



Mr. William "Billy" S. Bates

April 24, 1926 - July 30, 2021

William (Billy) Shirley Bates, one of Alpharetta's oldest merchants and most knowledgeable historians, died Friday, July 30, 2021, at his home in Alpharetta. He was 95 years old.

Born on April 24, 1926, in Milton County Billy remained a lifelong resident of Alpharetta. He was a graduate and senior class president of Milton High School. He joined the U.S. Navy, served in the Pacific area during World War II, and was honorably discharged in 1945.

After the war Mr. Bates returned to Alpharetta and became part of his family's grocery business in the center of rural Alpharetta. In addition, in 1957, Mr. Bates joined the newly formed Alpharetta Volunteer Fire Department where he became a Captain and served for over 30 years. Bates and Wood Grocery served the surrounding community for well over 40 years. After closing the store in 1986, he pursued his many interests and became an expert in each: fishing, furniture building, rock and arrowhead hunting, beekeeping, vegetable farming. Yet, he will be most remembered for his devotion to preserving the history of the Alpharetta area and genealogy of its many families. He became involved in identifying and surveying old and abandoned cemeteries. Working with other local historians, he helped identify information on early residents of the community long before computers became a popular research tool for genealogy research.

Mr. Bates provided valuable insight into what is called "Farm House" which

many researchers agree is the sight of the original location of the City of Alpharetta. He led initial efforts and worked with community leaders in restoring our town's historic log cabin which he helped build in 1935 as a member of the Future Farmers of America while attending Milton High School. He was active in starting the Alpharetta and Old Milton County Historical Society and served many years on the board as its historian.

While history can be found in textbooks, to listen to someone like Billy Bates tell many stories of how his community grew and changed over the past 100 years, making Alpharetta no longer a little rural community but a thriving suburb of Atlanta is priceless. All his study, research, and documentation is being left for others to use and enjoy.

On May 1, 2021, the Patriots of Liberty Chapter honored Mr. Bates with the Daughters of American Revolution Preservation Recognition Award.

His wife of 44 years, Dorothy Sims Bates preceded him in death. He is survived by wife, Marjorie Moore Bates; son, William Bates of Ball Ground; two daughters, Shirley Bates Benton and Lynn Bates of Alpharetta; numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews who will remember him with love. Friends and acquaintances will cherish their time spent with him.

Visitation will be held from 1 – 4 p.m. Saturday, July 31 at Northside Chapel in Roswell. The funeral service will be held at Northside Chapel at 2 p.m.

Sunday, August 1.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to the First Baptist Church of Alpharetta, Touch of Love Ministry, 44 Academy Street, Alpharetta, GA 30009.

Cemetery Details

Green Lawn Cemetery

10993 Alpharetta Hwy
Roswell, GA

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 31. 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Northside Chapel Funeral Directors & Crematory
12050 Crabapple Road
Roswell, GA

Funeral Service

AUG 1. 2:00 PM (ET)

Northside Chapel Funeral Directors & Crematory
12050 Crabapple Road
Roswell, GA

Tribute Wall



“ Northside Chapel Funeral Directors and Crematory created a Tribute Video in memory of Mr. William "Billy" S. Bates



Northside Chapel - July 31, 2021 at 09:45 AM

TR

Shirley and Phil, Dan just told me of your father's passing. I know this is a bittersweet time. What a mighty fine man your daddy was and what an amazing legacy he has left behind. He is a part of that "greatest generation" we cannot replace. He worked so hard all his life and raised amazing children and he was so proud of you. I know that you will miss him so much especially because you saw him almost every day. I hope that you will rest in knowing that he is with your mom now, whole and healthy and walking with Jesus. We will be praying for you and your family over these next days. We love you and your family. Trish and Bill

Trish Rissman - July 31, 2021 at 04:52 PM



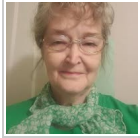
To the family of Billy Bates. I remember him as a gentle man. He was very knowledgeable in the history of the Bates family. I always enjoyed hearing him speak about what he had learned at the reunions when they were at Providence Baptist Church. He got Everett Cook interested in it for a while. Everett always got a kick out of knowing that Alberry Bates was buried at Providence Cemetery. That he became a prominent man in Alpharetta. Sadly I lost Everett July 7, 2020 of lung cancer. I'm so sorry for your loss, but know that he is definitely in a better place and I'm sure he and Everett are catching up on old times. My prayers are with his wife, that took care of him for so many years so faithfully, and his family that loved him. May God comfort you all. Barbara Cook, wife of Everett Cook.

Barbara Cook - July 31, 2021 at 05:13 PM



“ *Mr. William "Billy" S. Bates*

October 08, 2022 at 11:37 AM



“ *Billy was a man of many interests and talents. In my heart he was "the" original historian for Alpharetta. God bless his family and loved ones. Rest in Peace, Billy*

Judy Webb - August 01, 2021 at 04:11 PM



“ *This is a sad day for the City of Alpharetta. Mr. Billy Bates, one of the greatest generations left a hole in the hearts of so many with his passing. Our city owes him a debt of gratitude for all the history he help us preserve. His knowledge of our original settlement, Farm House, and of the families who forged our city will not be forgotten because of Mr. Bate's tremendous contributions. So much of our city's Alpharetta-Old Milton Co. Museum is recorded because of his thoughts and remembrances. His kind gentle ways of touching so many lives will long be remembered. Rest in Peace Mr. Bates, Donald Mitchell*

Donald F Mitchell - August 01, 2021 at 04:31 AM



“ *Heavenly Heights Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mr. William "Billy" S. Bates.*



July 31, 2021 at 06:00 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Mr. William "Billy" S. Bates.*



July 31, 2021 at 10:49 AM



“ *I worked for Billy, Peggy, and Bill Jr. for a number of years at Bates & Wood Grocery. Together they taught me much about the real values to be found in life: Respect everyone the same regardless of what path in life they walk. Never compromise your principles but be kind in the way you apply them. Act in a manner that will let you be proud of the man staring back at you in the mirror. I owe them all an un-repayable debt; those lessons and many others helped me weather many storms and I will always be grateful.*



John Moore - July 31, 2021 at 10:04 AM

DB

“ *Mr. Bates, and I ALWAYS have called him ‘Mr. Bates’ based on my sincere and high respect for him. I have always considered him a true ‘Renaissance Man’ based on his knowledge of and respect for Mother Earth. He grew crops, had a cultivation shed for plants and flowers, harvested wood. He simply was self sufficient. Not many like him these days. Many years ago Mr. Bates gave me a cane-back chair that he made with own hands. I sit on that chair every morning putting on my shoes. It will be constant reminder to me of this quiet, gentle, man. I will miss him.*

Dan Benton

dn Benton - July 30, 2021 at 08:11 PM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. William "Billy" S. Bates.*



July 30, 2021 at 03:26 PM