

## Joseph Hamilton Stepp, Jr.



On Sunday, September 4, 2011 the Lord called His honorable servant, Joseph Hamilton Stepp Jr., home to his Heavenly reward. He was at his home on Stepp's Hillcrest Orchard at the time of his passing. He blessed his family with more than 91 years of selfless leadership, love, and dedication. J.H. was truly an honorable and loving man, husband, and father. This Godly man lived a full life and his incredible wisdom and generosity will be missed in both his family and community alike.

He was born Jan 1, 1920 in Spartanburg, SC., to the late J.H. Stepp Sr. and Effie Pace Stepp. They later moved to Dana NC where he was one of nine children. He is preceded in death by his brothers Gene and Leon, Sr., and his sisters Mabel S. Edney, Mildred Stepp, Ruth S. Johnson and Elise S. Worley. His surviving sisters Lucille S. Ray and Gem S. Garren currently live in Hendersonville. J.H. married Zella Yvonne Mann on Jan 12, 1942 in Greenville S.C. He was

preceded in death by his lovely wife after more than 66 happily married years together. Mr. and Mrs. J.H. Stepp Jr. were blessed with four wonderful children.

In his long life, he sacrificially provided leadership to so many throughout the community. He faithfully and honorably served his country in WWII, obtaining the rank of E-8 in the U.S. Army Air Corps. J.H. was a humble expert in the Henderson County apple farming business. He was the Vice President of J.H. Stepp & Sons Inc. and opened one of the first commercial packing houses in Henderson County. He was also a Myers Sprayer dealer. J.H. started one of the area's first "Pick Your Own" apples operations with his late wife Yvonne, growing apples for over seven decades. Upon his death, he was the oldest active apple grower in Henderson County. In 2010, he was selected as the United Community Bank's Apple Farmer of the Year. The Stepps were also selected as the Henderson County Soil and Water Conservation Family of the Year. This great man was truly active throughout the community. J.H. was a board member for the Henderson County School Board, the Apple Cooperative, the Blue Ridge Apple Growers Association, and the North Carolina Apple Growers Association. He was also a member of Anderson Chapel in Hendersonville, N.C.

He is survived by his four children, Joseph H. Stepp III (Joby) and his wife Suzanne of Rappahannock Academy, Va., Alan M. Stepp (Mike) and his wife Rita of Dana, Sonya Stepp Hollingsworth and her husband Barry of Dana, and Sandra Stepp Johnson (Neicee) and her husband Eddie of Flat Rock; eight grandchildren, Joseph H. Stepp IV (Jaye) and his wife Glenda of Fort Mill, S.C., Heather Stepp Erwin and husband Wendell of Hendersonville, Shannon Wingate Stepp of Rappahannock Academy, Va., Danielle Stepp McCall and husband Rex of Dana, April D. Stepp of Atlanta Ga., Brandy A. Hollingsworth of Gastonia, Andi Hollingsworth Marshall and husband Tim of Dana, Cortney Johnson McCall and husband

Erik of Flat Rock; and seven great grandchildren, Sarah Abigail Erwin, Clair Elizabeth Erwin, Callie Stepp McCall, Maggie Kea McCall, Gus Jays McCall, Leiann Brooke Marshall, and Ryce Edward McCall.

Visitation will be 6 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, 6 Sep at Mud Creek Baptist Church. The funeral will be 2 p.m. Wednesday, 7 Sep at Mud Creek Baptist Church with burial to follow at Refuge Baptist Church in Dana. Donations can be made to the Salvation Army of Hendersonville N.C. Pallbearers are Joseph H. Stepp IV, Wendell Erwin, Rex McCall, Tim Marshall, Erik McCall, and Terry Hill.

Jackson Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements.