

Flowers of the Forest

We are saddened to report the following note received from Jim Morton Montgomery:

CMSI past president James Nelson Montgomery, aged 89, died March 15 at his home in Biloxi, MS. Suffering a stroke on the previous Saturday, he remained until all his children and grandchildren could arrive to say goodbye.

Number 25 on the roster of Clan Montgomery Society charter members, he served as its third president from 1987 to 1990. Jim and his wife Marjorie made a surprise visit to the Clan Montgomery Society annual meeting in Atlanta last October. He, Dr. John F. Montgomery, second society president, and fifth president James Morton Montgomery were all cousins, members of the numerous John Montgomery/Esther Houston line.

His full life included spending his early years in China, where his parents were Presbyterian missionaries. A chemical engineer, he spent his career with DuPont. As an ardent blue-water sailor, he and Marj took their beloved boat to most points in the Caribbean and up the east coast of the US.

Jim is in the middle of this picture with Past Presidents in October 2015 in Atlanta



The following are some excerpts from an article in this newsletter while Jim was President:

Jim's research, while in Wilmington, DE, possibly carries the line back to arrival in 1722 at New Castle, DE from Londonderry, Ireland. The original John Montgomery house still stands, as does the White Clay Creek Presbyterian Church which he helped organize. Although the trace becomes more faint, Jim has visited Londonderry and Lifford, Ireland where this John originated and records of Montgomerys are extensive.

Jim was born in China along with three sisters and a brother of Presbyterian Missionary parents. His first ten years were in China at a provincial capital city with crenelated walls and gates dating to B.C. The location was on the Grand Canal, about half way between the Yangtze and Yellow Rivers. The next two years were spent in Korea mostly at boarding school located in Pengyang, now North Korea. High school was finished in Birmingham, AL where he lived with relatives. His parents were in China and for a period were in Japanese Internment until repatriated through exchange in the fall of 1942.

He has active membership in several technical Societies, including the National Society of Professional Engineers in Delaware, West Virginia, and Louisiana and with ISA and IEEE.

His military service was from 1944-1947 primarily in Signal Corp training. He was with the Fifth Army Headquarters radio relay communications in Austria.

Jim hints his oriental origins by being almost a professional student at an early stage. The army included stints at Texas Tech., Nebraska U., N. Y. U., and Ohio State to which he added his own stints at Tulane, Auburn, Georgia Tech., Armour Institute, Illinois Tech., Univ. of DE, and LSU. Out of this he achieved a BSEE, MSEE, innumerable credit hours and dunning letters from a host of Alumni Associations.

While stationed in France, Jim and Marge had the opportunity to visit many places associated with Montgomerys, especially Normandy, Pontorson in Brittany and the Abbey of Fontenay in Burgandy.