



Dixie Elliott Royal Jr.

September 23, 1932 - July 28, 2023

Dixie Elliott Royal, Jr. of Lakeview Terrace in Altoona, Florida was born in Sorrento, Florida to Ettie L. and Dixie Royal Sr. He was a 4th generation Floridian. His father's family settled in the Cassia area in the 1840s where they raised citrus, watermelons and cattle.

Along with his brother David, Dixie attended school in Sorrento and Mt. Dora before moving to Umatilla in 1942. Sorrento was a small school with only Dixie and one other first grader that year, so they were moved up to the second grade, making him the youngest member of his class throughout school. Dixie graduated from Umatilla High School in 1949, where he was active in sports, student government and a founding member of the Key Club. Dixie then enrolled at the University of Florida where he excelled academically and was a member of the U.F. livestock judging team, making lifelong friends as they traveled across the U.S. competing nationally. He majored in Animal Science and graduated in 1953. Dixie continued his affiliation with his alma mater by working closely with U.F. citrus researchers and county agents throughout his career.

After serving an active-duty commission in the United States Air Force, Dixie returned to Umatilla to raise citrus and watermelons with his father. In 1956, he married Alice Brooks. They recently celebrated their 67th anniversary in June. He was a production manager for Golden Gem Growers for 30 years

while also continuing to serve the Air Force Reserves for 26 years. Dixie retired from the Air Force as a Lieutenant Colonel. He often said that one of his most satisfying assignments was helping prospective recruits as the Liaison Officer for the Air Force Academy.

He was an active member and past president of Lake County Farm Bureau, as well as serving on advisory boards for Florida and American Farm Bureau. He was a member of the Citrus Production Managers Association and the Hillbillies. Like his father, Dixie was a longstanding member of the Umatilla Masonic Lodge and a Shriner. A member of the First Baptist Church of Umatilla since the mid-1940s, Dixie taught Sunday School classes, including classes at the Elks Children's Hospital. He served as a trustee, greeter, and a member of the Florida Baptist Mission Board.

Dixie took great pride in raising high quality fresh fruit and beef cattle. He and Alice managed their own groves and family partnership groves. Dixie enjoyed nature photography, woodworking, BBQing, and spending time with his family. Dixie is survived by his wife Alice; daughter Debbie Bradford (Kelley), sons Richard (Kim), David (Tanya); grandchildren Rebecca Christy (Rob), Elliott Royal (Morgan), Kalan Royal, Ethan Royal, Elizabeth Aldridge (Austin), Emmie Royal, Kramer Royal; three great grandchildren Ella Aldridge, Brighton Christy, Michael Ann Aldridge; nephews Stan Royal (Amy), Dwight Royal (Jennifer) and one first cousin Clifford Royal (Nancy).

The family is grateful for the care provided by Cornerstone Hospice and the medical staff at Lakeview Terrace.

A Celebration of Life will be held at First Baptist Church of Umatilla on Thursday, August 3rd at 11:00 AM.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to Cornerstone

Hospice, First Baptist Church Umatilla, or Shriners Hospitals for Children.

Arrangements entrusted to Beyers Funeral Home of Leesburg, Florida.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

AUG 3. 11:00 AM (ET)

First Baptist Church of Umatilla
550 Hatfield Drive
Umatilla, FL 32784

Tribute Wall



“ I worked at the Walgreens where he printed his pictures. Everyone in the photo lab loved when he came in. He loved to share the picture he'd taken and stories about the older ones hed make copies of. He was always happy and we we're always happy to see him.

April Sperry - December 19, 2023 at 02:56 PM

“ If there was ever a pure soul on this Earth, it was Dixie. First a friend to my father, Dixie became my citrus mentor, my friend and “brother,” my sharer in good laughs, and arms of comfort when needed most.

My heart and prayers reach out to Dixie's dear Alice and his many family members so treasured by him.

Phyllis Bichard Hayes

Phyllis Hayes - August 31, 2023 at 10:57 AM



“ Dixie Royal is by far one of the most kind hearted, pure, honest souls I’ve been grateful to know in my life. He was someone I would follow to the ends of the earth. I cannot begin to describe the impact he had on me and my life. I’ve encountered many a person, but he is one of the few I’ve held near and dear to my heart. I feel very deep sorrow that he has passed. For I was just speaking last week that I needed to do our “catching up call.” I cannot speak enough about the love and respect I felt for him and his amazingly kind wife Alice. My grandparents passed away years ago, but I felt they showed me similar love I had experienced. It made me feel warmth, and comfort, and trust that you don’t feel often. Dixie and his wife are pure goodness. I’m unbelievably sad we lost him, but I know he is in a peaceful place. I’m sending all my love to Alice and their family.

Sarah Attwood - August 03, 2023 at 08:21 PM

TR

“ I was honored to have been a friend and neighbor to Dixie Royal. A great man and a citrus industry icon. My condolences to Alice, Richard and family. Tom Rose

Tom Rose - August 03, 2023 at 04:35 PM

DB

“ Although I never met him I felt like I knew him through my daughter Sarah Boggus Attwood. She apparently met him while working with Dr. Fountain. She adored him and had a wonderful friendship with him. We unfortunately learned of his passing this afternoon and realized the service was held this morning. Sarah was very disappointed that she missed it. May he RIP.

Deborah Boggus - August 03, 2023 at 02:44 PM

DU

“ Remembering a good deed and the person who did it. Years ago during a drought my citrus trees needed water. I was having trouble hooking up my irrigation pipes. Dixie sent a helper from his Eustis barn with parts and know how to get me going. I always remember this acts of kindness.
Don McCall

DonMcCall, umatillaFL - August 02, 2023 at 06:22 PM

TD

“ Mr. Dixie. Royal is a man who walked his faith, he pursued my dad in knowing Christ, and did it in such a gentle and consistent way over the years. So thankful for him and his family.



Tommy Durrance - August 02, 2023 at 09:54 AM

TD

Mr. Dixie Royal was a man who walked his faith, he pursued my dad to know Christ & was a consistent friend over a lifetime. A man who made a difference in peoples lives.

Tommy Durrance - August 02, 2023 at 09:56 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Dixie Elliott Royal Jr..

August 02, 2023 at 08:50 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Dixie Elliott Royal Jr..*



August 02, 2023 at 08:50 AM



“ *The Royal family is like a second family to me. I will always remember those weekends in Silver Beach Heights skiing with Debbie, Richard and David and Dixie was right there driving the boat. He will be remembered forever.*



Robert - August 01, 2023 at 10:51 AM



“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



Tanya B. Royal - August 01, 2023 at 10:05 AM

BM

“ I felt privileged to know and associate with this good man. I think the highest compliment that you can pay a man is to state that he was a true gentleman.

Dixie was a true gentleman in every sense of the word. May God Bless His Soul. Goodby for now, from his friend, Bill Milton

Bill Milton - July 31, 2023 at 08:08 PM

RW

“ Dixie was a true Southern Gentlemen and an Icon in the Citrus Industry. He will be sorely missed.

Deepest Sympathy,

*Rob Watson
Winter Garden, FL*

Robert Watson - July 31, 2023 at 07:20 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Dixie Elliott Royal Jr..



July 31, 2023 at 11:30 AM

JA

“ Sending my love and condolences to the family. Dixie truly changed anyone's life he has ever encountered. He felt like a grandfather to me. We were exchanging letters a couple months ago and he had sent me some photos of him in the service. I am forever thankful for the light he has shined in my life since I was just 9 years old.

Jade Apolo - July 30, 2023 at 08:13 PM



“ *Rose Remembrance was purchased for the family of Dixie Elliott Royal Jr..*



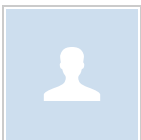
July 30, 2023 at 07:00 PM



“ *Dixie will truly be missed and remembered as a friend to many and contributing to our community in numerous ways. He was a faithful servant at First Baptist Church Umatilla and always had a smile on his face as he greeted people coming to worship. Homer was often ask if he was related to Dixie and although not related there were many discussions about a past connection with our sur names. It has been an honor to know Dixie and share a friendship for many years.*

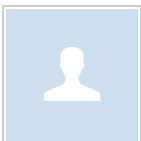
*With deepest sympathy,
Homer and Marilyn Royals*

Homer and Marilyn Royals - July 30, 2023 at 04:52 PM



“ *A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Dixie Elliott Royal Jr..*

July 30, 2023 at 04:51 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Dixie Elliott Royal Jr..*



July 30, 2023 at 04:51 PM



“ *Sweet Tranquility Basket was purchased for the family of Dixie Elliott Royal Jr..*



July 30, 2023 at 09:25 AM