



## Mr. Bryan Durham

December 1, 1923 - April 14, 2015

"I am excited. This is going to be a wonderful year!" These were our father's words while recovering from surgery in mid-March. His excitement became reality on April 14, 2015, when after many years of blindness, we know he once again saw his much-loved wife of 59 years, Addie Nelle Tingle Durham.

Bryan E. Durham was born at home on December 1, 1923, to Robert Martin Durham and Mae Amarilla Bryan Durham in the old city of Riverside, Georgia, near what is now Vinings. One of Bryan's favorite memories was being in the Junior ROTC at Russell High School in East Point, Georgia, and serving in an honor guard at the Atlanta airport when Clark Gable and Carole Lombard came to town for the premier of *Gone With the Wind* in 1939. At the time he said she was the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. At age 17 Bryan began working at Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Company with a starting pay of \$16 per week. A short time later he met Nelle Tingle, a Southern Bell Switchboard operator, who would become his wife.

World War II interrupted their courtship when Bryan joined the US Army and served 19 months in the Pacific Theater with the 7th Army Air Force Radio Squadron Mobile. While on leave in April 1944, he and Nelle were married by his grandfather in his grandparents' Techwood Homes apartment. After the war he returned to Southern Bell and a huge pay increase to \$40 per week! After 43 years (and only two sick days!), Bryan retired from the company he

dearly loved.

Those who knew and loved Bryan have fond memories of many stories of his Southern Bell years. He had an incredible recall of details of what supervisor on what night of the week in which year called him to go to a certain location to deal with a "trouble." The stories and details never varied as he told and retold them with perfect clarity.

Bryan and Nelle built their first house in the Cascade Heights section of Atlanta with the help of both of their fathers, a tradition he passed along when he helped his own children build their homes. They were part of the first wave of young couples who put their lives on hold for WWII and began to have families and build homes in the new subdivisions of the early 1950s. After 20 years in their first home then 20 more in Marietta, they settled in what he considered the perfect home, a farm in Bowdon, Georgia.

Through the years they developed many friends in the local area. He continued to care for and nurse Nelle through her battle with multiple sclerosis until she died in 2003. His joy from "Hidden Hollow" was seen in his attempts at raising livestock -- chickens who laid green eggs, pygmy pigs, goats (until one gored him in the leg), a horse, many dogs and cats, cattle, and six donkeys. He delighted in sharing stories of their country life with all who would listen.

Bryan developed macular degeneration in the mid 1990s, and eventually lost his sight. Always an avid reader, he quickly adapted to listening to recorded books provided for the visually impaired by the Library of Congress. These books became the source of new stories to tell.

The three defining loves of Bryan's life were his family, his country and Southern Bell. As his family, we will always be grateful for the values he

passed along to three generations: the importance of family, hard work, saving money, and finding joy in such simple pleasures as reading and sharing stories about Southern Bell, life in the Depression and serving in WWII. As a child of the Depression he was very frugal and spent his money wisely. For example, as every family member knew, he was reluctant to pay more than \$.39 a pound for bananas.

In addition to his parents and wife, Bryan was also preceded in death by two sisters, Kathryn Durham Brown and infant Sarah Marie Durham.

Bryan is survived by daughter Susan Little, son-in-law Jim of Summerville, Georgia; grandsons Bryan Little and wife Shelia of Cleveland, North Carolina; Matt Little, wife Lisa and great-grandchildren Malia and Michael of Summerville, Georgia; son Michael Durham, daughter-in-law Linda and grandchildren Anna and Chris of Bowdon, Georgia; daughter Janet Fails, son-in-law Charles, and grandchildren Chas and Samantha of Marietta, Georgia; sister Bobbie Ruth Robinson of Snellville, Georgia; sister-in-law Betty T. Dunn of Woodville, Georgia; numerous nieces and nephews; dear childhood friend since age six, Henry Greene of Jacksonville, Florida; beloved friend and fellow telephone-company retiree, Bob Boyd of Dallas, Georgia.

The family is so very grateful to the entire village of caregivers who loved and supported our father and us in his final years: extended family, friends, community members, medical professionals, and in-home caregivers. Thank you.

The family will receive friends at Rainwater Funeral Home on April 15, 2015 from 4:00-6:00 P.M. Funeral services will be held on Thursday April 16, 2015 at 1:00 at Bowdon First United Methodist Church Wedowee Street, Bowdon, GA 30108. Mr. Durham will lie in state from 12:00 until the funeral hour.

Instead of flowers, the family suggests contributions be made to the Food Ministry Program at Tyus Baptist Church, 4514 Tyus Carrollton Road Carrollton, GA 30117. This program provided a hot meal and kind visitor to Daddy monthly for a number of years, or to another elder-support organization you admire.

# Cemetery Details

## Pleasant Grove Cemetery

750 Blackwelder Road  
Bowdon, GA 30108

# Previous Events

## Visitation

APR **15**. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Rainwater Funeral Home  
317 North Carroll Street  
Bowdon, GA 30108  
(770) 258-7239  
[info@rainwaterfuneralhome.com](mailto:info@rainwaterfuneralhome.com)  
<https://www.rainwaterfuneralhome.com>

## Funeral Service

APR **16**. 1:00 PM (ET)

Bowdon First Methodist Church  
302 Wedowee Street  
Bowdon, GA 30108

# Tribute Wall

DB

“ I I I worked with Bryan Durham years ago on FAA switching systems. He was an engineer for Southern Bell and I was an engineer for Bell Labs. Over those years and later after we both retired we kept in touch. "Bull" was the best example of a southern gentleman that I have ever seen. I look forward to meeting again someday on the other side..  
*Dick Bidlack*

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**Dick Bidlack** - May 01, 2015 at 04:19 PM

PW

“ I would like to offer my condolences to the Durham family and also share a comforting scriptural promise that GOD is a refuge and strength in times of distress.(Psalms 46:1)

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**P. Watts** - April 22, 2015 at 06:39 AM

LM

“ Susan and Jim: I am so sorry to hear about your loss. I am thinking and praying for each of you and your family.

*Lori Mitchum*  
*Murray State University*

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**Lori Mitchum** - April 16, 2015 at 12:04 PM

PR

“ Mike, Linda & family: was saddened to hear of your loss. Please accept our condolences & pass them on to your Sisters. Love & prayers, Patsy & Jim Rucker.

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**Patsy & Jim Rucker** - April 15, 2015 at 07:49 PM

SC

“ I remember Bryan and Nelle built their home in Cascade Heights about the same time my husband Monroe and I built ours. They were good neighbors for a long time. Our daughters grew up together and were best friends for a number of years. After we moved to Paulding Co. and Bryan and Nelle moved to Bowden, they would stop by our farm and visit. And we would meet them in Carrollton to have breakfast. In the years since Monroe and Nelle passed, Bryan would call from time to time to chat and catch up. And he ALWAYS sent a Christmas card. So to some degree or another Bryan has been a part of my life for many years. He will be missed..

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**Sara Cates** - April 15, 2015 at 03:55 PM

JN

“ While visiting my younger cousins Anna and Christopher during summer vacations as a child, I remember playing around often in their grandparent's farm and home just down the hill. During my younger years, I didn't know him as 'Mr. Durham' or 'Bryan', I just called him "Paw-Paw" like my cousins did even though I am extended family from him. As I've grown older, we've had the pleasure of Mr. Durham's company at many family gatherings where he insisted on being called 'Bryan' and shared many stories with all of us about his long life and various experiences through this years. I will always remember him as a humble, thankful, kind man surrounded by his adoring family members. Deepest condolences to his family.

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**Jessi Nelson** - April 15, 2015 at 02:53 PM

TC

“ Tommy & Judy Cantrell lit a candle in memory of Mr. Bryan Durham



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Tommy & Judy cantrell - April 15, 2015 at 01:04 PM

MB

“ Susan and Jim Dear,  
I am saddened to hear of your loss but I know the values and interests he had will carry on in the many lives he touched. Today is just a foundation for tomorrow and when I see you I know he built a strong one! Bless you both and know that many prayers are with you at this time.  
Melanie Bone

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Melanie Bone - April 15, 2015 at 10:14 AM



“ Roses and Calla Lilies (Silk Cemetery Flowers) was purchased for the family of Mr. Bryan Durham.



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April 15, 2015 at 09:22 AM

TH

“ Tanner Hospice Care staff would like to offer our condolences to you during this difficult time and to say thank you for trusting your loved one in our care

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Tanner Hospice - April 15, 2015 at 08:09 AM

PW

“ *I would like to offer my condolences to the Durham family and also share a comforting scriptural promise that GOD is a refuge and strength in times of distress.(Psalms 46:1)*

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**P. Watts** - April 15, 2015 at 07:16 AM