



Charles McGehee

February 10, 1954 - January 12, 2010

Bluefield, WV- Charles Stuart McGehee, 55, of Bluefield, West Virginia, died Tuesday, January 12, 2010. Born February 10th, 1954, in Birmingham, Alabama, he was preceded in death by his parents, the Rev. Charles White McGehee and Jean Devine McGehee. At the time of his death, Dr. McGehee was Professor of History at West Virginia State University, and Archivist of the Eastern Regional Coal Archives, Craft Memorial Library in Bluefield. Educated at the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga and the University of Virginia, where he earned his Masters and Doctorate in American History, Dr. McGehee is best remembered by the success of his students. He served as Chairman of the Division of Social Sciences at Bluefield College, and Chair of the History Department and Dean of the College of Social Science at WVSU. Dr. McGehee was active in the community and in his profession, earning awards of "Professor of the Year" at Bluefield College in 1994, "Citizen of the Year" in Bluefield in 1989, and Delta Kappa Pi "Professor of the Year" at West Virginia State University in 1999. He served on numerous non-profit and charitable boards, as well as Chair of the West Virginia Archives and History Commission for five years. Dr. McGehee wrote five books and his more than fifty articles, essays, and reviews appeared in West Virginia History, Civil War History, The Journal of Southern History, The Tennessee Historical Quarterly, Goldenseal, East Tennessee Historical Publications, Blue Ridge History, Coal People Magazine, and many others regional and national publications. He appeared in the West Virginia History Film, the History Channel's "Modern

Marvels" series, as well as numerous PBS documentaries. Dr. McGehee is survived by his son Joseph Thomas McGehee of Bluefield, Virginia. He will be especially missed by his students and colleagues at West Virginia State University, coworkers at Craft Memorial Library, his band mates in the Bluestone Wildcats, and the regulars at the Cold Spot. There will be no memorial service. Stuart asks instead that charitable offerings be given to the Craft Memorial Library, 600 Commerce Street, Bluefield, West Virginia. Those wishing to share memories or e-mail condolences may do so by visiting www.mercerfuneralhome.com Mercer Funeral Home & Crematory is serving the family of Dr. Stuart McGehee.

Tribute Wall



“ Charles McGehee

October 05, 2023 at 06:08 PM



“ *Stuart McGehee was the best friend I ever had, growing up in Jacksonville, Florida. Once we were having too much fun at the beach and got so sunburnt we had to stay home from school-and play chess for a week straight. My mom was mad at Jean but it was our fault. We spent hours playing planet. 50 troops landed on your planet if you didnt stomp the other guy's frisbee in time. Stuart was that rare friend who, instead of arguing, enjoyed sharing unbiased and laughing assessments that no one could have survived this or that particular mayhem, or that probably 25 jumped off in time. He taught me broken-field running and how to deke the other guy out of his jock. He told me fantastic stories that I only now realize he must have made up. We spent hours throwing sticks into a river and doing play by play as these improvised ships tried to run past the dreaded Rocks of Navarone, and I never had more fun in my life. I knew the boy that became that beloved history professor, and I can tell you that he was always like that. If anyone from the Unitarian Church in Jax, where Stuart's dad was the pastor, reads this, please say hello. -Sean*

Sean Ellis - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM



“ *I just learned this sad news and I do not know if the family is still receiving these, but I just wanted to say - Dr. McGehee was the best professor I ever had. I wouldn't have graduated at all if he hadn't been for him. He changed my life and I will never forget him.*

Kathy - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

KS

“ I will miss you Stuart. You were a great mentor and a wonderful friend. Thank you for all the inspiration and smiles.

Kelly Smith - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

JM

“ I knew Dr. McGee when I was teaching as an adjunct in the English Dept. at WV State. We would often see each other in Hill Hall and we would joke with each other, with him saying, "Quit following me" with a mischievous smile and me replying "No, it is you who are following with me" and then we would both laugh and be on our way :) I can't believe he is gone. Everyone who had the pleasure of working with him (myself included) should feel honored to have had the opportunity to know him. My heart goes out to his family, friends and students. Please know that he will be very much missed and that he made the world and even my days at school a little bit brighter just by his presence in those hallways.

Janet Mays - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

SH

“ It was such a shock to hear about this wonderful man's death. He made history come alive with his passion for teaching and his love of the past of our state and country. My favorite history teacher, and definately one of WVSU's finest professor. My sympathies to his family and friends.

Shenandoah Hartley - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

MO

“ Smile by Charlie Chaplin, Smile though your heart is aching Smile even though is breaking When there are clouds in the sky, You'll get by If you smile With your fear and sorrow Smile and maybe tomorrow You will find that life is still worthwhile If you just smile Light up your face with gladness Hide very trace of sadness Although a tear may be ever so near That's the time you must keep trying Smile, what's the use of crying You will find life is worthwhile If you just smile. RIP Stu.

Monica - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

JR

“ Wow, i just heard about Stuart today and i am not only in shock, but tears. I am a former student from WVSU and a huge fan of Dr. McGehee and honestly can say his was the best teacher i ever had. He made history alive and he is the biggest reason i graduated with my BA in History. I owe him so much and am saddened to hear this news. My heart goes out to his family. He will be greatly missed.

Jennie Riddle - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

JM

“ Oh how I loved sharing the bond we had with Jean. I love you both. A trip to Mentone is needed, for the grand times .

Jan Templeton Merritt - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

CF

“ Dr. Mcgehee....I hope one day i can make you proud and be half the teacher you were..I will always remember and miss you

Candice Flack - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

WC

“ It is with profound sadness that I write this, as I feel as though an important part of my past has been torn away. I had the pleasure of attending some of Dr. McGehee's classes when I went to Bluefield College, and I got to know him as an instructor and a person. He was an excellent instructor, a talented musician, and all-round nice guy. Even though I haven't seen him in many years, I will always remember him and the things he contributed when our paths crossed in life.

William L. Cox - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

TR

“ I have never enjoyed learning history more than when I have been in Dr. McGehee's classes. His passion for history and teaching was something I looked forward to in every class. I feel blessed for getting the chance to learn from him. My sincere condolences to his family and friends.

Teddi Russell - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

TJ

“ Stuart McGehee was one of the most brilliant people I have ever had the fortune to call a friend. It has taken a few days to believe he's gone. I still see blue jeeps and my friend behind the wheel. May God bless all his friends and the extraordinary life that he led. We were all richer for having known him. Jean and Joe had become his world and it was evident the love and respect he had for you both. I will always strive to be an excellent teacher like him and I hope to leave the world a better place like he did!!

Tiffany Jones - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

JS

“ I was mortified to learn of Dr. McGehee's demise. He helped me many times with research for my coal fields paintings. I think there is a painting of a coal tipple in the coal archives that I gave to him. He was a fine gentleman and a great historian. My deepest condolences for this loss.

J. R. Shuck - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

AH

“ With one class, Dr. McGehee had renewed my faith in professionals, professors, and humans in general. While entertaining us with his vast historical knowledge, he also made us laugh. His passing is such a great loss to WVSU students and the state of West Virginia. My sincere condolences to his son, friends, and loved ones.

A WVSU, 2009 Student (WV History) - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

CG

“ Dr. McGehee was truly a friend and a mentor. I think of him each and every day that I teach history as a substitute. I don't know if he ever really knew how many lives he touched and will continue to touch through those who were privileged to be one of his students. His passion for his students and history can never be matched. I am truly blessed to say that I was taught and mentored by one of the greatest historians of our time. I can see him throwing out the old Doc Martens and putting on the new pair! God Bless you, Dr. McGehee and may you rest in peace. Our prayers are with your loved ones.

Carrie Laughlin Greene - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

MM

“ I was a former student of Dr. McGehee and I wanted to say how sad I am today. I will never forget him and the class i took that semester. He brought History alive and his lectures were wonderful. He was a very nice person who will be missed by many.

Marcia Meeks - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

SJ

“ I'm still a bit overwhelmed by all of this. Stuart was a great guy and I always admired him for saying exactly what was on his mind. I've not seen him much since graduation, but he was quite a presence in my life then. Always asking me how things were going, always there with a smile and a "hello" when I passed him on campus. I'll miss him at the Cold Spot and in Bramwell. We have lost a man who had encyclopedic knowledge on so many issues. Fortunately, this will carry on through his former students and those who had the chance to work with him in his various endeavors. You are gone, my friend-- but you won't be forgotten.

Shelly James - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

MR

“ Our deepest sympathies to Dr. McGehee's family and friends. We did not personally know him, but our daughter, Teddi, a student at WVSU, often acknowledged Dr. McGehee's intellect, wit and enthusiasm to teach. He was one of her favorite professors and has made a lifelong impression upon her. I know she will miss him. Mark & Lee Russell, Cincinnati, OH

Mark & Lee Russell - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

TC

“ Dr. McGehee was like a cup of strong coffee. I took several of his classes between 1985 and 1988 as a Bluefield College student. He held my attention and clearly, though with sarcasm, demonstrated his concern whenever I felt lazy (not too many times). My shock and sadness upon learning of his untimely death are hard to express. One thing is certain, though - he is one of my college professors whose name is known to my family (I have a number of Dr. McGehee stories I enjoy sharing repeatedly). May the Lord grant us all peace.

Tim Coates - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

LJ

“ I was truly saddened at the news of Dr. McGehee's passing. He was my advisor in the Social Studies Education program at WVSU. I remember the first class I took of his. After the first lecture, I thought to myself... "that's how I want to lecture." He was so passionate about history. His passion for American history, especially, was infectious. He will be missed by those whose lives he touched.

Lemuel Williams, Jr - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

KA

“ I just wanted to send one more condolence on what a great professor Stuart McGehee was. He will be missed. My prayers go out to his family, both present and former students and WVSU faculty.

kim atkins - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

RM

“ Dr. Stuart McGehee was my history professor at WVSU during the 90's and I never have met anyone with such a love of history and he inspired me greatly. He and I became friends instantly and I feel blessed to have known as a great professor and as a friend. I will miss him so...he had such great spirit and it was contagious. He always had a smile for everyone and he could make you laugh when you were at your lowest...rest in peace dear Stuart...you will be missed...RLM

Rose McCormick - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

DR

“ Stuart was a fellow UVA "Cavalier." He would often wear a tie with the UVA logo. I now am a graduate student at UVA and feel that Stuart's enthusiasm for learning and his exuberance in the classroom inspired me to reach for the stars. I am saddened to hear of his passing. I hope the family can be comforted knowing he touched the lives of many students.

Deborah Rexrode - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

HS

“ So sad, he was a super professor and the only person I know that made history interesting. I'm so sorry for your loss.

Hazel Sanders - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

EV

“ Stuart, my buddy of so many years. I will miss you for ever. I hope you rest in peace and be with Jesus for ever in heaven where will you be always smiling down on us. I will always love you and I will miss u and until then when I it will be my turn to leave this world. Amen,

Eva - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

KA

“ I am truly saddened to hear of the death of one of my favorite professors. He left behind so many students that adored and admired him and imparted such a love of history to all. He challenged me to be more disciplined, question the parts of history that must be questioned, and have a zeal for life both past and present. I will never forget him and he will live on in my, and I know many others memory, as a wonderful teacher! I want to impart my deepest condolences to his family.

Kerrin O'Donnell Abromowitz - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

PM

“ I am sadden to hear of the lost of one of the best historical minds of this time. Although I only knew Dr. McGehee through classes at West Virginia State University, I have come to respect and love Dr. McGehee's enthusiasm for teaching history, the way he turned his lectures into a voyage through time causing them to come life before my eyes. I have learned so much about the history from Dr. McGehee, will always be honored to have had the chance to be in his history class. Most of all I will remember him for always pushing his students to aspire to a higher standard of learning, which he exhibited not just through his periodical essay testing's, but through his encouragement, mannerism, and professionalism towards all that came in contact with him. Dr. McGehee you will be sadly missed. My heart and prayers go out to his family in their time of mourning, rest in peace.

Patricia Mosley - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

NA

“ Doc will be sadly missed by all of his Cold Spot friends/family. My thoughts and prayers are with his all of his family and loved ones.

Niki Allen - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

AF

“ Dr. McGehee you will be greatly missed. I have never had a professor get me excited about and interested in history as you did. Having you on my panels for student teaching made me feel more at ease. I will miss your "this day in WV history..."

Amy Fleming - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

KP

“ Dr. McGehee was my favorite professor, former boss, mentor, and friend. I graduated from West Virginia State College in 1999 with a history degree. I have so many fond memories of him. I will miss him greatly. My prayers are with his son and other family members.

Kimberly (Mosley) Pickens - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

SH

“ Dr. McGehee was truly a fantastic history professor. We all loved him at WVSU and I could not wait to get to class to see what interesting stories he was going to bring to us that day. He had a way of making history so interesting, bringing life back to American and WV history. He always spoke to me by name, every time we passed. I will miss him terribly. My thoughts and prayers are with his family during this difficult time.

Saundra Hammack - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

SL

“ Rest in peace!

Sr. Lindena - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

TC

“Stuart, or Doc as we called him at the Cold Spot, will be greatly missed. He was not just a friend, he was a member of the Cold Spot family. We shared dinners, beers, stories, politics, and his great knowledge. Rest in peace Doc.

Tracy and Steve Chapman - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

SH

“Words can not express the depths of my sorrow at the passing of my friend, my love. Only a poem from a cheesy chick-flick can come close to expressing my grief. Funeral Blues by W.H. Auden Stop all the clocks, cut off the telephone, Prevent the dog from barking with a juicy bone, Silence the pianos and with muffled drum Bring out the coffin, let the mourners come. Let aeroplanes circle moaning overhead Scribbling on the sky the message He is Dead. Put crepe bows round the white necks of the public doves, Let the traffic policemen wear black cotton gloves. He was my North, my South, my East and West, My working week and my Sunday rest, My noon, my midnight, my talk, my song; I thought that love would last forever: I was wrong. The stars are not wanted now; put out every one, Pack up the moon and dismantle the sun, Pour away the ocean and sweep up the woods; For nothing now can ever come to any good. My thoughts and prayers go out to Joe and all of Stuart's friends. We all share in the great loss of this dynamic man. Stuart, I hope you found the peace you've been searching for...love always, XOXO

Shelly Hardy - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

TE

“There are no words to express what a great person Doc was. His dedication to his family and students was remarkable. I feel lucky to have known him. I will so much miss seeing him and talking to him at the Cold Spot. It is a very sad day for all of us.

Teresa - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

TH

“ I am a former student of Dr. McGehee's. I wish to send my heartfelt condolences to his son and family. He will be greatly missed by many at WVSU. His great love and respect of the state of West Virginia was present in his work. I have been personally touched by his spirited lectures that have me interested in history more so than I was before having him as a Professor.

Theresa Holt - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

DO

“ Great guy. So sorry

Doc - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

MC

“ DOC YOU WILL BE MISSED BY SO MANY AND THE THINGS YOU ALWAYS SAID WILL STICK IM MY MIND .YOU WAS A GREAT FRIEND AND I WILL MISS TALKING TOO YOU EACH DAY ,THANKS FOR ALWAYS BEING A GREAT FRIEND AND SO HELPFUL YOU WILL BE SO GREATLY MISSEDRIP DOC

mike cobb - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

KS

“ I only new Stuart through my profession as a hairstylist but what a great man what a great loss i am saddened today and am at a loss for words I will continue to pray for his son and family thank you Lord for letting our paths cross ...

karen kirk regis hair salon - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

VW

“ I am very sorry to hear of the passing of Dr. McGehee. God Bless his family and friends.

Virginia Hoge Williams - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

DS

“ *Stuart was a truly brilliant man and was a good friend. His passing represents a tangible loss to Bluefield and surrounding communities. "Once a wildcat, always a wildcat" That was how he concluded our conversations over the past several years when I have had the chance to speak with him. He was gracious and genuine. I will miss him. Dennis Smith....Former Wildcat.*

Dennis and Sherry Smith - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

DP

“ *Doc, as we knew him at Cold Spot was a great and interesting person. He was just a person you enjoyed to be around because he always had something intelligent to say, whether you liked it or not! He was funny, charismatic and genuine person. We will enjoy his memory as much as we enjoyed the person he was.*

Doshia Petry - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

PT

“ *We knew Doc from the Spot and he will be greatly missed. It is truly a loss for all of us. He was a brilliant man with so many things to offer. Things won't be the same, but now he is at peace. Our hearts go out to all that had the pleasure of knowing him friends and family.*

Patty and Alan Taylor - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

KK

“ *Wish I could have inspired you as much as you inspired me. Would have loved to talked to you one more time, I will miss you greatly as well as all others that had the privilege to ever meet you. Rest Easy Old Friend. Kyle*

KK - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

JL

“ *Charles was a great patriot trying to preserve our area's rich history. He will be sadly missed.*

James Leedy - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

SG

“ What to say about Dr. McGehee. He was one, if not the greatest, person that I had the pleasure of knowing in my life. Every class that he taught was never dull; and, even if you weren't paying close attention I can guarantee that you walked out knowing something that you did not know before you walked in. I graduated from then WV State College in 2001 with a BA in History. I changed my major after taking a couple of his classes; he had such an affinity for history that it could not help but rub off. I have many memories of Stu including traveling to Washington DC for the impeachment hearings of former President Bill Clinton with a small group of students. There was never a dull moment; I will not go into what happened with us and Strom Thurmond. Anyone who knew him could only imagine what might have popped out of his mouth. His teachings did not stop at the classroom door either. I can say that I would not have graduated from "State" if not for his motivation while I was going through a very difficult time in my life. I was not showing up to class or to the History Department so he took it upon himself to take time to find out the problem instead of failing me. From that point on he did not back off of me and I am eternally grateful for that. I ended up graduating in 3 1/2 years with honors. It was his dedication to his work, his family, and the State of West Virginia that proved exceptional. But, I believe it was his love for his mother and son that put him over the top. Anytime, and it was often, that he spoke of them it was evident by the expression on his face and the love in his voice that they were adored. If I can only be one percent of the person he was in life, then I will have accomplished what most never will. I am truly sorry for your loss; the State of West Virginia lost one of the greatest leaders, educators, mentors, and people with which we have ever been graced. People like Stu do not come around very often and I feel very blessed to have known him.

Sara (France) Grigsby - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

JD

“ Dr. McGehee will be missed alot. I was a student at WVSU and he was an **AWSOME** teacher. You couldnt ask for a professor that would go out of his way to do anything for you to help out. My prayers our going out to the family and friends! **I WILL MISS YOU**

Jennifer Dean - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

VL

“ I worked with Stuart in 1988. I had a grant from the NEA to study coalfield history and Stuart was my mentor. I can't say enough good things about him. He was a great guy who pushed me to work harder and do better. His contribution to Bluefield was enormous. He preserved the history of a fascinating town and gave recognition to heroes in American history- the coal miners and their families. My sincere condolences to the family.

Veena Gupta Lothe - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM

SJ

“ It is much too soon to see Dr. McGehee go. He will most definitely be missed. My thoughts and prayers are with his family. Good bye my friend. I will cherish my memories, discussing matters with him. It was good to see him last week.

Shawn Jackson - March 07, 2014 at 04:21 PM