



Forrest Burns Meek

June 11, 1928 - August 6, 2012

Forrest Burns Meek, known to most as Woody, was born June 11, 1928 and died August 6, 2012. In the years between those dates, his curious, optimistic nature brought him enough adventures and accomplishments to fill several lifetimes. He was a teacher, a historian, a mentor, and a seeker. His legacy will be the lives that he touched and changed for the better.

Woody taught thousands of students during his career in a variety of subjects and places. From Earth Science to drama to speech to 8th grade science, he used the content to teach his Clare students to be thinkers. In Wuhan, China, he taught local graduate students to use English effectively and took great joy in sharing his own culture and learning about theirs. He spent years in rigorous research of Clare County history so that he could make the story of our past accessible to Michigan residents through his books. He cared deeply about all of his students, young or old.

He was born in Tustin, Michigan to Robert Burns Meek and Electa Gallup Meek and grew up in northern Michigan with his brothers and sister, Robert, Weldon, Paul, and June. Weldon (Hazel) Meek and June Hastings survive him, as do Robert's wife, Lisa, and Paul's wife, Martha.

He enlisted in the United States Army after graduating from high school and proudly served in Austria at the end of World War II.

He married Jean R. Grimes in 1953 in Lansing, Michigan. After exploring several occupations, he found his calling as a teacher and moved with Jean and their four children to Clare, Michigan. Along with his wife, he is survived by his children, Sally (Don) Dunlop, Tom (Giovanna) Meek, Nancy (Allen) Nickels, and Charles (Kimberly)

Meek; his grandchildren, Nora (Karl Klockars) Dunlop, Diana Horton, Maxwell Dunlop,

Spencer Meek, Tong Meek, Alexander Meek, Moira Meek, and Connor Meek; his step grandchildren,

Jennifer Kirkwood and Allen Nickels; his wife's siblings, Robert (Joyce) Grimes and Janet Grimes; his special cousin, Dr. Charles (Pam) Asplund, and many

beloved nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his daughter-in-law, Kathie

Van den Brink Meek and his grandson, Paul Horton.

His family is especially grateful to his friends and caregivers at The Horizon Senior Center in Clare.

Services for Forrest will be held on Saturday, August 11, 2012 at 1:00 P.M. at

the Clare Middle School Auditorium. Burial will be in the Cherry Grove Cemetery. Visitation will take place on Friday from 2-4 and 6-8 P.M. at the Clare Chapel of Stephenson-Wyman Funeral Home. Memorial contributions may be made to the Clare Depot Restoration Fund or to MidMichigan Home Care and Hospice. On-line guestbook at www.stephenson-wyman.com

Cemetery Details

Cherry Grove Cemetery

1000 Cedar St.
Clare, MI 48617

Previous Events

Visitation

AUG 10. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Stephenson - Wyman Funeral Home (Clare)
1005 North McEwan St.
Clare, MI 48617
(989) 386-7451
wymanhf@chartermi.net
<https://www.stephenson-wyman.com/>

Visitation

AUG 10. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Stephenson - Wyman Funeral Home (Clare)
1005 North McEwan St.
Clare, MI 48617
(989) 386-7451
wymanhf@chartermi.net
<https://www.stephenson-wyman.com/>

Service

AUG 11. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (ET)

Clare Middle School Auditorium
209 E. State Street
Clare, MI 48617

Tribute Wall

JB

“ *Mr. Meek was my teacher, friend and mentor. He was indeed a thinker and academic but his sense humor and love for all made him someone I truly " looked up to " He had the ability to make learning fun . He was a risk taker and if for one minute you don't believe me you should have seen the students scaling the walls of the limestone sinkholes at roger city (ha ha)our field trips were the best ! His influence on my life led me to a teaching career , where I hoped and strived to be as good (lots of field trips)as Mr. Meek. He visited my classroom twice (which was a very big deal for me) he expounded on China . He explained that six hundred million Chinese are speaking " Clare Michigan" because the authorities liked the way the dialect sounds.Many things to say , God willing ,maybe I'll write a book someday about a man that did his work and did it well ,making a big difference in at least one kids life .That I do testify . my heartfelt condolences to his family . Sincerely ,James J. Burdo*

James burdo - July 04, 2016 at 07:35 PM

JH

“ *My family and I send our deepest condolences. I cared for Forrest "Woody" when he was with Affordable Nursing Inc. I purchased his book Michigan Timber Battleground and had the privilege of him signing it for me. He was a wonderful man. I took him to Glen's Market on the mornings I was with him for coffee with one of his friends Mr. Koch. What a great man he was. I'm so sorry for your loss.*

Jennifer Hughes - November 19, 2014 at 11:12 AM

WN

“ Dear Forrest Meek family,

We have never met, but my husband Leonard Roger Nelson was stationed with Forrest in Austria at the end of World War II. Leonard talked very highly of Forrest and had great respect for him!

They talked a few times in the last 20 years. Leonard would talk for days about Forrest!

We are saddened to just find out about his passing. May God Be with you!

Leonard and Wilda Lu Nelson

Willie Nelson - October 19, 2013 at 07:51 PM

BW

“ *Dear Jean and family: I am afraid I have only just caught up with the sad news of Woody's passing. The memories of our time together in Wuhan are still as warm and vivid as ever, and the crazy bike rides we took between WuDa and Hubei University to meet up and share conversation and time together. Thank you both for being such a wonderful part of my life and my deepest condolences to you and your family. Barbara Woodward, London, England.*

Barbara Woodward - July 17, 2013 at 06:41 PM

WM

“ *My sincere condolences to the Meek family. For two years, back in the '60's, Woody and I had many opportunities to 'intellectualize' as he would say. We were both colleagues at Clare High School at the time.*

Through the years I would stop by and visit with him on my business sojourns throughout the state. He always had an instantaneous smile when I would show up unannounced. He had an open invitation for coffee and some more talk.

Woody researched and wrote about the history of Clare County. I have a couple of autographed books that he wrote and gave to me. He knew about my interest in documenting the history of my own family in Isabella County and whenever the family histories would cross paths I would hear from him. He always kept my family in the back of his mind.

I also have another legacy - several hundred emails that we exchanged through the later years. He was a true disciple of fuel cell technology where transportation was concerned. It was contagious. In my consultancy I often had the chance to introduce his theories and hopes to some of our countries largest corporations. Many, many times I would get queries from top corporate executives as to where they might be able to contact this 'Forrest Meek' person.

Woodies legacy will live long after his departure - from his family, from his research, from his books, from his students and from the long list of people that, even once, had the pleasure of talking with him.

*William L. Morrison
Ossineke, Michigan*

William L. Morrison - September 03, 2012 at 11:00 AM

SS

“ Dear Jean and family,
May you find comfort in the sharing of memories with friends and family and in your faith.
I didn't see Woody much after graduation, but had many fond memories of our time together. I, too, was one of the initial recruits to the debate team and remember those long bus rides to Tawas City, Big Rapids and other places. He was generous with his time and his mentoring. He was profoundly influential in letting me know when I disappointed him and helped teach me what mattered and what didn't. I remember talking to him about time going faster as one gets older and maybe that was one of my first introductions into "relativity" of a sort.
In addition to the debate team, I had the great benefit of being "saved" by him from an after school all night babysitting job that would have taken me away from my family for many long hours/nights. He offered me a job correcting earth science papers for him. It was another of his very generous acts of giving to his students. He will be long remembered and missed. My mom and dad kept up with him after I was long gone from the community. He even came to their 60th wedding anniversary party to honor them, but also knowing he would see all of us (Ruth Anne, Dave and Doug and me).
Ruth Anne (Maniteau) had the privilege of working with Jean at the hospital and by staying in the community was more in touch than I was. But none of us will ever forget the impact on our lives - in so many different ways.

Susan Smith
Class of 1969

Susan J Smith - August 11, 2012 at 09:58 AM

MH

“ It is amazing how computer technology allows us to reconnect. It doesn't seem that long ago that we were introducing Franklins, Apples, Atari's and others into the Clare Public Schools. I'm delighted to have heard through Marcia in AZ, about Forrest's passing in time to share in condolences and cherished memories before his service. He was always a prime mover in whatever he touched. I count it a privilege to have had our paths cross. I look forward to a future reunion in the presence of Our Lord.

Jean and family, your family memories are rich and varied and should last for many lifetimes. Rest in the assurance of God's love and mercies.

Martha Kellom Hafner, Randolph, VT

Greetings to the Wyman's and other Clare friends, too.

Martha Kellom Hafner - August 11, 2012 at 09:21 AM

ST

“ My Deepest sympathy goes out to to Meek family. He was well respected and Loved through out his life . My Father and Mother talked well of him and i know he used to have long talks with my Grandpa and i loved listening to the stories of the past. He will be sadly missed But he is now in the wonderful hands our Lord God and with that find Strength ,Hope Sandy (Cunningham) Turley

Sandra (Cunningham) Turley - August 10, 2012 at 10:28 PM

KL

“ I once asked uncle woody why he couldn't be my dad, he laughed and said I didn't wait long enough enough : -) . I was born in 1951.

kathy lynch - August 10, 2012 at 09:46 PM

SK

“ To The Meek Family:

I want to extend my deepest sympathies on your loss. I have many fond memories of the time I spent with Mr. Meek. I still remember him telling me "If you can't convince them, confuse them."

He was one of those great teachers whose concern for his students success went far beyond the classroom. On several occasions he stopped in The Embers for lunch and he always asked if I was working and I always enjoyed our chats. I learned so much from him that has helped me in my adult life. My father always says that letting me be on the debate team was a big mistake. Please know that you are all in my thoughts and prayers. Shelley (Battle) Kemmerling

Shelley Battle Kemmerling - August 10, 2012 at 08:16 PM

MB

“ Dearest Jean, and all your 'kids', and all the Meek family,

What a privilage it has been thru the years to know each one of the Very Special Meek family, to be friends as well as a fellow teacher with Woody and Jean, to be encouraged and awed by all their accomplishments, abilities and attributes! Woody and Jean, you set a high standard for your family, fellow-teachers, students - and the rest of us... and then encouraged us to attain those high goals. We are better people because of knowing the talented and gifted Woody, Jean, and each one of their offspring whi invidually and collectively have made ' their HIGH marks' in this world.

May you be comforted knowing that the Lord, too, has welcomed Woody already with, "Well done, good and faithful servant",. May you rest in His love, and be encouraged by the love of those who have been touched by Woody's life, and Jean's, and the Meeks as a family.

With much love, prayer, memories,and many hugs,

Marcia (Allen) Benner Mesa AZ, formerly of Clare

Marcia Allen Benner - August 10, 2012 at 06:46 PM

DI

“*Mrs. Meek and Family. I was saddened to learn of the passing of your husband, father, and grandfather. I was one of his students in the first class he taught for the Clare school system. Over the years, I have shared with many friends and colleagues what a difference he made in my life. It was in his classroom where I first realized my potential as a student. This was the direct result of him believing in me. His style of teaching and his forward thinking ideas enriched his student's school years and planted the seeds of their self worth that they carried into adulthood. His life made a difference to others and especially mine. Darla Carrow Ijames*

Darla Carrow Ijames - August 10, 2012 at 06:39 PM

CH

“*Dear Jean, Sally, Tom, Nancy and Chuck. We are with you in this hard time. Your father "Woody" was a great person, friend and educator. He enlightened the hearts of so many. We all have fond memories of him. He was a corner stone of CHS. We will cherish his memory and spirit forever. There are a few teachers that demanded our best and gave us the tools to achieve our best. Mr. Meek was one of a kind. We as a community and children of the community were blessed to have such a profound spirit lead us. Our prayers are with you and the family.*

*Carleen Stephenson Hull
Houghton Lake*

Carleen Stephenson Hull - August 10, 2012 at 01:06 PM

ZR

“ Dear Jean, Sally and family,

I was so sorry to hear of your husband, father, and grandfathers passing. "Forrest was a very gracious and compassionate man." He always tried to instill in all of his students the meaning of "respect and honesty" and being a "good citizen". I remember him coming to our home after school and talking to my mother about the early days of Clare County when he was just starting to write his book.

He was gracious enough to give me a signed copy of his book at my mother's memorial service after she had passed.

And Jean, you played the organ music! I will always remember and hold those thoughts very close to my heart.

In closing, if there is one thought that I can leave with you it is something that I have always remembered from the "Wizard of OZ".

"My friend, always remember that we are not judged by how much we love others, but rather by how much we are loved by others".

"FORREST", you are truly loved by those that had the opportunity to know you!!!

Jean and family, may GOD bless and keep you in his arms during your time of heartache and loss. My thoughts and prayers are with each of you.

Respectfully,

*Zaye T. Robinette
CHS Class of 1971*

Zaye Thoms Robinette - August 10, 2012 at 12:36 PM

DJ

“ I was saddened indeed to learn of Mr. Meeks passing. Our thoughts and prayers are with family and friends. Mr. Meek had a pronounced influence on my life as a great thoughtful teacher. Even after high school I most enjoyed my discussions with him, his passion to learn of our past history and his publishing talents live on as a true legacy. I will remember him fondly.

*Dan Dysinger Jr.
Farwell*

Dan Dysinger Jr. - August 10, 2012 at 07:27 AM

JK

“ Jennifer Kirkwood purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Forrest Burns Meek.



Jennifer Kirkwood - August 09, 2012 at 09:53 PM

KE

“ Jean, Sally, Tom, Nancy and Chuck, Lucky me to have Woody in 7th grade homeroom his first year at CMS. He was part of my life for the next 6 years. He opened his student's eyes to possibilities and life beyond Clare County. We saw the world in a new way because of him. He sure knew how to make things happen. Spring of 1964, he took us on a science field trip down by the dam. A few girls thought it would be a fun idea to go back on our own after lunch and we skipped school to watch the construction of the new expressway. My punishment from Woody was a 500 word essay about what I had learned that afternoon. Brilliant move. What a wise teacher he was. Thank you Woody Meek for demanding my best and giving me yours. It was my priviledge to know and love you. Kathy Owens Evans

Kathy Owens Evans - August 09, 2012 at 07:23 PM

PW

“ Dear Mrs. Meek and Family,

What a special man Woody was! My most sincere sympathy to all of your family on his passing.

I can never pass by Pike Lake on my way up North without remembering our big 7th grade camping trip. We were his first class in Clare and he was so brave to take all of us up there! He made learning fun and everything an adventure.

Finian's Rainbow will always be such a special memory! Both Jean and Woody put in so much time and effort.

It takes a special person to have such a profound effect on so many people as evidenced by the many tributes that have already been posted. Here's to a life well lived, Woody! You were a great teacher!

Love,

Penny Case Wisinski

Penny Case Wisinski - August 09, 2012 at 06:32 PM

BH

“ Dear Mrs. Meek and Family,

I attended CHS from 1965 to 1969, and had Mr. Meek for just one class. However, it is safe to say that he changed my life. He started a debate team in 65 and recruited me and a handful of others, including Leonard Erickson who would be my teammate for four years, to join. We travelled around the state competing against some larger schools, and the success we had gave me a confidence in myself that I never would have gained otherwise.

The last time I saw Mr. Meek was at a reunion in 1999, I believe. He was the same guy I remembered from 30 years earlier--interesting, genial, vibrant, curious. In short, everything a fulfilled, complete human being should be. I don't know if I ever shared my admiration for you then, but I know you know of it now.

Thank you, Mr. Meek.

Bob Hartzler

Bob Hartzler - August 09, 2012 at 10:51 AM

KM

“ To the Meek Family,

Forrest Meek was a name well known - leaving a legacy of intellectual curiosity and community connectedness. Thank you for sharing these inspiring gifts through him and through the lives of the entire Meek family.

*Sincerely,
Karen L. McGuire*

Karen L. McGuire - August 09, 2012 at 10:00 AM

SB

“ Dear Mrs. Meek, Sally, Tom, Nancy & Chuck,

Mr. Meek was one of a kind! Thinking back to having him as a teacher and mentor he was always encouraging us to excell in what we did, how we thought and how we treated one another. The trips to Washington DC was a eye opener for many of us and I will always be thankful to him for that time. I was very fortunate to have wonderful talks with Mr. Meek about many different subjects and will miss him dearly. Your family holds a special place in my heart. Praying that God will give you comfort and peace.

Shari Cooper Buccilli

Shari Buccilli - August 08, 2012 at 10:11 PM



“ Dear Jean and Family,

I am deeply saddened to learn of your loss. Mr. Meek was a guiding light, a true teacher, mentor and friend to me and countless others.



I treasure all of the memories of him. His presence in my life after my father passed away was the significant redeeming aspect during that time. I have great memories of his famous High School musicals, traveling around the State as part of his campaign 'stumping crew', finding the two of you backstage in Houghton Lake with a rose in hand. I will cherish those times, the copies of his books and his kind words and deeds. He left an indelible mark on my life and instilled in me, in all of us, a sense of belonging.

I pray that your loving memories of him will comfort you now and always.

Fondly,

Zoe Robinette

Zoe Robinette - August 08, 2012 at 09:49 PM

MS

“ *Jean and Family,
I have known Woody almost fifty years and I am proud to say he was a friend and mentor to me and my family. I've always had the utmost respect for Woody not only as a mentor and friend, but also as a teacher, a scholar, a historian and most of all as a christian father and family patriach. Woody, may you rest in peace throughout eternity. Jean and family, may God someday grant you the peace that Woody is enjoying now.*

Mark and Betty Salchert

Mark Salchert - August 08, 2012 at 09:02 PM

LC

“ *Dear Mrs. Meek and Family,
I am so saddened to hear of Mr. Meek's passing. He was a favorite teacher of mine way back in the late 60's and early 70's (I graduated in '71). He was always caring, a good listener and full of encouragement to me over those years. My sister died about 10 yrs ago and he came to the visitation just to say hello to me - I was touched beyond words!! It was so good to visit with him after all those years had passed.*

Please know that he touched my life in so many ways. He was a good man and will be missed. I will remember him with a warm heart and fondness.

My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family at this time of loss but please be blessed knowing of his legacy.

*Warm memories,
Leslie Cox-Bourassa*

Leslie Cox-Bourassa - August 08, 2012 at 09:00 PM

WB

“ *Mr Meek was one of the most influential people in my life. He has and will always hold a special place in the hearts of the many, like me, who benefitted so significantly from his dedication, commitment and skill. He was a "class" act and many of us grew up hoping to be even a little like him.*

Wayne Berg - August 08, 2012 at 05:34 PM

TW

“ *You have my deepest sympathy, Mrs. Meek, for the loss of your husband. May God bless you and your family at this difficult time.*



Terry Whalen - August 08, 2012 at 12:46 PM

EZ

“ I'm praying for comfort for the family!

Proverbs 3:5-6 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

John 14:1-3

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if [it were] not [so], I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, [there] ye may be also.

Psalm 46:1-3, 10a

God [is] our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; [Though] the waters thereof roar [and] be troubled, [though] the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Be still, and know that I [am] God:

John 14:27

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Emer Zapanta_NCE - August 08, 2012 at 12:32 PM

MB

“ *My sincere condolences to Admiral Meek on the loss of your father. I wish you and your family peace and comfort.*
Michelle Beilke

Michelle Beilke - August 08, 2012 at 12:28 PM

BS

“ I had Mr. Meek as an 8th grade Science teacher. He was very inspiring. I also seen him as a very caring man. He was such a huge influence in the community too. I have two of his books and refer to them on occasion. My prayers to the family and Mrs. Meek. He will be missed.

Bonnie Warner Sweet - August 08, 2012 at 10:21 AM

CM

“ Mr. Meek - still after all these years, "Mr. Meek" - shared his joy of learning with us, always encouraging us to be the very best that we could be. And he believed that each of us was special and had unlimited potential and he took such delight in developing that potential. My respect and love for him as a teacher are boundless - he grew my spirit and my mind and I am a much better person because he had faith in me and stood with me and understood. I still remember him saying, "Slater, you can do anything you want in life and you are your only limit. I have enough faith in you that I know you'll never limit yourself." Life changing, indeed. We are so very lucky to have had such a brilliant force our lives. Well done, my mentor. You will always be in our hearts. Rest in peace.

Cate (Cathy Slater) McGinn - August 08, 2012 at 10:03 AM

DH

“ We are so sorry for your loss. Mr. Meek truly was a mentor to so many students, and people. He had the ability to focus both on big issues and the small details, in his historical work. He never stopped thinking; just thinking about what was important. We will keep you all in our prayers.

Doug and Jaynie Hoerauf - August 08, 2012 at 09:27 AM

BH

“ Mr. Meek pointed so many of his students toward success by simply believing that they would succeed and convincing them of that single, powerful idea. One of the many things he shared with me is , " Bruce, just wanting something doesn't ever get it for you. You've got to work hard enough to deserve it." Simple, yet so profound and life changing. He'll be greatly missed, but never gone.

Bruce Lee Hales - August 07, 2012 at 07:05 PM

RG

Woody left a lasting impression on me. He was so interesting and could excite us about things we normally took for granted. Rocks, stars, formations, you name it, it was fun with Woody. I spoke with him on several occasions at Mid when he was teaching astronomy, about eight years ago. It seemed that he had frozen in time. Still witty, sharp, interesting and droll sense of humor. Heaven has recieved a blessing.

Ronald James Gepford - August 09, 2012 at 01:09 PM

MI

Dear Mrs Meek & Family , We shall miss Woody deeply .He was a moving force of our world. Although I never had Woody for a class I did enjoy music class with Mrs Meek.I got to know Woody through my husband Rich. The two of them could talk for hours about history of the area. We were all lucky to have shared apart of two great teachers! Our thoughts & prayers are with you all. Rich & Marian (Boatman) Irish

Marian Boatman- Irish - August 10, 2012 at 11:11 AM

AH

Hello Jean, Tom, Sally, Nancy and Chuck. We are sorry for your loss of Woody. What a "big man" he was in many ways. He was a disciplined person in research and in writing his books. I cry with you, Jean. You will again see and be with him. Love, Arlene and Phil - Redmond, WA

Arlene Z. Pielemeier (formerly Hunt) - August 10, 2012 at 05:56 PM