

Anderson recalled as political mentor and avid educator

The former longtime Roanoke County treasurer and GOP activist died Tuesday.

By Tiffany Stevens

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Once a year, former 6th Congressional District Republican committee chairman Fred Anderson would fill Thrasher Memorial United Methodist with the sound of bagpipes.

The Roanoke County resident, who died Tuesday morning at age 73 after complications from a heart transplant, loved sharing his Scottish heritage. Creating an annual “Kirkin’ o’ the Tartan” service, where attendants could bring their family tartans to be blessed, was his way of bringing the Scottish-American tradition to Vinton, Thrasher Memorial Pastor B. Failes said.

“It was loud, because if you get seven or eight bagpipes in the chapel, it’s overwhelming,” Failes said.

Anderson was a fixture both at Thrasher Memorial and in regional Republican circles. In addition to serving as Roanoke County treasurer from 1972 until the early 2000s, he served on the Republican State Central Committee and assisted with election campaigns for U.S. Rep. Bob Goodlatte, R-Roanoke County, former assistant Mildred Scott said.

“He was a great person in the Republican Party,” Scott said. “I can’t say enough good things about him.”

Before becoming trea-

surer at 28, Anderson taught government and history at Cave Spring High School. Anderson told The Roanoke World-News in 1971 that he believed “young people, through the 18-year-old vote, can be a true force for change.”

Scott said Anderson often pushed young residents to try their hands at local politics, directing them to committees and causes where he thought their talents could be used. His work in local Republican circles also sparked Scott’s work in the party, leading her to later hold office in the Roanoke Valley Republican Women’s Club, she said.

“He had a way of kind of pushing you into it, and you didn’t really know it and you didn’t mind it,” Scott said.

In his later years, Anderson continued to men-

tor younger members of the party. While he was campaigning for office in 2015, Sen. Dave Suetterlein, R-Roanoke County, said Anderson provided advice about how to reach county residents.

U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith, R-Salem, also said that Anderson was always willing to introduce party members to Roanoke County circles that might help them build their campaign.

“I don’t think Fred ever stopped being a teacher,” Griffith said. “And that’s what he would do for candidates, was teach them.”

Visitation for Anderson will be held Friday at the Oakey’s Vinton chapel from 2 to 4 p.m. and from 6 to 8 p.m. A funeral service will be held at Thrasher Memorial at 2 p.m. Saturday.



FRED
ANDERSON
1943-2016