



William Edwin Pickard, Jr.

May 24, 2014

William Edwin Pickard, Jr. of Decatur, Georgia, passed away peacefully in his sleep on Saturday, May 24th with his beloved children by his side. A World War II veteran who fought in the Invasion of Normandy and the Battle of the Bulge, Bill was a splendid example of a life well lived. Bill made his home here on earth for 90 years, and he will now spend eternity in the presence of God and loved ones gone before. He most assuredly had them all smiling and laughing shortly after his arrival.

Bill was born on Good Friday, April 18, 1924 in Albany, Georgia to William Edwin and Neva Balthrop Pickard. Four years later, his beloved sister Nancy Lynn Pickard was born. A lifelong Baptist, Bill spent his youth attending Albany schools, playing baseball, and bird hunting with his father and their string of English pointers. In 1949, he earned a degree in Economics from Mercer University, where he was a member of the ATO fraternity.

In 1942, Bill enlisted in the United States Army, and on June 8, 1944, D-Day Plus 2, began combat on Omaha Beach in Normandy. He spent 21 months in combat as a radio operator and artillery gunner in Battery C, 186th field artillery battalion. A humble man by nature, Bill rarely brought up time spent defending our country, but he was happy to share when asked. Younger generations of his clan have marveled at his tales of hiding out in the cellar of an abandoned, destroyed farmhouse in France, hearing the initial shots fired

that began the Battle of the Bulge and sneaking out of the hospital with a foot injury to attend performances at the Wagner Opera House in Bayreuth, Germany after the war.

Bill met and married his beloved Joyce Stephens Pickard, of Tucker, Georgia in 1955. The couple raised three children, William Edwin Pickard, III, Houston, TX; Lucinda Pickard Cartwright, Sugar Hill, GA; and Patty Pickard Ruch (David), Sugar Hill, GA. Bill and his children said goodbye to their cherished and accomplished wife and mother, Joyce, way too soon, when she passed away in 1985.

Following twenty-two years as an investigator for the Internal Revenue Service, Bill retired at age 60 and filled his days writing country music, dabbling in antiques, bird hunting, and enjoying his grandchildren. Bill was elected Country Music Songwriter of the Year in 1990 by the Atlanta Songwriters Association and received the key to the city of Pearl, Mississippi at a luncheon held in his honor for penning the song, "I Found a Jewel in Pearl, Mississippi." He loved to play horseshoes and ping pong, and in his late 60's he held the concurrent titles of ping pong champion for the city of Macon for "over 40", "over 50" and "over 60".

Bill is also survived by his grandchildren, Alexander Stephens Pickard, Carol Ann Pickard, William Edwin Pickard, IV all of Houston, TX; William James Cartwright, Kevin Stephens Ruch, and Randall Thomas Ruch all of Sugar Hill, GA, and a host of cousins, nieces, nephews, extended family and friends.

It is with bittersweet pangs that Bill's children, grandchildren, and loved ones say goodbye. We know that he is now out of pain and in a place that is greater than we can imagine, but we will all miss his slow drawl, enthusiasm for life and Southern generosity. Oh, and that unrestrained sense of humor!

The family will receive visitors Friday, May 30th from 6 - 8 pm and on Saturday from 10 until noon at Flanigan Funeral Home in Buford with a funeral service at noon in their chapel. Graveside services will be conducted immediately following the funeral at Floral Hills in Tucker.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Stephens Pickard Scholarship Fund, which provides assistance to students seeking a degree in Early Childhood Education, at Georgia Baptist Foundation, 6405 Sugarloaf Parkway, Duluth, GA 30097 or a charity of your choice.

Tribute Wall



“ *William Edwin Pickard, Jr.*

November 08, 2022 at 07:37 PM



“ *I worked with Bill and also knew Joyce very well. I would keep Patty for Joyce while she was teaching my son. I wish the family well and want them to know both your father and mother were special people.*

Love

Grace Smith (formerly of Tucker, GA)

Grace Smith - June 06, 2014 at 12:00 AM



“ *With deepest sympathies for the loss of a wonderful man .
You are in our thoughts and prayers .*

Stephanie and jimmy demos and children - May 30, 2014 at 12:00 AM



“ *Cindy,
Much love to you and your family during this time of sadness (mixed with eternal joy). I know you'll miss him terribly.*

Virginia and Paula moody - May 29, 2014 at 12:00 AM

CT

“ Despite not having had the pleasure of meeting Bill, through Patty, I got a sense of the wonderful man he was - only emphasized by the what I read in the Journal today.

A life well-lived, for sure, with a plethora of family and friends to make sure the memory endures.

Peace to you all, our thoughts are with you.

Charles

Charles Teller - May 29, 2014 at 12:00 AM

BJ

“ What a wonderful tribute to "Daddy"! He certainly did live a life well lived and much enjoyed. He was well loved and that is the best we can always hope for.

Barbara Johnson - May 28, 2014 at 12:00 AM