Sherron Skipper - October 29, 2020 at 08:36 AM

MR

“ *Marty Robbins lit a candle in memory of Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired*



Marty Robbins - October 29, 2020 at 08:09 AM

JR

“ *Jenny Rogers lit a candle in memory of Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired*



jenny rogers - October 29, 2020 at 08:09 AM

DO

“ *Diane Ollis lit a candle in memory of Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired*



Diane Ollis - October 29, 2020 at 07:54 AM

JG

“ *Jeff Galloway lit a candle in memory of Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired*



Jeff Galloway - October 29, 2020 at 06:21 AM

GG

“ *Gene And Teresa Gibson lit a candle in memory of Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired*



**Gene and Teresa Gibson** - October 29, 2020 at 12:14 AM

PG

“ *Paddie Giordan lit a candle in memory of Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired*



**Paddie Giordan** - October 28, 2020 at 10:52 PM

BT

“ *Betty Huggins Turner lit a candle in memory of Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired*



**Betty Huggins Turner** - October 28, 2020 at 10:41 PM

BT

*Thoughts and prayers with the family.*

**Betty Huggins Turner** - October 28, 2020 at 10:42 PM

TB

“ *Tonda Bunch lit a candle in memory of Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired*



**Tonda Bunch** - October 28, 2020 at 10:04 PM

AL

*Carla and family. I have treasured your family your years. Back to first grade with my sweet Carrie. My baby prayers are with all of you and my heart breaks for a wonderful man. God bless y'all and be at peace. Love to all of you.*

**agnes lyles** - October 28, 2020 at 10:11 PM

TC

“ *Carla, Dean and Carrie, We are saddened to hear about Don's passing. He was a wonderful person to have as a neighbor, friend and Doctor. He will be missed. You all will be in our thoughts and prayers. Tim and Grace*

**Tim and Grace Cleary** - October 28, 2020 at 08:55 PM

GS

“ *Thoughts & prayers to the family. Dr. Dunton was truly one of a kind, such a sweet, gentle & caring person. It was an honor for me to have known & worked with him during the years he performed eye exams on the children of Darlington County CAA Head Start. Heaven has gained a wonderful Angel.*



**Gloria Smith** - October 28, 2020 at 08:42 PM

VW

*There never was a more caring person than dr dunton he was my eye Dr for many years hartsville lost a great eye Dr when he retired and has lost a wonderful person he will always be remembered as a caring special person*

Viola walters - October 29, 2020 at 05:48 AM

DF

“ So sorry to hear about Don!! Love and pray to all of you!



dianne fann - October 28, 2020 at 08:16 PM

JB

“ Don(Doc) as the girls called him was such a gentleman. Spent time traveling together to France with a fun group and other fun times. My prayers for comfort and strength are with the Dunton family 🙏

Jill Beckham - October 28, 2020 at 08:14 PM

SC

“ Praying for the family.

Susan Clemmons - October 28, 2020 at 07:26 PM

CJ

“ Charles Johnson lit a candle in memory of Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired



Charles Johnson - October 28, 2020 at 07:05 PM

RA

“ We are so sorry to hear this. You are all in our prayers.  
*Robin and George Atkins*

Robin Atkins - October 28, 2020 at 06:36 PM

CG

“ Connee Grantham lit a candle in memory of  
*Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF,  
Retired*



Connee Grantham - October 28, 2020 at 06:20 PM

DT

“ Debbie Talbert lit a candle in memory of Col.  
*Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired*



Debbie Talbert - October 28, 2020 at 06:12 PM

GD

“ Grayson & Pat Dailey lit a candle in memory  
of Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF,  
*Retired*



Grayson & Pat Dailey - October 28, 2020 at 06:00 PM

RH

“ *Rosalie L. Hyatt lit a candle in memory of Col. Donald Dean Dunton, O.D., USAF, Retired*



---

**Rosalie L. Hyatt** - October 28, 2020 at 05:44 PM

GC

“ *Carla,  
We are so sorry to hear about Don. You will be in our thoughts and prayers.*

---

**Gail & Maxie Cantley** - October 28, 2020 at 05:28 PM