



## Dr. Robert "Bob" Chapman Rollings

December 28, 1926 - December 25, 2018

Saluda, SC

Robert Chapman Rollings, "Bob" (91) passed away peacefully on December 25, 2018, at Saluda Nursing Center. He was born in Camden, South Carolina, on December 28, 1926. He was the only child of the late James Chapman Rollings and Iva Annette Huey Rollings. As a young boy, his family relocated to Batesburg, SC, where he enjoyed playing baseball, scouting, and working a newspaper delivery route. He graduated from Batesburg-Leesville High School in 1944 and participated in the Army Specialized Training program, established by the U.S. Army, and attended Ole Miss University and Auburn University. He completed basic training at Camp Blanding, in Starke, Florida, before serving as a supply sergeant in the Philippines. After returning from the Philippines, he attended the Southern College of Optometry, in Memphis, Tennessee.

On April 14, 1949, Bob married Jessie Morrow Atkinson, in Chelsea Avenue Methodist Church, in Memphis. He received a Doctor of Optometry degree from the Southern College of Optometry, on June 22, 1951. Bob and Jessie relocated to South Carolina where he began practicing optometry in December 1951. In 1984, Dr. Rollings obtained certification to practice diagnostic optometry in South Carolina. In 1993, following extensive education through the University of South Carolina, in conjunction with the University of

Alabama at Birmingham School of Optometry, Dr. Rollings, received therapeutic pharmaceutical agent certification in South Carolina, at 66 years of age. He was a member of the American Optometric Association and the SC Optometry Physicians Association (formerly the SC Optometric Association) for 63 years. In December 2001, he was honored by the SC Optometric Association for 50 years of dedicated service. He practiced optometry for 63 consecutive years, with offices in both Saluda and Batesburg. Before his retirement in December 2014, Dr. Rollings was the oldest licensed optometrist in the State of South Carolina.

Bob was also a USC sports enthusiast and a member of the Gamecock Club for 50 years. He and his wife, Jessie, traveled throughout the country with many friends in the community to attend USC sporting events. He served as a former president of the Saluda County Gamecock Club Chapter for many years and helped coordinate annual Gamecock Club events in the community. He also served a three-year term on the 11th Judicial Circuit of the Gamecock Club Executive Committee.

Bob was a long-time member and former deacon of the Saluda Presbyterian Church. He served on the building committee for the church manse in 1957. He was a member of the Saluda Lions Club, was named "Lion of the Year" in 1954, and was a recipient of the Milestone Chevron Award. He was also a member of the Saluda County Chamber of Commerce.

In 1961, Bob was a developer, part owner, and charter member of Persimmon Hill Country Club, (now under new ownership and known as Persimmon Hill Golf Course). Bob was the first president of Sedgefield Development Corporation, the group chartered to build the Russell Breedon designed course. In 1971, Persimmon Hill Country Club was featured in the Sandlapper Magazine of South Carolina. The course was ranked #4 in South Carolina, by Carolina Golfer, in 1975 and 1976.

In the early 1980's, Bob started a rhododendron garden at his home. Even though he was told the plants would never survive in South Carolina, with great persistence, he overcame the odds. As many as 65 rhododendron plants and 11 varieties survived his garden for years. In June 2005, he shared his knowledge of growing the ornamental, mountain natives in clay soil, in the hot south, with The State newspaper. In April 2008, an article was featured in Southern Living magazine entitled "Rx for Rhododendrons." Later, a segment was also aired on the Educational Television Roadshow, Making it Grow.

He leaves behind his wife of 69 years, Jessie Morrow Atkinson Rollings, daughters, Patricia Rollings Hood (Kenny) and Maribeth Rollings Werts (Dave), all of Saluda, four grandsons, Kenneth Brannan Hood (Alexandra) of Fleming Island, Florida, Joshua David Hood (Natalie) of Greenwood, William Bradford Werts and Jesstin Rollings Werts, of Columbia, two great granddaughters Addison Hood, Elisabeth Keller, and a great grandson Fischer Hood. He is predeceased by his father, James Chapman Rollings, and mother, Iva Annette Huey Rollings.

The family is grateful to Dr. Bill Sawyer and the staff at Saluda Nursing and Rehab Center for their skilled care and compassion.

A Celebration of Life service will be held Thursday, December 27, at Saluda Presbyterian Church at 11:00 a.m. Visitation will be held prior to the service, in the church fellowship hall, at 10:00 a.m. There will be a private burial following the service at West Travis Park Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Saluda Presbyterian Church, 103 W. Highland Avenue, Saluda, SC 29138.

# Cemetery Details

## West Travis Park Cemetery

300 Travis Avenue  
Saluda, SC

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC 27. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Saluda Presbyterian Church  
103 W. Highland Avenue  
Saluda, SC 29138

## Funeral

DEC 27. 11:00 AM (ET)

Saluda Presbyterian Church  
103 W. Highland Avenue  
Saluda, SC 29138

# Tribute Wall

JE

“ *Your Family are in Our Thoughts and Prayers.*

*Your FRIENDS at The Hardware Store*

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**Jerry** - December 27, 2018 at 02:05 PM

ME

“ *My Mama and Daddy loved your parents so much and shared so many memories of all of their trips to see the Gamecocks play! They were truly life long friends. Thinking of you all during this sad time.*  
*Mary Addy Ellis*

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**Mary Addy Ellis** - December 27, 2018 at 01:43 PM

VD

“ *Dr. Rollings was the best eye doctor I have ever had in my life! I thoroughly enjoyed not only his wonderful care, but also the great friendship we had during my many years working in Saluda. My thoughts and prayers are with Mrs. Jessie and the family. God bless you.*

*Vernon DeHart*  
*Columbia, SC*

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**Vernon DeHart** - December 27, 2018 at 01:19 PM

GF

“ *Maribeth, Tricia and families, My heart is very heavy for all of you. Dr. Rollings was a true southern gentleman. He loved his Saluda community and his family. We appreciate all he did for this little town and his long years of service and dedication to his profession. He will surely be missed. Trey, Reagan, LeeAnna, Ryan and myself send our prayers and sympathy to all of you.*

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**Gina Fingerlin** - December 27, 2018 at 11:55 AM

TC

“ *Thinking of you!  
Tammie Warren Covington and Frances Shaw  
Batesburg-Leesville, SC*

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**Tammie Warren Covington** - December 27, 2018 at 10:18 AM

AB

“ *Dr Rollings was a very special gentleman. He loved his Gamecocks and following them on the road. But he also loved taking care of Saluda folks in his optometrist office. He worked long past what most people do in their chosen profession because of that love. He will be greatly missed. Thankful for our memories of this great man.*

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**Ann and Bob Bowles** - December 26, 2018 at 07:10 PM

RB

“ *Maribeth, Tricia, and Mrs. Jessie, I am so sorry to hear about Dr. Bob. Please know that you are all in my thoughts and prayers.*

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**Ruth Bartley Bledsoe** - December 26, 2018 at 06:07 PM

TG

“ *Our prayers are with this family. Dr Rollings was a great friend. He will be so missed. We pray for comfort and strength for his family.*

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**Teresa Grigsby** - December 26, 2018 at 05:37 PM