

The following was taken from a IAMPETH Newsletter of 1997 and was reprinted from the Spring 1996 Newsletter as a Memoriam.

Joe Vitolo

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Member Spotlight Travis Jones (1907-1997)

A gentleman in every sense of the word, Travis Jones, of Birmingham, Alabama, is one of IAMPETH's most loved members. Born in 1907 his love of lettering began at an early age; an age when penmanship was thriving and its students worked tirelessly toward perfection of their skills.

Travis held several jobs before enlisting in the U.S. Navy during World War II. While serving in the Pacific, he supplemented his income by lettering towels and T-shirts for his shipmates. This was the beginning of his commercial lettering endeavors.

After the war, he returned to Birmingham and wedded Sallie Mae, to whom he has been married 53 years. He began working for the L and N Railroad in several capacities, and his love of lettering continued to grow. He started teaching calligraphy and lettering in the evenings and on weekends to friends and neighbors who expressed interest in the art. He soon found himself in demand to prepare resolutions for local banks and other institutions in the Birmingham area. After his retirement from the railroad in 1972, Travis went full time with his commercial work and teaching.

For over 50 years, Travis has taught lettering courses at local schools, and almost everyone involved in the field has either studied with him or one of his students. As a result of his students desiring further educational opportunities, Travis Jones founded the local guild, Les Enlumineurs, in the early 1980's. Through the encouragement of Roy Manley, a long time member of IAMPETH, Travis joined our association in the late 1960's. Since then, he has presented many workshops and shared his wisdom and insights with the members, and has served as president of the association. He was instrumental in encouraging our current members from the Birmingham area to join the association, and in 1993, the Convention held in Birmingham was, appropriately, dedicated to him.

Travis Jones is loved by all, and is one of the kindest and patient men you will ever meet. Other than his wife, Sallie Mae, lettering has been his passion in life, and continues to be so, though now he rarely picks up his pen.