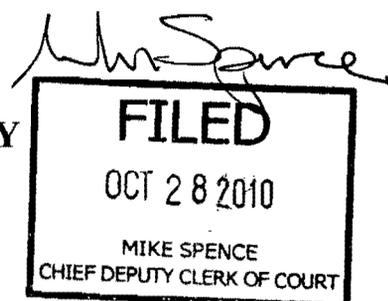


**MEMORIAL FOR
JAMES CRESWELL GARDNER
SHREVEPORT BAR ASSOCIATION
MEMORIAL AND RECOGNITION CEREMONY
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT
OCTOBER 28, 2010**



Jim Gardner's career was different from that of most lawyers who have been recognized at this memorial ceremony. He did not go to law school. He never worked for a law firm. He did not practice law. The only lawsuit he ever handled was to collect a debt owed to SWEPCO Credit Union. As he said in his memoirs: "It went off well." That's what one would have expected of anything Jim Gardner undertook.

He passed the Louisiana Bar Exam at age 39, after studying at night for four years at Centenary College. He did this while raising a family and holding down a full time job as a SWEPCO executive. He wrote that taking the bar exam was stressful, because he was competing with people who were probably better prepared than he was. However, he said he had the advantage of "helpful life experiences." What he didn't say was that those helpful life experiences included active duty in the military in World War II, an observer at the Nuremberg Trials, service in the Louisiana legislature and his election, at age 30, as Shreveport's youngest Mayor.

Although not a practicing lawyer, he was a law maker. While serving in the legislature, he developed a life long interest in two subjects: highway construction and local government planning. Among his many accomplishments, he was instrumental in passing the law that established the Louisiana Expressway Authority, whose goal was to build a north south expressway. Forty-five years after that law was passed, the final section of I-49 was completed to Shreveport, and the Louisiana Highway Department and the Shreveport Chamber of Commerce recognized Jim Gardner's work toward building that highway.

Today the Metropolitan Planning Commission has authority for planning not only in Shreveport, but for an area five miles beyond the city limits. This now seems a sensible thing to do, but in 1954 it was a novel, and somewhat controversial, concept. Jim Gardner wrote and passed through the Legislature the law known as the Metropolitan Planning Act. It is still the basic planning and zoning law for Shreveport, and has been adopted with little change by a number of other Louisiana cities.

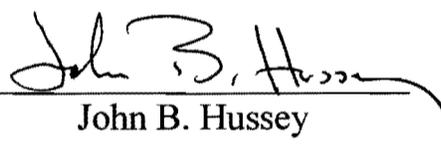
Jim Gardner was a student of history, especially Shreveport history. In 2003 he gave a speech to the Shreveport Bar Association about the economic history of our city. It is a remarkable speech, worth revisiting today. He told how the history of Shreveport had been shaped by our economy. But he did more than just discuss the past. He used the lessons of our history to focus on our future. He said that we needed an economic game plan, one that would include building I-49 to the north of the city. By then he was nearly eighty years old, but he was still talking about the future, about how planning and highway construction would help our city grow.

He was employed by SWEPCO from 1959 until his retirement in 1987, having served as Louisiana Division Manager, Vice President and a member of the Board of Directors. He was known as the architect of the 1978 change in Shreveport's form of government. He was elected to the City Council and served as the Council's first Chairman.

He received numerous civic awards, including the Shreveport Bar Association Liberty Bell Award, Mr. Shreveport, Business Leader of the Year, Paul M. Brown Humanitarian Award, Young Man of the Year, and the NCCJ Humanitarian Award. He was chairman or president of the Shreveport Chamber of Commerce, the Rotary Club of Shreveport, the YMCA, the Community Foundation, LSU-S citizen's advisory committee, the Committee of 100, and Shreveport Junior Chamber of Commerce.

He was predeceased by his first wife, Mary Ella Buchanan Gardner. He is survived by his wife, Mary Ann Welsh Gardner, a daughter, Ellen Gardner Caverlee and her husband Samuel (a member of the Shreveport Bar) and a son, James Creswell Gardner, Jr. and his wife Sharon. He is also survived by Mary Ann's daughters, Martha Elizabeth Hannigan, Margaret Welsh Clausen and Amye Wren Wilson. His survivors include grandchildren John Gardner Caverlee, Dr. James Buchanan Caverlee, James Creswell Gardner III, Dr. Megan Elizabeth Gardner, Michael Wait Gardner, Ryan Hannigan, Austin Hannigan, Gretchen Wren King, Craig Clausen, and Olivia Ann Wilson. He is also survived by nine great grandchildren.

James Creswell Gardner was born in Shreveport on June 17, 1924, and died here on August 27, 2010. The title of his two volume memoirs was *Jim Gardner and Shreveport*. That was a perfect title because he loved Shreveport and spent his lifetime making our city a better place. We are all beneficiaries of his remarkable life and career.


John B. Hussey