



Thos. Shepherd & Son Funeral Directors

J. Lawrence (Larry) Hauser

(March 20, 1923 - July 17, 2008)

J. Lawrence (Larry) Hauser, 85, of Etowah, passed away Thursday, July 17, 2008 at Pardee Memorial Hospital.

He was born on March 20, 1923 to Jeanette (Rascoff) and A. Maurice Hauser. His early years were spent in the New York City area, in Rockaway Beach and Woodhaven, Queens, N Y. After the death of his mother when he was 9 years old and his father two years later, he went to live with his maternal grandparents in the East New York section of Brooklyn, attending Thomas Jefferson High School. This experience made him a lifelong Republican as he felt Socialism was the worst form of government possible. During the rest of his long life he saw no reason to change that opinion.

He attended New York University for one year, transferred to Ohio State University, quitting before the second year was up, went to work at Bear Stearns and Company in Wall Street as a “runner” and was drafted into the Army Air Corps in February, 1943. Due to bad eyesight he was unfit for overseas duty, yet, by November, he was stationed near Colchester, Essex, where he met his first wife, Evelyn Binks.

His wartime service was uneventful as a clerk typist, never rising above the rank of Corporal. He transferred to the Finance Department, but remained attached to the same Air Force Service Group. After his discharge in November, 1945, he went back to Bear Stearns. He threw away a wonderful opportunity in order to immigrate to South Africa, of all places! While there, and between rounds of golf, Larry sold American made products as an independent commission agent.

When the opportunity to represent a South African firm in the UK was offered, they moved to Manchester, England. This did not work out and they moved to New York. Larry went to work for his uncle at the family soft drink factory known as “Beverages by Hammer”. It was a very successful small bottler of its own brands of carbonated beverages. Being “family”, Larry quickly rose to being Vice president and Chief Operating Officer.

During his years with the soft drink company he resided in the Village of Lake Success. He was elected to three two-year terms as a member of the board of trustees, similar to being a town council member here

“Beverages by Hammer” was sold to its leading competitor in 1971. Part of the sale price was a six-year contract for Larry, which left him with little to do, except make the coffee as the first one in the office each morning, reviewing the sales of the previous day and

reading the Wall Street Journal . As planned, Larry retired in 1977, just shy of his 55th birthday.

Larry was one of the eight founders of the Henderson County Gem & Mineral Society in 1978. Of the eight, only Margaret and Bill Johnson, of Hendersonville, NC are still living.

Larry's ambition was to develop a mineral museum in Hendersonville area. Helen had represented the mineral club on the Apple Festival board, becoming president of the festival in 1992. Afterwards, for ten years was venter chair of the Festival, as well as secretary. Over lunch one day with Dr. George Jones in 1994, the year he was president, he mentioned that he was going to ask the county commissioners for the use of the unoccupied county building at 400 North Main Street for the offices of Henderson County Genealogical and Historical Society, which is the repository and makes available old county records. Dr. Jones said he would also like to establish a county historical museum in the building. Helen mentioned that Larry had wanted to have a mineral museum.

George and Larry, who hardly knew one another at the time, discussed their museums. As they say: the rest is history! The Mineral and Lapidary Museum agreed to rent the basement of 400 Main Street. It is a popular stop for tourists and children. Last year, attendance reached a new high of 31,134. Due to a favorable lease and being staffed by volunteers, it has always been free of any admission charges.

The success of the museum has been a great accomplishment for Larry. He felt it made his whole life worthwhile. Larry had 29 .years of wonderful retirement in Henderson County. He looked at the museum as a way of repaying the community for providing that retirement. With the help of many others, he was able to see that dream come true. Not many others have been that fortunate.

The Mineral Museum is financially stable. Although a 501 (c) 3 non profit, it has never had to ask for donations from the local business community. However, in lieu of flowers, he requested that memorials be given to the Mineral Museum for its future expansion plans.

Larry was preceded in death by his first wife Evelyn Binks Hauser and granddaughter Rebekah Harlowe.

Survivors include a daughter Jeanette and husband Jay Jeziarski of Mesa, AZ; son Neil Hauser of Phoenix, AZ,a sister Thelma Stern of New York; stepchildren: Delayne Parham Harlowe and husband Jack of Chesapeake, VA, Steve Parham and wife Carol of Rutherfordton, NC, Ann Parham May and husband Larry of Brownsberg, IN, Teresa Parham Landenberger and husband Neal of Zebulon, NC , Greg Parham and wife Paula of Sultan, WA. Four grandchildren and two great grand children. Several cousins. Plus Many many friends.

A memorial service will be held at 1:30PM on Saturday, July 26, 2008 at the Thos. Shepherd's Church Street Chapel with Dr. George Jones officiating. The family will receive friends following the service at the Cedar's and may feel free to stop by the residence at any time.