



Legacy of the Wall Family

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The Wall family was a vital part of creating and supporting businesses in Myrtle Beach and Conway, South Carolina. Both E. Craig Wall Senior and Junior were very successful in business, serving the local community and contributing to parts of higher education that would have a profound impact on many students.

Edwin Craig Wall Senior was born February 14, 1911, in Lilesville, North Carolina. Throughout his life, he founded multiple businesses surrounding what is now Coastal Carolina University. He had an incredibly charismatic, outgoing, and motivated personality. Each morning, he would visit his companies to connect with the employees and give directions about what they were to do that day. The biggest company he created was Canal Wood Products Company, later known as Canal Industries, LLC.

The land in the south, up until the 1930s, was primarily agricultural. However, North and South Carolina began to industrialize in the 1940s, creating a need for labor in plants and textile mills which pushed people to leave their farms. Craig Wall Senior took this as an opportunity to buy land from the individuals who were leaving to go work in the factories. He drove around South Carolina in search of land, most of which had multitudes of pine trees. Craig Wall Senior saw these pine trees as a provider and created Canal Wood Company, which is now a distributor of lumber with locations all over the southeast.

Craig Wall Senior had four children, three daughters named May Ervin Wall, Harriet Wall Martin, Nell Wall Otto, and a son named Edwin Craig Wall Junior. E. Craig Wall Junior was born in Conway, SC on August 21, 1937. He grew up attending Conway High School and then proceeded to Davidson College to obtain a bachelor's degree in economics. In a pursuit to continue his education, Craig Wall Junior earned his Master's in business administration from Harvard Business School in 1962. After finishing his schooling, he followed his father's footsteps at Canal but created his own brand while doing so. He was the opposite of his father, reserved and preferred to avoid the spotlight. Although he carried these traits, he had an incredibly large network from working at Canal.

After Craig Wall Senior passed away in 1985, Craig Wall Junior became the chief executive officer of Canal and began to expand their locations. He took what his father had started and shaped it into a company with locations all over the southeast, distributing to customers worldwide. Craig Wall Junior was devoted to leading the company, but his time was divided amongst several obligations. He served on numerous corporate boards including Blue Cross/Blue Shield of South Carolina, NationsBank Corporation, SCANA Corporation, and Sonoco Products Company. Additionally, he was involved in various non-profit organizations as a board member or trustee such as The Duke Endowment, Brookgreen Gardens, and the Horry County Board of Higher Education. These are just a few of the dozens of boards and companies he was a part of. He was heavily invested in Davidson College, where he graduated with his bachelor's degree. There he served as Chairman on the Board of Trustees for many years. He gave back to all the learning facilities he attended.

Craig Wall Senior was one of the founders of Coastal Carolina University, so naturally, Craig Wall Junior became heavily involved with CCU as well. When Craig Wall Junior's father passed, Coastal named the E. Craig Wall School of Business Administration Building after him. Craig Wall Junior saw potential in the students at Coastal and believed they deserved something that was not readily available to them. His vision was to create a professional and leadership development program that would help students excel in their future careers. This program is called the Wall Fellows.

"Our role is to prepare students not for their first job, but for their last job," said Craig Wall Junior.



As chief executive officer of Canal Industries Inc. from 1997-2005, Harold Stowe commented on Craig Wall Junior's insights for developing the Wall Fellows Program in the E. Craig Wall School of Business Administration.

"What Craig [Junior] believed is that there were plenty of kids at Coastal who had the intelligence and the talent to compete with any college student anywhere in America, Ivy League, you know anywhere, it's just that they didn't have the same exposure and polishing when they were growing up, and the Wall Fellows Program was supposed to provide that element, that group of tools in their toolkit."

Craig Wall Junior met with Clay Brittain, a highly respected member of the community. Both men offered generous donations in order to initiate the Wall Fellows Program at Coastal Carolina University in 1995. When searching for the first director, they came across a corporate lawyer from Atlanta, Georgia named Bill Woodson. He had recently stopped his practice and returned home to Conway. Woodson knew how others should present themselves to excel in business from his prior experience, so Craig Wall Junior believed he would be vital to creating and developing the Wall Fellows Program. As the program started, students learned business etiquette, the importance of writing thank you letters, how to dress in business attire, the impact of networking, public speaking, working on real-world business consulting projects, team-building projects etc., in order to help them succeed in their future careers.

Andy Crane, a longtime partner of the Wall family, commented on Craig Wall Senior's and Junior's participation in making South Carolina a better place for all.

"There are a lot of do-gooders. They will get on the board of something, you know they'll come to the meetings, but they don't do anything. They really just want to get their name in front of the public, or, you know, they really just want to get out there—the do-gooders makeup probably 60% of the boards of the non-profits in this country. The real people are the volunteers; I would tell you that in the case of little Craig, he was a true volunteer. When he got involved, he got involved. He made a significant difference in his participation as a volunteer for the better good of South Carolina."

In March of 1997, Craig Wall Junior was in the process of personally interviewing over 75 candidates for the president position at Davidson College, driving back and forth to Charlotte at least three times a week when he tragically died of a heart attack at the age of 59.

Craig Wall Junior is remembered not only for his successful career, but also for his considerate and caring personality. He cared deeply for each of his employees and how they were doing personally. He was a relationship-oriented guy who kept track of every person he met and valued all his connections. Craig Wall Junior was known for sending over 20 hand-written thank you cards a day and always carrying a notepad in his pocket. Whenever a person needed something done by a particular time, he would write it down to ensure it was accomplished.

Craig Wall Junior was married to Judith Atkins Wall, who passed away in her home on May 28, 2020. Together they had three children named Edwin Craig Wall III, Benjamin Rutledge Wall II, and Judith Wall Guest. E. Craig Wall III worked at Canal Industries early in his career, but now runs a rural real estate company in Columbia, South Carolina. E. Craig Wall III followed his father's footsteps by continuing the family's involvement at Coastal Carolina University where he currently serves on the Coastal Educational Foundation board of directors and Wall Fellows board. Benjamin lives in Spartanburg, South Carolina, where he is the managing partner of WJ Partners, an investment partnership that he co-founded. Benjamin continues to give back to his community. He serves on the board of Davidson College, Woodberry Forest School, and previously served as the chairman of Converse College, among many other endeavors. Judith started her career working for an investment bank in New York and now settled down and had a family. Based on the remarkable foundation Craig Wall Senior and Junior built, the Wall Family continues to leave legacies in their career leadership, philanthropic efforts and education.

At Co/Investor Club, our team is primarily comprised of Coastal Carolina students, Wall Fellows and alumni. Our founder, Mike Pruitt, is also an alumnus of CCU where he played on the 80's word series baseball team and had the honor of meeting Craig Wall Senior. Inspired by all the Wall Family has accomplished, he too gives back to CCU and his community in various ways. One of which is by providing mentorship, internship, and job opportunities to grow the careers of young graduates. Thank you to our Premium Members for paying the annual fee of \$100 a year to continue making our internships possible.

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About Clay Brittain Jr. - Coastal Carolina University

Judith Wall Obituary (2020) - N. Litchfield, SC - Charlotte Observer

Harold Stowe, previously a chief executive officer of Canal Industries Inc.

Andy Crane, previously a partner with the Wall family

Benjamin Wall II, son of Craig Wall Junior and grandson of Craig Wall Senior