



Dr. Howard Franklin Flippin

December 29, 1936 - September 6, 2022

Dr. Howard Franklin Flippin of Searcy, Arkansas passed away on Tuesday, September 6, 2022, at the age of 85.

Howard was born on December 29th, 1936, in Jonesboro, Arkansas. He graduated from Biggers-Reyno High School in 1954. He attended Harding College, where he met his wife, Mary Ann Bettis. He then attended the Southern College of Optometry (SCO), graduating in 1959. He served on the Southern College of Optometry Board of Trustees as chairman in 2006-07 and received the SCO Lifetime Achievement Award.

Dr. Flippin served in the Army National Guard from November 1959 to February 1960 and was a member of the National Guard Reserves from 1960 to 1965.

Dr. Flippin started his optometric practice in Searcy, Arkansas in 1959 and served the community with optometric care for forty-eight years, retiring in August 2007. He was active member of the Arkansas Optometric Association, serving as President, receiving the Distinguished Service Award, the Myron Hofner Award of Excellence and was a two-time recipient of the Optometrist of the Year Award.

He was first appointed to the State Board of Optometry in 1977, by Governor David Pryor, and served as a board member until 2001 when he was named the Executive Director. He served as Executive Director for 20 years until his retirement in 2021.

In his role as Executive Director, Dr. Flippin oversaw the licensure of hundreds

of Optometrists. He was responsible for monitoring the competency of Optometrists through required yearly continuing education. He also worked closely with legislators in drafting laws impacting Optometry and assisted the Board in ensuring Optometrists followed the laws in the care of their patients. He understood always that the job of the Board is to serve and protect the people of Arkansas.

In addition to his Executive Director role, Dr. Flippin was also an active board member of ARBO (Association of Regulatory Boards of Optometry, Inc.) He was instrumental in the development of COPE (Council on Optometric Practitioner Education) and the OE Tracker platform. Both are now utilized annually by Optometrists across North America in obtaining continuing education hours.

His hobby was airplanes, and he became a pilot, owning several small planes and building a hanger on his property next to the Searcy airport. He turned his hobby into a business by founding Searcy Air Taxi and Searcy Aviation. He also served as President of Flying Optometrists of America.

Dr. Flippin married Mary Ann Bettis on June 7, 1959. They raised a son, Dane and two daughters, Karen and Patricia. They enjoyed vacationing in Branson, Missouri and spending time attending their grandchildren's activities. They were members of the Foothills Church of Christ in Searcy.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Howard and Bertha Flippin; son-in-law Brent Thomas; brother-in-law Ken Johnson and grandson Carter Flippin. He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Mary Ann Bettis Flippin; his sister Mary Flippin Johnson of Brentwood, Tennessee; two daughters, Karen Flippin Thomas of Overland Park, Kansas, and Patricia Flippin Cunningham (Aaron) of Searcy; a son, Dane Howard Flippin (Karen) of Jonesboro, Arkansas; nieces Kimberly Careau and Rebecca Smith; grandchildren Dane Westfall, Ryan Westfall, Lainey Cunningham, Mallory Flippin, Emma Flippin, Zachary Thomas, and Kayleigh Thomas.

A visitation will be held Monday, September 12, 2022 from 12:00 -2:00 at Powell Funeral Home in Searcy, followed by a funeral service at 2:00 and

graveside service to follow.

In lieu of flowers, Dr. Flippin's family suggests donations made to the Southern College of Optometry.

Arrangements are entrusted to Powell Funeral Home of Searcy. www.powellfuneralhome.net

Cemetery Details

White County Memorial Gardens

Eastline Road
Searcy, AR 72143

Previous Events

Visitation

SEP 12. 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Powell Funeral Home & Cremation Services (Searcy)
2602 W. Beebe-Capps Expy
Searcy, AR 72143
(501) 268-7220
searcy@powellfuneralhome.net
<https://www.powellfuneralhome.net/>

Funeral Service

SEP 12. 2:00 PM (CT)

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Tribute Wall



“ *Powell Funeral Home & Cremation Services created a Webcast in memory of Dr. Howard Franklin Flippin*



Powell Funeral Home & Cremation Services - September 12, 2022 at 10:12 AM

DA

“ *I want to take this moment to express my sincere celebration and appreciation for the earthly life of Dr. Howard Flippin.*

I will remember him as a faithful man, great family leader, and a giant within his professional community.

Regretfully we must give up his physical presence. But we can surely be grateful for his example of how to live for and contribute to the benefit of others.

God bless Dr. Howard Flippin and welcome him into your kingdom. Additionally dear God, bestow peace and comfort upon his family.

Dr. Perry Amerine

Dr. Perry Amerine - September 12, 2022 at 04:50 PM

DV

“ *Dr. Wanda Vaughn purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of Dr. Howard Franklin Flippin.*



Dr. Wanda Vaughn - September 12, 2022 at 12:17 PM

MR

“ *Mark and Retha Robinson purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Dr. Howard Franklin Flippin.*



Mark and Retha Robinson - September 11, 2022 at 09:55 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Dr. Howard Franklin Flippin.*



September 10, 2022 at 09:46 AM

KB

“ *Dr Flippin became my Dr in 1978 and continued until he retired. They don't make optometrists like him anymore. He truly cared about his patients and treated them like friends. He knew you wherever he saw you even years after he retired and always greeted you with that smile. Deepest condolences to the family.*

Karen James Bowen - September 10, 2022 at 09:00 AM

LB

“ I definitely remember Dr Flippin I had another doctor before him and that doctor left and I was very blessed to find Dr Flippin he was my eye doctor while I was in high school all the way up until he retired and then his sweet daughter she became my doctor and even after I moved from Searcy I have now moved to Jacksonville and luckily his daughter continued to work even opening up a business here in Jacksonville so I've been able to continue having them as my doctor very sad for the family my condolences and prayers for the whole family very sweet and wonderful man

Lamonica R Brady - September 10, 2022 at 01:17 AM

JT

“ Dr Flippin became my eye doctor almost 60 yrs ago when I was about 10 and became not only my doctor he also was like a friend. He cared for my family's eyes until his retirement. Frances and I are sadden to hear of his passing and our prayers are with the family.

Johnnye and Frances Totty - September 09, 2022 at 06:25 PM

SW

Dr Flippin fitted me with contacts in 1961, when I was a junior at Harding. He continued to be my optician until he referred me to an ophthalmologist about 1998. I have eaten BBQ at his parents' restaurant when I was much younger. His sister Mary and her family have friends for many years. I'm so very sorry for all of you. 🙏❤️🙏❤️
🙏

Suanne Walker - September 10, 2022 at 01:41 AM

WT

“ With deep respect, AUDIE & PAM TEAGUE purchased the Lovely One Spathiphyllum Plant for the family of Dr. Howard Franklin Flippin.



With deep respect, AUDIE & PAM TEAGUE - September 09, 2022 at 01:54 PM

KF

“ Karen's HNTB Friends purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Dr. Howard Franklin Flippin.



Karen's HNTB Friends - September 09, 2022 at 01:45 PM