

Memorials



Bachelor, James Thomas
Prattville
Admitted: 1981
Died: May 3, 2007

Eshelman, Elizabeth Davis
Birmingham
Admitted: 1964
Died: April 10, 2007

Frank, Fred, Jr.
Cullman
Admitted: 1980
Died: February 12, 2007

Inge, William Bullock, Jr.
Mobile
Admitted: 1959
Died: March 29, 2007

Turner, Ellen Thompson
Mobile
Admitted: 1990
Died: March 31, 2007

JOHN THOMAS KING

Birmingham attorney John Thomas King died January 24, 2007 at the age of 83. A native of Adamsville, he was the son of Circuit Judge Alta L. King and Donna Collins King.

He displayed leadership early in his life, being elected president of the student bodies at both Phillips High School (1940) and the University of Alabama (1948), where he graduated with honors with a degree in accounting. He entered the University of Alabama School of Law in 1948, and received his L.L.M. degree in 1951. His college education was interrupted when he volunteered for the United States Army during World War II, and served in the Pacific Theater of Operations from 1943 to 1946.

Following law school, he served as an Assistant United States Attorney for the Northern District of Alabama. In 1954, he went to Washington, D.C. as Chief Administrative Assistant for U.S. Congressman George Huddleston, Jr. from Birmingham. While serving in there, he was urged to return home and run for mayor of Birmingham, which he did in 1961 and again in 1963. In vigorous campaigns, he offered fresh, dedicated and visionary leadership, though he was not successful in his bids.

In 1970, he ran for state senator and was elected, serving the people of Jefferson County and the State of Alabama in this capacity from 1971 to 1975. The Alabama State Bar turned to Senator King time and again to sponsor and promote legislation important to the legal community. Senator King was instrumental in the passage of the *Alabama Rules of Civil Procedure* in 1973, and was one of several co-sponsors. Among other legislation he sponsored was requiring lobbyists to register and file statements of accounts with the Secretary of State; amending the Corrupt Practices Act to include those non-profit corporations which lobby for candidates or for or against ratification of constitutional



amendments; creating the State Board of Public Accountancy; requiring city and county boards of education to provide group health insurance for teachers; raising funds for capital outlay for the Hospital of the University of Alabama, Birmingham (UAB), and for nurses' scholarships at UAB; and naming the "Spain Tower" at UAB.

In 1982, he was again called into public service when Lieutenant Governor-Elect Bill Baxley asked him to chair a distinguished panel of 35 former Alabama senators to rewrite the rules of the Alabama state senate.

In addition to his public service, Senator King was engaged in the private practice of law, receiving his 50-year practicing pen from the Birmingham Bar Association and the Alabama State Bar in 2001. He especially enjoyed his litigation practice and was respected as an avid cross-examiner. He also cherished the years practicing law

and teaching and trying cases with his three sons, Jefferson County Circuit Judge Tom King, Jr., Jefferson County Probate Judge Alan King and attorney David R. King. During 1961 to 1994, he was an arbitrator of labor management disputes, where he authored over 600 opinions and was proud that his opinions often appeared in national publications.

Senator King served as chairman of deacons at two churches, Huffman Baptist Church and later at The First Baptist Church of Birmingham, the church where he was baptized as a youth. He was active in numerous civic organizations, where he often served as president or chair, including the Muscular Dystrophy Association, Northeast Branch YMCA, Birmingham Brotherhood Association and East End Optimist Club. He was a member of the East End Rotary Club.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his loving wife of almost 50 years, Norma Tibbetts King. ■