

John T. Hanna

January 6, 2019



HANNA, John T., 95, passed away December 11, 2018. He was preceded in death by his loving wife, Lucille H. Hanna; his brother, Robert G.; and sister-in-law, Helen J. Hanna. He is survived by his nieces, Sherle Tallent, Sue Gerdelman (John), Amy Hanna and their families; and his sister-in-law, Betty Harper and her husband, Rogers; and his nephews, Rodgers, Harry Lee and Michael and their families. A 1945 graduate of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University with a degree in Electrical Engineering, John was a member of the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets, T Company. He proudly served in the United States Navy during World War II. John started his career as a public servant in 1948 working for the City of Richmond. For the next 20 years, he progressed through the positions of Traffic Engineer (Richmond's first), Assistant Director of Public Safety and Assistant City Manager. In 1968, John was appointed Director of the newly created Virginia Highway Safety Division, where he served for 21 years. He later served as an adjunct professor, then assistant professor at Virginia Commonwealth University. Known as the "Father of Transportation Safety," John's legacy is honored by the annual award of Drive Safe Hampton Roads "John T. Hanna Awards." He is also remembered at The Virginia Museum of Transportation, located in Roanoke, with The Hanna Transportation Safety Room. A 68-year Mason, John was a member of Westhampton Lodge #302. He was an Acca Shrine member for 65 years, serving as Potentate in 1982. Passionate about Virginia's history, he served on the Board of Directors of the Virginia Thanksgiving Festival for more than 40 years. Never without his necktie, a hearty appetite and a good joke, John is lovingly remembered by his family as a kind, caring and thoughtful Southern gentleman. A memorial service will be held on Friday, January 11, at Westminster Canterbury Richmond, at 1 p.m. Interment is private. Memorial contributions may be made to The Virginia Tech Foundation Inc., in memory of John Hanna, 902 Prices Fork Road, Blacksburg, Va. 24061 or Westminster Canterbury Foundation, 1600 Westbrook Avenue, Richmond, Va. 23227. The Central Chapel of Bennett Funeral Home is handling arrangements.