



John Kent Owens

November 15, 1934 - November 6, 2024

Dr. John Kent Owens, beloved husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather left this earth for his eternal home on Wednesday, November 6, 2024.

Affectionately known as Dad, Grandpa and Dr. Owens by family, friends and colleagues, John excelled as a Professional Engineer and Mississippi State University Professor Emeritus of Aerospace and Electrical Engineering. John is survived by his wife, Jane Deaton Owens; son, Jeffery Kent Owens, and stepdaughter, Marilyn Page Pounders. Other survivors include his six grandchildren and five greatgrandchildren. John was preceded in death by his grandmother, Ross Lee Owens; father, John Alvin Owens; mother, Birdie Eastman Carr; sister, Nita Jean Owens Carter and his son, Lt. Col. John Mark Owens, USMC.

Dr. Owens was born in Laurel, Mississippi on November 15, 1934. He graduated from Gardner High School of Laurel, joining the Marine Corps shortly thereafter. First stationed in North Carolina, John married Priscilla Creech Owens. Their son, John Mark, was born soon after. After leaving the Marines, they moved to Florida where Dr. Owens worked as an electronics technician. Here, their son, Jeffrey Kent, was born. Shortly thereafter, Dr. Owens decided to pursue a college education.

Dr. Owens returned to Laurel, Mississippi in 1962 and enrolled at Jones County Junior College. Following his graduation from Jones, he enrolled at Mississippi State University and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering in 1965. He received his master's degree from the University of New Mexico in 1967 and his Ph.D. from Mississippi State University in 1974. John was a proud member of numerous honor societies, including Eta Kappa Nu, Tau Beta Pi and Phi Kappa Phi.

John began his professional career with Lockheed in Marietta, Georgia before returning to Starkville to begin his career in research and as a professor at Mississippi State. John taught at MSU for 23 years, earning the Hearin-Hess Distinguished Professor Award and Professor Emeritus while performing noteworthy research for Honda Aeronautics. John married Jane Deaton Page in 1986. In 1991, John left his work in research and as a professor to begin his second career in forensic accident investigation and expert testimony. John actively worked in this business until retiring in 2018, a total of almost 70 years devoted to his profession.

Dr. John loved fishing, touring around to meet the "Cruisin' Cajuns" with Jane in their motorhome, all things associated with the Bulldogs and most of all his family. John will be greatly missed.

Visitation will be held at Memory Chapel Funeral Home on Tuesday, November 12, 2024 from 9:00-10:00 AM with a funeral service beginning at 10:00 AM. A graveside service and interment will follow at Hickory Grove Cemetery. Justin Safley will officiate.

Pallbearers will be David Carter, Douglas MacEachern, Michael McCraw, Alex McIntosh, Delwyn Pounders, and Micah Torres.

Memorials for John may be sent to the Children's Building Project at First

Baptist Church of Starkville, Mississippi.

To sign the online guest book, visit www.memorychapellaurel.com.

Cemetery Details

Hickory Grove Cemetery

Intersection of 15th Street and Old Bay
Springs Rd
Laurel, MS 39440

Previous Events

Visitation

NOV 12. 9:00 AM (CT)

Memory Chapel Funeral Home
3100 Audubon Drive
P. O. Box 674
Laurel, MS 39440
(601) 428-5235
memorychapel@comcast.net
<https://www.memorychapellaurel.com/>

Service

NOV 12. 10:00 AM (CT)

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Tribute Wall

RB

“ I first met Dr. John while being a member of the Ms Fire Investigators Assn...over several years we assisted each other with various cause and origin investigations. John exemplified what I call a true southern gentleman. I enjoyed knowing him.

Ron Baughn - February 17, 2025 at 01:01 PM

KP

“ Dr John was my mentor at MSU, and I owe my success in my career to him. Plus, I went fishing with him and Dr Ball, and it was a blast. I also worked for him in the Aerospace lab, which was a great experience. Like him, I went to MSU after a stint in the military, and I had a wife and 2 kids, going on the GI bill. He was a great help to me and my family. He was a great man. I look forward to seeing him on the other side.

K. Grant Palmer - February 14, 2025 at 06:35 PM

MK

“ I was one of the earliest graduate students that Dr. Owens guided through the process of getting their masters. He was my boss and mentor during my time as a research assistant. We also shared a connection to the University of New Mexico. I learned a lot from him. Mike King, MS 1978.

Michael King - December 21, 2024 at 01:11 PM



“ Dr John taught me so much and we shared so many laughs. He was special

Michelle Johnson - November 30, 2024 at 02:13 PM

RF

“ *He was an outstanding teacher, and he touched many lives.*

He was my teacher, my mentor, and my friend. He got me through graduate school. He consulted and mentored me at work. He was at my wedding, and he took me fishing.

His memories will remain with me and many others forever.

Ray Franco

Ray Franco - November 16, 2024 at 05:50 AM

SW

“ *Susie Wynn lit a candle in memory of John Kent Owens*



Susie Wynn - November 15, 2024 at 01:43 PM

“ This will be a memory that is understandable only to those technical readers out there. But, hey, Dr Owens was a professor of Electrical Engineering, so here goes...

I worked one summer at Howard's Industries with Dr. Qwens. One of the first tasks I was assigned was to measure the power loss of some transformer cores. That task involved attaching a 10-turn excitation coil around a core, setting an excitation voltage, and then reading the core loss from a power meter. The excitation coil I was using had an intermittent open circuit that required that I 'wiggle' the coil to close the circuit so that I could read the power loss. Still, I completed the measurements by 'wiggling' the coil when necessary to get the power reading.

Once the measurements were completed I took the results to Dr Owens. As I handed him the results of my work I explained that the coil had a 'short' and I had to wiggle the coil to complete the measurements.

Now, for those that are not technical, a 'short' is exactly the opposite of an 'open'. I was completely mischaracterizing what was happening (the coil had an intermittent open and NOT an intermittent short). But, in those days, I referred to any fault as a short.

Once I (incorrectly) finished describing how I was able to complete the measurements, Dr Ownens just looked down at the floor, shook his head from side to side, and said "My god, a grad student in electrical engineering that doesn't know the difference in a short circuit and an open circuit." I immediately realized my mistake and conceded that the coil had opens and not shorts. Dr. Owens just chuckled.

I hope my technical story did not bore you too much. I just wanted to convey a lighter side of Dr Owens.

Rest in peace, Dr. Owens. It was a pleasure to sit in your classes and to work with you.

Jeffrey Smith

Jeffrey Smith - November 14, 2024 at 08:06 AM

BW

“ *I can just imagine as JK arrived in Heaven, he was greeted by my Daddy (Billie J Ball) and Charlie Cliett. They are all three together, fishing with Jesus. I have so many memories of the fishing trips these three men took together, them working together at MSU, and all the times our families spend together. JK was dearly loved and will be greatly missed. Sending love, hugs, and prayers to all the family.*

Love and Blessings from Barbara Jean Ball Ward

Barbara Jean Ball Ward - November 12, 2024 at 09:24 PM

JO

Barbara, I can just picture those three: Billie Ball, Charlie Cliett, and my John fishing together in a boat with Jesus, and it warms my heart. I fished with them occasionally, but I never caught many fish. I did, however, learn a lot. I see them in Heaven now, in a boat, fishing with Jesus, and I know they are all fine and doing well. Those are happy memories.

Jane Owens - December 09, 2024 at 06:29 PM

LT

I worked with Dr. Owen's in Aerospace Engineering from 1977-1981 and later, when I worked in the Office of Sponsored Programs as a Research Administrator I represented the College of Engineering. Dr Owen's was one of my favorite people. He would stop at my office and tell me what he thought about various department or world issues. I remember buying a poster at the bookstore and I just had to put it on his office door. It was a poster with a Snow White Persian cat wearing silver rimmed glasses. The quote at the bottom of the poster read: "Everyone is entitled to the benefit of my opinion." He actually liked it. He never failed to speak to me and my husband when we encountered him at Walmart. He was a friend as was Jane and we were so saddened to hear of his passing.

Lynda G Tuck - December 26, 2024 at 08:23 PM

DS

*“ I got to know JK at a young age. We spent many hours together fishing in the creeks, so he meant a lot to me as a young boy. Condolences to all the family.
David Simpson*

David Simpson - November 12, 2024 at 01:47 PM

PO

“ With deepest sympathy Priscilla Owens.

priscilla owens. - November 12, 2024 at 10:39 AM



“ Dr. Owens was one of several faculty members who mentored the younger faculty in the Electrical Engineering Department at MSU. He projected that tough marine temperament, which served him well in the classroom, but if you knew John, you knew that there was a kind heart inside. Dr. Owens took the time to encourage the young faculty to get involved in the professional society for electrical engineers. Always the professional, he earned the respect of his fellow faculty members. You will be missed, John. Rest in Peace. Prayers lifted for the family.

Pat Donohoe

Pat Donohoe - November 11, 2024 at 09:48 PM



“ David Carter purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of John Kent Owens.



David Carter - November 10, 2024 at 12:47 AM



“ David Carter planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of John Kent Owens.

David Carter - November 10, 2024 at 12:47 AM