



CAT TRACKS



SPECIAL EDITION IN MEMORY OF DR. MADISON FRANK DIXON, SR.

Cham'pi'on (noun)

Supreme victor in contest – somebody who competes in and wins a contest, competition, or tournament, either alone or as a member of a team,

A defender, supporter, or promoter of somebody or something,

Remarkable person – a personal example of excellence or achievement.

Cham'pi'on (transitive verb)

Defend – to defend, support or promote a cause or person.

DR. MADISON FRANK DIXON, SR.

September 29, 1920 –

April 10, 2009

A CHAMPION

East Georgia College

lost one of our greatest champions this past week with the death of Dr. Madison Dixon. Dr. Dixon had been a supporter of the college since the beginning. As the Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce in 1971, he led the cause to promote the establishment of a junior college. He met continuously and tirelessly with community leaders and organizations to generate their support of the \$2,150,000 bond issue that would bring Emanuel County Junior College to Swainsboro. Dr. Dixon had served on the Foundation Board of Trustees since it was formed in June, 1979. Recently, his cause to "champion" had been the issue of housing on the campus of EGC. The majority of the money in the housing fund at the present time is directly due to the efforts of "Doc." This special edition of CAT-TRACKS is dedicated to the memory of a true gentleman, a champion for the cause, a good and faithful servant that now is at rest with the perfect peace.



A CHAMPION FOR HIS COUNTRY

Mrs. Virginia Bolton is working on a project of interviewing WWII Veterans sponsored by the Franklin Memorial Library, the Emanuel County Historic Preservation Society and the Governor David Emanuel Chapter of the DAR. These are excerpts from her interview with Dr. Dixon on February 16, 2006:

Dr. Madison Dixon was a student studying mechanical engineering at Tennessee Tech when the American Naval Fleet was bombed at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. He finished that year of school and reported for duty in the United States Army Air Force at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia, in September, 1942. He was then sent to St. Petersburg, Florida for basic training where he received an introduction to weapons and went through physical training to get in condition for service. From St. Petersburg, he rode a troop train to Nashville, Tennessee, where he expected to participate in pre-flight training to become a fighter pilot. He was given two vision tests and told that he would have difficulty distinguishing red and green colors in low light. His superior officer advised him that his vision problems could cause problems in flight and recommended that he pursue his second choice, airplane mechanics.

He was then sent to Moody Field in Valdosta, Georgia, where he spent most of his time in service. He worked as a carburetor specialist working primarily on A-10 and A-11 training airplanes. These planes were made of plywood and were designed for training pilots to fly twin-engine planes. At one point, he was asked to paint lettering on the planes and when he showed a talent for doing this, he did the painting on a number of planes and received a promotion to corporal.

CAT TRACKS



A CHAMPION FOR HIS FAMILY

Madison Dixon was one of four children born to Henry M. and Ruth McCrackin Dixon of West Point, Tennessee. He was born on September 29, 1920. He had one brother, Harvey L. Dixon of Sunnyvale, California and two sisters, Faye Clayton of Ohio and Joan Law of Nashville, Tennessee. After the war, Dr. Dixon attended the University of Tennessee, South Georgia College, the University of Georgia and Northern Illinois College of Optometry before opening his optometry practice in Swainsboro in 1951. On September 15, 1945, he married Phyllis Holton. They had three children, Peggy Dixon Thompson, Frank Dixon, Jr. and Mike Dixon. He had five grandchildren, Rebecca and Richard Thompson and Holton, Laura and Erin Dixon. After the death of Phyllis, Dr. Dixon married Mrs. Jane Lindsey Norris on February 6, 1988. With this marriage, he gained a stepson, Jim Norris of Spartanburg, S.C. and three grandchildren, Chad and Gabe Norris and Hunter Price. In addition to his first wife and his parents, Dr. Dixon was preceded in death by his sons, Frank, Jr. and Mike.

Dr. Dixon loved his family and he showed it in so many ways. In recent years, he could always be seen by "Miss Jane's" side at the care home, helping her with her meals in his good and patient way. His grandson, Holton, is a student at East Georgia College. Recently, he had the idea that it would be a good and fitting idea to award Holton a scholarship from the scholarship fund established in the name of Phyllis Holton Dixon at EGC. It was a very proud moment for Doc as he stood by Holton for the picture that day. He was also proud of the family picture with Peggy, John, Richard, Rebecca, Holton, Laura and Erin on the day that Madison Dixon Drive was dedicated. His eyes were glowing with pride and happiness on that day.



A CHAMPION FOR HIS PROFESSION

As an optometrist for 44 years in Emanuel County, Doc left quite a legacy. From the eye exercises he taught his patients to the special tricks, like wearing only one contact (mono vision, he called it), Dr. Dixon was a professional. He dedicated his life to a mode of optometry called vision training. He worked with many new doctors across the state to encourage them to follow the programs he fostered in Vision Training through the College of Vision Development and Optometric Extension Programs. As Dr. Kemp Jones said, "Dr. Dixon was always doing his part, taking courses on weekends, studying and taking very challenging tests to show the strengths of our profession and he has maintained every certification needed to practice full scope optometry even today."

A CHAMPION FOR HIS FAITH AND HIS FRIENDSHIPS

At his funeral service on Easter Sunday, Doc was eulogized by his friends, Mark Williams, Bill Rogers, Jr., Dr. Kemp Jones and Dr. Bob Blankenship and his grandson, Rev. Chad Norris. There were several recurring themes in what each one said, themes like "thrifty", "determined", "stubborn", and "tough as nails." Yet, each one had a unique perspective on Madison Dixon. Here, we will share a few:

From Kemp Jones-

"Dr. Dixon loved his church and his faith was one he wore functionally as one might wear work boots, and not patent leather slippers for show. He taught me by action that in a profession like ours, there is no room for competition- just colleagues – that you do all you can to make your colleagues successful, for the more successful they are, so are you."

From Bill Rogers, Jr.-

After telling a fable from the Book of Judges about picking a leader, Bill said, "The moral of the fable is that when good men don't step forward, lesser men do. Thank goodness for men like Dr. Madison F. Dixon who always step forward to give – not only of his hard earned money but his time and energy!"

From Mark Williams –

"Papa Doc took great joy in teaching and mentoring people. He could sell anything and had a way of not just asking you if you wanted to buy what he was selling, but putting it in a way that you could not refuse. He taught me so much about life and day to day living. He even turned me on to some of his home remedies when he thought I was ailing and in need of some doctoring."

From Bob Blankenship- A to Z on Dr. Madison Dixon

Ambitious, Brave, Character-Christian, Determined, Enabler-Encourager, Faithful, Genuine, Hopeful, Initiating, Jack of all Trades, Knowledgeable, Leader, Missionary, Naturalist, Obstinate, Persistent, (A) Quitter – he was not, Religious, Servant, Teacher, Unique, Visionary, Workhorse, Mr.X, Yokefellow, Zealous

And from Chad Norris –

"I got to know Doc after he married my grandmother. I really got to know him when I would try to help him do something. Of course, we did it his way. Doc told me he didn't like long funerals, so I will honor him and keep it short. We will all really miss you."