



George H. Wittenberg III

 Nov 26th, 1939 - Dec 1st, 2025

 Birth Date: Nov 26, 1939

 Death Date: Dec 1, 2025

 Funeral Date: Dec 16, 2025 at 4:00 pm

 Location: 1509 S. Louisiana Street, Little Rock AR 72201

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Biography:

George H. Wittenberg III, a third generation Little Rock architect who built skyscrapers, university buildings, schools and residential homes before becoming known for his watercolor paintings, died on the first of December. He was 86.

A graduate of Little Rock Central High and Washington University, he earned his Masters of Architecture at Harvard University. It was at Harvard that he received his first and only D, something his children and grandchildren never let him forget. While in Boston, he married a Little Rock local, Beverly Phillips, and they had their first daughter, Jessica. He went to work for the Boston Redevelopment Authority, focusing largely on the redevelopment of downtown Boston. Eventually, he returned to Little Rock, added a second daughter, Toby, and joined his family's architecture firm, Wittenberg, Delony & Davidson, where he worked alongside his beloved uncle, Gordon Wittenberg. Over the next 20 years he helped design notable projects such as the Stephens Building, UALR Law School and Library, and UAMS Biomedical Research Center.

A visionary in urban design, George led the Urban Studies and Design program at UALR. He and his students completed numerous community planning projects, such as the Murray Lock and Dam, Riverfront Park, the downtown Farmers Market, and a master plan for the cities of Maumelle and Eureka Springs. But nothing excited him more than an imaginative plan for revitalizing the area south of I-630 and Main, which he and his partners named SOMA (South of Main) after SOHO in New York. His daughters often pointed out that the acronym wasn't totally accurate but the name SOMA, and the vision, stuck. He practiced what he preached and made SOMA his home for the past 25 years, renovating the Abels Garage, a block off Main Street. SOMA is now a bustling area of mixed income housing, galleries, restaurants, stores and walking space for pedestrians along art filled streets.

George was a lifelong creator and encouraged his children to follow suit. Always telling them to draw "outside the lines" and together designing elaborate homemade gingerbread houses. His jack o'lanterns were artistic masterpieces! But he was best known for his postcard art series which grew out of two of his favorite activities--drawing and traveling. He never traveled without a sketchpad in hand, a tradition continued by his grandsons. Each image represented a personal moment

of experiencing a unique space like the view from the Mexico hotel room, Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye, or the forms of the Chateau Chenoneaux crossing the river. Mailed from the location to include a matching postmark, the postcards were sent to his daughters, sometimes as many as 8 or 10 in a day.

His art is displayed in numerous locations including a permanent piece at the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts. He was most excited when he won "Best of Show" - on his first try he would like to say! - as part of the Mid-Southern Watercolorists, an organization he remained involved in until his hands no longer let him draw.

Passionate about community service, he was involved with Planned Parenthood of Arkansas, serving as President of the Board and strongly encouraging both of his children to volunteer at the local branch. He enjoyed splitting his time between downtown Little Rock and "the farm" in Brixey, MO where he enjoyed painting, kayaking and gardening with his husband, Peter Callaway. He would return to LR and make the rounds delivering fresh eggs, organic greens and wildflowers to family and friends.

A lover of art and design, he constantly pointed out the beauty of design, from his appreciation of the first Apple Mac (displayed in his home as a piece of art) to his collection of pop up books. If he wasn't alone in his art studio, you could find him listening to music from Pavarotti to Eric Clapton (he would proudly tell you he was considered his doppelganger), laughing at jokes on Saturday Night Live and even SouthPark, playing tennis on Sunday nights with family, biking thru cities in the US and Europe, discussing current events and local initiatives, planning future travel adventures with Peter, quizzing his daughters on geography, and driving (too fast) on family road trips all over the country.

George's memories live on in his family; husband Peter Callaway; daughters Jessica and Toby, their mother, Beverly; grandsons Jacob, Tatum, Oliver and Max; brother and sister-in-law, Tom and Lillian, and their children Shelby, Jenny and Justin. In memory of George, we encourage you to take a moment today to sip a glass of wine in front of a crackling fire and enjoy some good music and lively conversation.

If you'd like to donate in his honor, he supported the mission of the Quapaw Quarter United Methodist Church in feeding the hungry. Please join us for a toast and reception in his memory on Tuesday, December 16th from 4 – 6pm at 1509 S. Louisiana St.

Condolences(09)

William Cohen

Dec 7th, 2025 2:25 am #9