



## Mr. Ira W. Tatum

November 26, 1924 - September 6, 2014

Ira Willard Tatum, 89, passed away on September 6th, 2014. He is preceded in death by his wife of 64 years, Vivian Lee Mize Tatum; parents, Stella Millsapps Tatum and Roscoe Ira Tatum; sisters Edna Roebuck, Laverne Hansard and Mildred Coleman. He is survived by his son Doyle Ira Tatum and his sisters Verdelle Tatum Herring and Jean Tatum McBride as well as 11 Tatum nieces and nephews. Ira was born on November 26th 1924 in Dawson County where he grew up as a farmer, joined the Navy at age 18 and has since lived in Atlanta and Alpharetta with his family. Ira was a very talented, creative loving father and husband who was very religious and dearly loved by his family and friends. He will be greatly missed. Funeral services will be held Tuesday, September 9, 11:00 AM at Northside Chapel Funeral Directors. Interment will follow at Union Hill Baptist Church. The family will receive friends Monday evening, 6:00 – 9:00 PM at the funeral home.

Daddy was born in late November of 1924. He was born to Stella and Roscoe Tatum, right in the middle of his 5 sisters. Edna, Verdelle and Laverne were his elder sisters, while Mildred and Jean were born later. They started out in Dawson County but had moved to Forsyth County by the time the last two sisters were born. They were cotton farmers, growing plenty of food crops to keep the big family fed. Daddy's father, Roscoe, would eventually start raising chickens, too. Jean remembers that Daddy would busy himself in the barn building things. Wheelbarrows were his specialty, but he also built soap-box type wagons for racing down pasture hills and two-seater outhouses (needed

often as they moved around).

At the age of 18, Oct the 14th 1943, Daddy joined the U.S. Naval Service. His Mother displayed a banner with a gold star in the window, signifying that family members were in the service. His sisters remember getting letters from him that were edited by the military, removing things that possibly could compromise lives, like places he might be going or had been. He mainly sailed in the Atlantic, holding the rank of Seaman First Class. He was assigned to Merchant Marine ships carrying diesel fuel and had two Navy sailors on-board to man the one anti-aircraft gun that was retro-fit onto the vessel. He was the gunner's mate and only saw action once, firing at a German reconnaissance plane that flew over their convoy. He said that he'd like to think his gun hit it, but admitted that there wasn't a chance. The plane came down in the middle of their convoy dangerously close to many ships. He was on one of the ships that went back and forth between English ports and the beaches at Normandy. Some ships made as many as three trips in June of 1944 alone. He was honorably discharged on December the 19th 1945, four months after the end of the war.

He got a job, in Atlanta, at the Cudahy Packing Company. It was a U.S. Meat packing company that had begun operation in 1887 in Wisconsin and by 1943 had distribution centers in 91 cities. Soon he would begin a long career at Automobile Glass Company which was located in the parking lot of the downtown Varsity Drive-In. He drove around the city of Atlanta replacing windshields and repairing glass in vehicles. Mother and Daddy were married in 1949 and got an apartment with a balcony that overlooked Spiller Field, where the Class AA Southern Association Atlanta Crackers played baseball. Daddy's favorite memory, was that he saw Eddie Matthews, Hall of Famer, play third base before he was called up to the Boston Braves major league team in 1952. Mother and Daddy would then move to 2240 Burroughs Ave, SE where Dennis was born but died just after birth. Two years later, May 14th 1958, I was born and named Doyle, after a bluegrass musician, Doyle Wilburn of the 40's bluegrass band, The Wilburn Bothers. Daddy continued being a

glass mechanic and building items around the house. In 1962, Mother's Daddy, Doc Mize, gave them 10 1/2 acres in Alpharetta. Soon they broke ground on a house there and we moved to a rental off Hopewell Road in Alpharetta. Daddy did everything he possibly could on the new house to save money while commuting to Atlanta to work. We moved into the new house on Cogburn Road in 1963.

Daddy loved sports! He fished and hunted every chance he got. Rabbit and quail hunting were his favorites. He played baseball and later softball. He always blamed his bad knees on being a catcher and was known for being one of the best slow-pitch softball pitchers playing for Union Hill Baptist Church. He was also an excellent bowler, averaging about 225 for the Automobile Glass team. Daddy never missed cheering me on at all my baseball and basketball games throughout the years.

He was always working in the yard, garden and building sheds and things around the house. He loved building bird houses and feeders. Daddy made a bass boat out of an old motorboat, kept the engines running in all our vehicles, boats, tractors, lawn mowers and everything else through the years. He was very talented. He commuted to Decatur every day to continue his glass career at Friendly Ford and later Southern Lincoln and Mercury. He was a member at Union Hill Baptist Church and loved attending as long as he could. He loved watching all the Atlanta sports teams, especially the Braves, Westerns and any movie with Clint Eastwood or John Wayne. Daddy loved his family, friends and life in general. We all will miss him very much.

# Cemetery Details

## **Union Hill Baptist Church Cemetery**

McGinnis Ferry Road  
Alpharetta, GA

# Tribute Wall



“ *Mr. Ira W. Tatum*

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October 08, 2022 at 11:37 AM



“ *Victor V. purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Mr. Ira W. Tatum.*



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**Victor V.** - September 08, 2014 at 02:42 PM