



Ronald Eugene Higginbotham

August 16, 1939 - March 14, 2015

Dr. Ronald Eugene Higginbotham was born on August 16, 1939 in York Township, West Union, Illinois to the late Hershel and Dorothy Higginbotham. He passed away at his home in Bristow, VA on March 14, 2015 at 4:06 am at the age of 75.

Ron attended Marshall High School in Marshall, IL. He received his Bachelor's degree in Math from Rose Hulman Institute of Technology and his Master's degree in Engineering Science from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, NY. He earned his PhD in Electrical Engineering from the University of Connecticut.

As an engineer, Ron has had a vast array of experiences from undersea surveillance to the Apollo Spacecraft to computer technology within his career. He started with Hamilton Standard in Windsor Locks, CT, in June of 1961 then onto United Aircraft Corporation in Farmington, CT working on inertial guidance and control systems. He taught undergraduate electrical engineering subjects at the University of CT from 1965-1968. He provided design and analysis support to a NASA sponsored research project focused on the development of guidance and control systems. He went on to Houston, TX in 1968 to TRW Systems Group and was a member of the Technical Staff. He worked on the Lunar Module development, managed reaction control system propellant budgeting for the Apollo spacecraft, and managed simulation development and performance analysis of the Skylab Control-Moment-Gyroscope and thrust attitude control systems.

In December of 1972, he moved to TRW Systems Group in McLean, VA. He was a member of the Technical Staff that provided systems engineering and integration guidance to Naval Electronics Systems on an undersea surveillance system project.

In March of 1978, he worked for Floating Point Systems, Inc. in Riverdale, MD. He was the Southeast Analyst that covered from the Mississippi River to the east coast, parts of Canada and Puerto Rico. He provided engineering and integration support to customers for the company's products. Products were the classical array processor, a mini-supercomputer, and a supercomputer. Applications included: (1) digital signal and image processing related to radar, sonar, speech, seismic, and telecommunications and (2) large scale engineering and scientific computing related to finite element analysis, computational chemistry, computational fluid dynamics and electronic circuit design.

Beginning March 1988, Ron worked for General Electric Aerospace, Government Electronic Systems Division in Syracuse, NY. He organized and managed a 50 member Signal Conditioning/Signal Processing Unit in the Submarine Systems Engineering Subsection. He managed development of firm ware and hardware specifications for the Seawolf submarine combat system.

April 1993 he worked for Martin Marietta Ocean, Radar, & Sensor Systems in Syracuse. He was the Principal Systems Engineer and the systems engineering and integration of all seven major acoustic sensor subsystems for the Seawolf Submarine combat system.

March 1995 Ron worked for Lockheed Martin Ocean, Radar, & Sensor Systems. He was the Principal Systems Engineer and directed development of test requirement documents, test plans, and test procedures for the Seawolf Submarine combat control system. He managed testing of the combat control system. (The combat control system initialized properly the first time it was powered up on the submarine and its performance was generally outstanding in its first sea trials.)

February 1997 he worked for Lockheed Martin Federal Systems in Manassas, VA. He was the Senior System Engineer. Ron managed the integration and test project for the New Attack Submarine (NSSN Virginia Class).

Then in July 1999, Ron worked at the Center for Enterprise Modernization (CEM). He provided strategic planning, guidance and support to the IRS Business Systems Modernization Office. Ron supported that group with establishing an independent quality assurance program and led the team that supported the development of risk management directive, process, and procedures.

Dr. Ronald Higginbotham taught classes at George Washington University and many courses within the companies that he worked for over the years. Dr. Higginbotham has been a life member of Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE).

He has been an elder in the Church of Christ in Liverpool, NY, Springfield, VA, and Manassas, VA.

He enjoyed writing and teaching Bible classes, preaching, meeting people, serving as a Scoutmaster, doing genealogy research and wildlife photography. Ron is survived by his wife of 54 years, Phyllis Ann Quick Higginbotham. They have two children; their son, Eric and his wife, Melinda of Cloverdale, CA and their daughter, Atresa Lyn Swalina of Coconut Creek, FL. He has five grandchildren, Tyler and Greye Swalina of Florida, Allison Higginbotham and Kathryn and Nicholas Menzel of California.

He is survived by one brother Robert Higginbotham and his wife Rosalee of West Union, IL

He is also survived by many nieces and nephews.

There will be a celebration of his life at The Manassas Church of Christ in Manassas, VA this summer. Date and time for service to be determined.

Tribute Wall

LS

“ Ron was a great genealogist and was into so much detail. He helped my sister, Marty Bray and myself many times and we'd pick up obituaries and photo's of headstones for him. He will be really missed by many.

Lynne Sherer Sitkiewicz

Lynne Sitkiewicz - May 17, 2015 at 05:30 PM

LW

“ Phyllis, I only recently heard of Ron's home-going. I remember the two of you fondly and the Bible studies in your home. Please know that you and your family are in my thoughts and prayers. Thank God for the grace of knowing He gives us peace and rest.

Linda Taylor Williams (widow of James)

Linda Williams - April 29, 2015 at 03:00 PM

JC

“ Dear Phyllis,

Please know that I have you in my prayers for God's comfort and care. May He hold you gently and lovingly in His arms as you adjust to the next phase of your life here on this earth. May the many memories you have of and with Ron sustain you as you relive the many happy times of your lives. Knowing Ron is with his Lord and no longer tied to the bonds of this earth is a precious feeling that gives great comfort that we can only have through Jesus Christ. I wish I could have known him, but do have some insight into who he was through all the things Denise has told me about him. I know he was a wonderful man.

*Blessings and prayers in the weeks ahead, Jeannette Chapman
(Dover, OH)*

Jeannette Chapman - March 19, 2015 at 08:50 PM

DC

“ Ron was a very special person to not just Scott and I but also to my family. He touched my family in a very special way by always being there for our birthdays, my graduation, and other events that Scott and I had and my family seeing this love. He has been there for us in good times and bad. Anytime we needed someone to talk to or to pray with us we could call him and he would say come over. He was not just a friend he was a great elder also. He was always at all of the Bible Bowls for the young group at church as well. He will truly be missed by many and will always remain a dear and special person. Prayers for Phyllis and the family. We love you all.

Scott and Denise Collins

Denise Collins - March 18, 2015 at 12:21 PM

AC

“ Ron was a special person to my family. He was there when needed with out being asked.
He will remain a special person in our hearts.
Agnes Collins

Agnes Collins - March 18, 2015 at 12:05 PM

JM

“ Memories of Ron brings to mind Christian hospitality. His and Phyllis' home was always open to visitors. My favorite memory great fellowship and delicious coffee cake the first time we were invited to Sunday dinner as newcomers to the Springfield Church of Christ. Our prayers and love to Phyllis and her children at this time. May God continue to be your rock. John and Janet Massey

Janet Massey - March 17, 2015 at 06:40 PM

SM

“ As a neighbor,friend and classmate of Ronnie.I have a lot of good memories of him and Phyllis.I enjoyed reading the obituary today,so many things he had done with his career.that I was not aware.it was very impressive that he had accomplished so much in life.My prayers and thoughts for Phyllis and the family.

Shirley Murphy - March 17, 2015 at 02:06 PM

BL

We appreciated Ron's faith and devotion to God. It was an inspiration in and of itself. Linda & Bill

Bill & Linda - March 17, 2015 at 02:48 PM

WK

Ronnie was a special classmate and a wonderful person. Your family is in my thoughts and prayers. Wanda Kuehner

Wanda Kuehner - March 17, 2015 at 03:42 PM

KA

*Eric,
I will never forget the hospitality of your sweet parents when we visited with our class. What precious people and sweet memories.*

Karen Stevens Altom - March 17, 2015 at 08:37 PM

PB

Ron was a dear friend and an inspiration to all. His Godly walk with our Father exemplified a complete living faith. We pray for God's peace and comfort for all of you, but rejoice in Ron's victory. Love, prayers, and deepest sympathy, Pansy and Lyle

Pansy Bigham - March 18, 2015 at 01:36 PM

CO

We have lost a true gentleman, friend and faithful Christian. Very, very sorry to know he has passed, but know wholeheartedly he is with our God and savior, Christ. With deepest sympathy, Cynthia Oz and TR Kern

Cynthia Oz - March 18, 2015 at 02:01 PM

TP

Ron was very special and was always there when needed, giving comfort, encouragement, guidance and support. I don't think I ever saw Ron that he didn't have a smile on his face. He welcomed me as well as many in his home and was he was there for us in times of rejoicing in our lives. Our prayers and love go with Phyllis and the family as Ron will be missed. Love, Nancy & Tom Pond

Thomas Pond - March 18, 2015 at 10:15 PM

LJ

Ron and myself worked together at Lockheed-Martin to build and test the sonar systems on the Seawolf submarine in the 1990s. Sorry to hear of his passing.

Lyndon Jones - December 03, 2018 at 02:55 PM