

Josh T. Nessmith, Jr.

Dr. Josh Nessmith, age 93, died January 10, 2017 in Mount Pleasant, SC. Although retired from Georgia Tech, he still worked for the Georgia Tech Research Institute part-time as a consultant up until his death. He was a dear friend, a national treasure, and will be missed by many.



He was a native of Bulloch County, Georgia. He is survived by a son, Josh T. Nessmith, III of Warner Robins, Ga; two daughters and sons-in-law, Mrs. Nancy Nessmith Kitten and husband Lester Kitten of Charleston, SC, and Dr. Carol Nessmith Pryby and husband Dr. Todd Louis Pryby of Clarkesville, GA; three grandsons, Jacob Thomas Kitten, Evan Daniel Kitten, and Dr. Christopher Ian Pryby and wife, Brittany Roberts Pryby; one brother and sister in-law, William Emory Nessmith and Betty Nessmith; a sister in law, Dorinda Simmerson; a brother in law, Charles M. Simmerson and wife Claire; and a number of nieces and nephews. His wife, Alawayne Simmerson Nessmith; two daughters, Cynthia Jean Nessmith and Susan Patricia Nessmith; a sister, Martha Jean Rodgers; and a brother, Ben Robert Nessmith, predeceased him.

After Dr. Nessmith's graduation from Statesboro High, he attended Georgia Teachers College before entering Georgia Tech. His education was interrupted by his enlistment in the US Army Ordnance (1942-46) operating on the East Coast and in Europe during World War II. He returned to Georgia Tech receiving his BSEE. He received the MSEE and PhD from the University of Pennsylvania.

Prior to becoming Senior Scientific Advisor at RCA, Dr. Nessmith managed the Systems Engineering Department of the Missile and Surface Radar Division of RCA (now part of Lockheed Martin). During the Development of the AEGIS Weapon System, he served as Deputy Program Manager and Manager of Systems Engineering providing the direction of RCA and sub-contractor system engineering. As Missile and Surface Radar Systems Engineering Manager he directed research on multifunction radars and weapon systems. As Project Manager, he was technically responsible for design, fabrication, test and operation of the TRADEX ABM measurement radar, a mainstay in the development and test of anti- and ballistic missiles for five decades. He also performed the system design of the key radars in the NASA net.

Retiring from RCA, Dr. Nessmith went to Georgia Tech as a Senior Faculty Leader performing research in Radar and teaching Phased-Array Radar Design and Modern Radar. He served as a radar and weapon system consultant to Industry and the Government including the SDI Radar Discrimination Panel, Blue Ribbon Panel investigating NEXRAD weather radar requirements, and as Chairman of ONR review of radar research at the Naval Research Laboratory. He served as a consultant to the Office of Naval Technology and as a member of the National Academy of Science Advanced Radar Technology Panels. Retiring from GA Tech in 1993, he served twelve years as a staff consultant to Georgia Tech., to the Applied Physics Laboratory of Johns Hopkins University on the Anti-Tactical Missile Panel and as a radar

expert to the BMD Program Office. He continued to work after retirement and at his death he was still working for GA Tech.

Professional affiliations and service included the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers where he served on the Awards Board, Fellows Committee, Aerospace and Electronic Systems Society as Vice President of Operations, Chairman of the International Radar Systems Panel, Education Society, and Fortescue Fellowship Awards Committee. He served as an IEEE Delegate to the People's Republic of China in 1980. He was a member of the Anti-Aircraft Warfare and Planning Committees of the NSIA, and the University of Pennsylvania Advisory Board for both Electrical and System Engineering.

Major publications include chapters on radar in the *Electrical Engineering Handbook*, *Antenna Engineering Handbook*, *Encyclopedia of Applied Physics*, and *Antenna Applications Reference Guide*. Major papers are included in conference records and in IEEE Society journals. He presented at both national and international conferences. He received citations from the Advanced Research Project Agency, the U.S. Navy and the National Security Industrial Association. Awards included election as a Life Fellow in the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers, Fellow of the Military Sensing Symposia and the Admiral Sides Award by the NSIA.

Upon retirement he returned to Statesboro in 1993, he became a member of Kiwanis, a charter member of the GSU 1906 Society and the First United Methodist Church.

Funeral services were held 11:00 am at the First United Methodist Church of Statesboro on Saturday, January 14, with Reverend Scott Harris presiding. Interment was in the Eastside Cemetery. Memorials may be made to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Georgia Chapter, 1117 Perimeter Center West, Suite E101, Atlanta, GA 30338 and the First United Methodist Church of Statesboro.

See *The Telegraph (Macon, GA)* [account](#) for further details.