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Dolphin Dunnaha Overton III
April 2, 1927 ~ March 25, 2013
Georgetown, SC
Dolphin Dunnaha Overton III, celebrated [Korean War](#) flying ace, businessman, devoted husband, beloved father and grandfather, was born in Andrews, S.C. He was the first son of the late Dolphin D. Overton, Jr., and the late Jennie Mae Haselden

Overton.

He was a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and distinguished himself in two tours of the Korean War. A full accounting of his military honors includes the Distinguished Service Cross, Distinguished Flying Cross with four oak leaf clusters, four Silver Star Medals, Korean Service Medal, Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation, United Nations Service Medal for Korea, Air Medal with eight oak leaf clusters, and the Korean War Service Medal, among others.

Overton is survived by his wife of 54 years, Sue Hagood Overton; his five children, Kathleen (Kitty) Overton, Dolphin Dunnaha Overton IV, Jane Overton Cobb, Charlotte (Charlie) Overton York and Carolyn Overton Morton; and ten grandchildren, Jo Elizabeth Overton Bailey, Lauren Overton Call, Dolphin Dunnaha Overton V, Robert Watson Cobb Jr., Johnson Hagood Cobb, Calvin Hayes Cobb, James Geary Morton, Charlotte Cordes York, Elizabeth Augusta York, and Jo Dunnaha Weiss; and his daughter and sons-in-law, Michele Overton, Jeffrey York, Robert Cobb, Geary Morton and Jon Weiss.

He was pre-deceased by his parents, his sister Monica Overton Devereux and brother Louis Marvin Overton.

Sign a guest book at www.mayerfuneralhome.com

Funeral services will be held on March 29, 2013, at 3:00 PM at Prince George Winyah Episcopal Church in Georgetown, S.C., followed by a reception at the South Carolina Maritime Museum, 729 Front Street, Georgetown, S.C.

In lieu of flowers, please send donations in his memory to Tidelands Community Hospice, 2591 N. Fraser St., Georgetown, SC 29440.

The Georgetown Chapel of Mayer Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

Published in The News & Observer from March 27 to March 31, 2013

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Guest Book

Be the first to share your memories or express your condolences in the Guest Book for Dolphin D. Overton III.

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Dolphin Dunnaha Overton III

Born: April 2, 1927

Died: March 25, 2013

Location: Georgetown, South Carolina

[Mayer Funeral Home](#)

222 St. James St.

P. O. Box 2838

Georgetown, SC 29442

mail@mayerfuneralhome.com

Tel. (843) 546-4184

Tribute & Message From The Family

Georgetown: Dolphin Dunnaha Overton III, April 2, 1927 – March 25th, 2013. Distinguished Korean War flying ace (South Carolina's first), businessman, devoted husband, beloved father, grandfather and great-grandfather-to-be died peacefully surrounded by his wife and children at Tideland Community Hospice in Georgetown, SC. Born in Andrews, SC, as a child Overton built balsa model planes and devoured popular books about World War I flying aces. He inherited a life-long passion for planes and flying from his father who was also a pilot. Overton bought his first airplane at age 14 for \$1. It was the first of many classic model planes and cars he would rescue from forgotten fields and hangars throughout his life. He soloed when he was 16, and got his pilot's license at 17. After graduating from Andrews High School, he attended The Citadel, leaving after a year to join the Navy. After a brief stint of naval service during World War II, he completed his education at the United States Military Academy at West Point, earning a bachelor's degree in engineering. He would become one of the early entrants to the United States Air Force. From 1951 to 1953, he distinguished himself in two tours of the Korean War. In his first tour, as part of the 8th Fighter-Bomber Squadron, 49th Fighter-Bomber Wing, Overton successfully led three dangerous bombing missions within the space of a month, which incurred no loss of life despite massive anti-aircraft enemy fire. It was during one of those missions that Overton led the squadron in the destruction of a convoy of 150 Communist Chinese trucks. "Lt. Overton's command of this strike in such adverse conditions and with such devastating results highlights his superb flying skill and extraordinary heroism in the face of fierce enemy opposition," his Distinguished Service Cross citation would later read. In his second tour, he joined the 16th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron, 51st Fighter-Interceptor Wing at Suwon, where in the space of four days in late January of 1953 he crossed the Yalu River into China's notorious MiG Alley and downed five Soviet aircraft, earning ace status in the shortest time of any pilot in the war. It would prove a bittersweet victory, as Overton's mission had taken him into Chinese airspace, which was officially prohibited -- leading to an abrupt end to his military career, and preventing him from receiving at the time the medals he had earned. At the age of 25, a storied military career behind him, he spent the next 60 years in private enterprise, starting in the tobacco industry in Mullins, SC, and eventually becoming an international businessman. At 32, he married the girl he often said was the prettiest he'd ever seen and began a family that now includes 5 children, 10 grandchildren, and a great grandchild on the way. Through it all, he never lost his affection for historic airplanes and cars. He built a personal aviation library with over 10,000 books. He founded Wings & Wheels in Santee, SC (later moved to Orlando, Fla.), at the time the largest private collection of antique cars and airplanes in the world. By 1999, Overton had acquired and restored over 90 aircraft, donating most to museums and institutions around

the United States and abroad including the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum. He was also active in the development of a state aviation museum for North Carolina. The Carolinas Aviation Museum, established in 1992, named its library for Overton. While his legendary war career had always been celebrated – he was twice honored by the Gathering Of Eagles Foundation, in 1999 and again in 2008 – he was honored in 2009 to be awarded the medals he had earned during his Korean War service. While helping a fellow West Point graduate, retired Air Force Lt. Gen. Charles G. Cleveland, gain the credit he deserved for his own fighter ace status, Cleveland recognized that Overton had been denied his own honors and tirelessly worked to piece together the evidence and serve as a witness before the Air Force Board for Military Corrections. As a result, in a 2009 ceremony at the Air Force Association Air & Space Conference in Washington, D.C., 57 years after the fact, Overton received the Distinguished Service Cross from then Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz. A full accounting of his military honors would include the Distinguished Service Cross, Distinguished Flying Cross with four oak leaf clusters, four Silver Star Medals, Korean Service Medal, Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation, United Nations Service Medal for Korea, Air Medal with eight oak leaf clusters, and the Korean War Service Medal, among others. Dolph, as he was known to most, was a wonderful storyteller. Perennial favorites included tales of being a plebe at West Point, trips to New York City as an upperclassman, and a hilarious series of exploits in his first few days in the 31st Fighter Group that almost ended his career as an aviator before it started. He loved all things planes and cars, frequenting car and air shows, fly-ins, and military reunions. He particularly enjoyed time spent with the aviation ground crew, aero-engineers, and munitions experts – to whom he had entrusted his life every time he climbed aboard for a mission. Overton is survived by his wife of 54 years, Sue Hagood Overton, his five children, Kathleen Hagood "Kitty" Overton, Dolphin Dunnaha Overton IV, Jane Overton Cobb, Charlotte "Charlie" Overton York and Carolyn Overton Morton; and ten grandchildren, Jo Elizabeth Overton Bailey, Lauren Overton Call, Dolphin Dunnaha Overton V, Robert Watson Cobb Jr., Johnson Hagood Cobb, Calvin Hayes Cobb, James Geary Morton, Charlotte Cordes York, Elizabeth Augusta York, and Io Dunnaha Weiss, and his daughter- and sons-in-law, Michele Overton, Jeffrey York, Robert Cobb, Geary Morton and Jon Weiss. He was predeceased by his parents, sister Monica Overton Devereaux and brother Louis Marvin Overton. Sign a guest book at www.mayerfuneralhome.com (<http://www.mayerfuneralhome.com>) Funeral services will be held on Friday, March 29, 2013 at 3pm, at Prince George Winyah Episcopal Church in Georgetown, SC., followed by a reception at the South Carolina Maritime Museum, 729 Front Street, Georgetown, S.C. In lieu of flowers, please send donations in his memory to Tideland Community Hospice, 2591 N. Fraser St., Georgetown, SC 29440. Arrangements are by the Georgetown Chapel of Mayer Funeral Home.