



James Gerald Rayburn

August 14, 1935 - December 4, 2018

James Gerald Rayburn, 83, Rainbow City, died on the morning of December 4, 2018. A Celebration of Life will be held for him on Sunday, December 9, 2018 at 2:00 PM at Thompson Funeral Home in Piedmont, AL, with Pastor Ken Byford officiating. The family will receive visitors from 12:30-2:00 PM, immediately prior to the service. Following the service, a private graveside service will be held at Goshen Cemetery in Piedmont. Dr. Rayburn was born on August 14, 1935, in Anniston, AL and was the son of the late Dewey R.C. Rayburn and John Billie (JB) Rayburn. He graduated from Oxford High School in 1953 and received his Bachelor's Degree in Music from Jacksonville State University in 1958. As a music student, he composed the Jacksonville State Alma Mater, which is still the official JSU Alma Mater today. He worked as a band director at both Roanoke and Cordova High Schools and later went on to receive his Master's and Doctorate Degrees in Education from the University of Alabama. He worked in college administration for the remainder of his career, first at Livingston State University where he was Dean of Student Services, and later at Brewer State Junior College in Fayette, AL, which he helped to open in 1969. He served as the Dean of Instruction and Interim President at Brewer State (name later changed to Beville State) until his retirement in 1995. In addition to working in college administration, he also taught many courses at the college, including photography, bicycling, music, and psychology, and was a mentor and supporter to faculty and students alike. As a long-time resident of Fayette, he attended Fayette First United

Methodist Church, and was a member of the Exchange Club and the Arts Council. After retirement, he returned to his first love of music, especially Dixieland jazz, and played trumpet in the Guys and Dolls Dixieland Band. He also enjoyed watercolor painting and loved attending biweekly art classes in Tuscaloosa for a number of years. Following a bout of illness, he moved to Rainbow City in 2014 to be closer to his family. He became a resident of Regency Pointe retirement community, where he led the music for Sunday morning church services and directed Monday afternoon hymn singing. He also attended Gadsden First United Methodist Church where he was a member of the Jim Martin Sunday School Class. He is survived by his loving wife of 59 years, Carma Jo Ray Rayburn, his sister Pat (Bo) Eller of Easley, SC, his two sons: Joseph Scott (Angela) Rayburn of Rainbow City, AL, and Seth David (Nicole) Rayburn of Athens, AL, his four grandchildren: Joseph Scott Rayburn, Jr., Joanna Salome Rayburn, Carter David Rayburn, and Margaret Elizabeth Rayburn, and multiple nephews, nieces, and cousins. He glorified God through his honesty and strength of character in all that he did, but most keenly as a devoted husband and as a loving father and grandfather to his sons and grandchildren. He will always be fondly remembered for his warm and generous heart and for the blessings he brought to all who had the privilege of knowing him. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the Piedmont Cumberland Presbyterian Church, 23746 AL-9 North, Piedmont, AL, 36272, or to the Gadsden First United Methodist Church, 115 South 5th St., Gadsden, AL, 35901.

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC 9. 12:30 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Thompson Funeral Home & Crematory
6340 Old Piedmont-Gadsden Hwy
Piedmont, AL 36272
(256) 447-7113
<https://www.thompsonfuneralhomepiedmont.com>

Memorial Service

DEC 9. 2:00 PM (CT)

Thompson Funeral Home & Crematory
6340 Old Piedmont-Gadsden Hwy
Piedmont, AL 36272
(256) 447-7113
<https://www.thompsonfuneralhomepiedmont.com>

Tribute Wall



“ *Thompson Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of James Gerald Rayburn*



Thompson Funeral Home - March 30, 2020 at 12:20 PM

AS

“ *Alabama Heart and Vascular Medicine and staff purchased the Floor Plant for Sympathy for the family of James Gerald Rayburn.*



Alabama Heart and Vascular Medicine and staff - December 11, 2018 at 08:38 AM

CR

“ *Dean Rayburn was a mentor, friend, teacher and fellow professional to me. He always greeted me with a smile, handshake and a nod. I was a student at Brewer in 1971-73. I mopped floors and cleaned his office as a work study student, he treated me as if I were the richest man in Fayette. I returned to what was Beville State in 1993, working at the Jasper Center. The new administration had Dean Rayburn delivering mail, he completed his task with professionalism even though it was an attempt to insult him. We should all be as big of a person as Dean Rayburn was. RIP sir, life well lived.*

Connie Rye - December 08, 2018 at 05:14 PM



“ *Carma Jo*

Jimmy was my first band director at Roanoke, Alabama. I have fond memories of him, both play in the band and you and Jimmy with my Mother and Dad playing rook almost every weekend. We all loved him very much. He's the one that made me a better bass drummer at Roanoke and Jacksonville. I would not have go to Jacksonville had it not been for him.

I will always remember him as a great teacher, band director and friend.

Thank you, Jimmy Rayburn, for always being there for me.

Troy Crumpton

Sandra Crumpton - December 08, 2018 at 11:37 AM

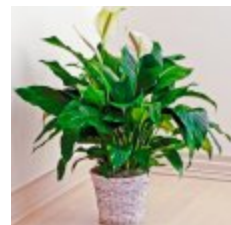


“ *Mr. Rayburn was always friendly to others, enjoyed life, and was a loving provider to his family. His conviction and faith led him to live a role model life. He had a soft-spoken, enjoyable wit and was very generous with his time. I am thankful for knowing him and his family.*

John Whitaker - December 08, 2018 at 10:39 AM



“ *Floor Plant for Sympathy was purchased for the family of James Gerald Rayburn.*



December 08, 2018 at 10:10 AM

RH

“ *Carma,*

We just heard the sad news this afternoon. Dr. Rayburn and I have been close friends for many years, and he went out of his way many times to help me during my 21 years at the college. I will forever be indebted to him for his kindness and for the many times he helped me along the way. I only wish that we had taken the time to visit after you moved to Piedmont. Sometimes we act as if our friends will live forever, until suddenly it is too late for anything but expressing regrets. For the many lives he touched along the way, there will be a void, but also a glowing memory of one who meant so much to so many. May God bless and comfort you, your sons, and all his loved ones.

Roger Handley

Roger Handley - December 06, 2018 at 11:13 PM

BA

“ *Mr. Rayburn was such a wonderful kind hearted man. I will miss him. My prayers are with Mrs. Rayburn and family. God Bless You.*
Belinda Adcock

Belinda Adcock - December 06, 2018 at 10:39 PM