

Raleigh Barnett Dies At Age 82

Known for his love of Ford 8N tractors 05/19/06

Staff Report, The Fulton County News, McConnellsburg, PA

Raleigh Barnett, coal operator, bank director and community leader, died Monday in Chambersburg Hospital following a short illness. He was 82 years old.

Believed to have owned the largest collection of Ford 8N tractors in the country, he had been working on one of his prized collections at his home near Waterfall just three weeks ago when he suddenly became ill with severe abdominal pain.



Known and respected throughout the county, Barnett was a man who knew how to get things done. "If he wanted something done, he would find a way to accomplish it," said his grandson, Jason Sharpe.

Getting things done was a way of life for Raleigh Barnett. He began his career working in the coal business operating "drag line" in Somerset County. Later, he moved back to Waterfall in Fulton County, where he was born, and operated his own coal-stripping business from 1960 to 1969. After working at JLG Industries, he again went into the coal business in 1974 with his son, Richard, and a partner. Raleigh and his son also owned and operated Broad Top Trucking, which was formed in 1985.

The companies thrived from the mid 1970s into the early 1990s, mining coal from Broad Top Mountain.

While mining in Somerset County in 1950, Raleigh Barnett bought his first Ford 8N tractor for his family back home to use on the farm. He paid \$2,050 hard-earned dollars for it and never dreamed that 56 years later, he would own 64 8N tractors and none of them would really be needed for the farm.

Raleigh's display of all 64 8Ns delighted visitors from near and far to Fulton County's annual Fall Folk Festival for many years.

In the 1950s, Raleigh was working hard to make a living and collecting and restoring tractors hadn't even occurred to him then. After working at stripping coal for H.B. Mellott in Fulton County, he went out to the Boswell area of Somerset County to work after Mellott was tragically killed in an airplane accident. It would be another 10 years before he bought his next Ford 8N tractor, beginning a hobby that paralleled his success as a coal operator and director of The Fulton County National Bank & Trust Co. (FCNB).

Retiring from the FCNB board in 1998, he was the largest single stockholder of that bank at the time of his death. He was also a former board member of the Fulton County Medical Center and the Forbes Road School Board.

Always civic-minded, Raleigh was a Mason, a member of the Broad Top Area Coal Miners Historical Society and Fraternal Order of Eagles.

A devoted family man, Raleigh is survived by his wife, Inez, and by a son, two daughters, seven grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

Raleigh V. Barnett

05/19/06

Waterfall, 82

Raleigh Victor Barnett, 82, Waterfall, died at 9:05 a.m., Monday, May 15, 2006, at Chambersburg Hospital.

Born June 15, 1923, in Taylor Township, he was the son of the late James and Emma (Reeder) Barnett. He was married to Inez Brown on January 6, 1945. She survives at their home.

He is survived by a son, Richard, and his wife, Judy, Hustontown; two daughters: Sandra Sharpe and husband Joe of Wells Tannery, and Shirley Johnson, Fort Loudon; seven grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren; two sisters: Evelyn Bitner, Zullinger, Pa., and Blanche Umbrell, Chambersburg.

He was preceded in death by two brothers and four sisters.

He was a member of Center United Methodist Church, Waterfall.

He spent most of his life in the coal business. He was the owner and operator of L and B Coal Co., and co-owner and president of L and B Coal Co. Inc.

He enjoyed his collection of Ford 8N tractors that is said to be the largest private collection of such tractors in the country today.

He was retired from the board of directors of Fulton County National Bank and Trust Co., McConnellsburg, where he had served from 1986 until 1998. He was a former member of Fulton County Medical Center Board and Forbes Road School Board.

He was a member of Somerset Lodge 0358, Free and Accepted Masons, as well as the Jaffa Shrine, Altoona, Pa., and Harrisburg Consistory.

He also was a member of Broad Top Area Coal Miners Historical Society and Fraternal Order of Eagles Lodge 4426, Broad Top.

Funeral services will be held at 10:30 a.m., Thursday, May 18, at Center United Methodist Church, Waterfall. Pastor George Clippinger will officiate. Burial will be made in Center Cemetery. Friends may call at the M.R. Brown Funeral Home, Hustontown, from 2:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., Wednesday, May 17, with the family receiving friends from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. There will be no viewing at the church on Thursday.

Memorial contributions may be made to Center United Methodist Church, c/o Ruth Knepper, treasurer, 862 Drifting Lane, Hustontown, PA 17229.