

FORMER CITY COUNCIL MEMBER FRANK BRITNELL DIES

by Mary Jo Denton

Mr. Frank Britnell

COOKEVILLE — A former Cookeville city council member who was instrumental in creating the Cookeville Putnam Clean Commission has died.

Frank Britnell, 89, who served on the council in the 1980's, died January 26, 2013, at Heritage Pointe Senior Living Center, where he had lived since 2007.



He had enjoyed a long career in engineering, working for Redstone Arsenal, for TVA, and for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, where he rose to the position of chief of the Hydro Power Section in the Nashville district in 1967, supervising the work of seven hydro-electric power generating dams on the Cumberland River and its tributaries, and later to the chief of the Hydro Power branch for all US Army Corps of Engineers Multipurpose Hydroelectric Power projects in the United States.

After retiring from a 37-year career, he and his wife, Jo Britnell, moved back to Cookeville, where they had lived for a time in the 1950's.

He took his civic duties very seriously and served in many organizations devoted to community projects.

In 1985, he was elected to the Cookeville city council, a position for which he campaigned in his quiet, dignified way, but stopped short of handing out election cards at the polls on election day, a practice that many candidates believe is important.

In a 1985 interview, Britnell said that instead of handing out cards on election day he spent the time picking up litter on Jefferson Avenue and Washington Avenue, city beautification being one of his goals.

At the time, he told this newspaper that he considered campaigning on the doorstep of the polling places "an irritant."

He was known as a no-nonsense public servant who aimed always at gathering the facts, making a decision, and sticking to the decision.

In addition to helping create the Clean Commission here, he also helped create the Cookeville chapter of the National Association of Retired Federal Employees, served as a Cub Scout pack master, as an assistant Scout master and Scout master, as president of the Putnam High School Band Boosters, as chairman of the local American Red Cross, and president of Toastmasters.

For the past 12 years, he had battled Alzheimers and, true to his dedication to public service, he chose to donate his body to science in the hope that it could help in the search for a cure for that disease.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, Feb. 2, at 11 a.m. at First United Methodist Church in Cookeville.

Hooper Huddleston Horner Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

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*Read more about the History of Putnam Co., TN at: <http://www.ajlambert.com>