

## Mr. James Benjamin Kilpatrick

October 9, 1932 - August 15, 2024

It is with great sorrow that the Kilpatrick family announces the death of Mr. James Benjamin Kilpatrick.

Mr. Kilpatrick entered into rest on Thursday, August 15, 2024. The Directors of Brown-Pennington-Atkins Funeral Home and Crematory are caring for the family.

A funeral service to honor his life will be held at 2 o'clock on Sunday, August 18, 2024, in the Chapel of Brown-Pennington-Atkins Funeral Home, with burial to follow in Magnolia Cemetery. The family will receive friends one hour prior to the service.

Ben was a man of integrity who put his whole heart into his family, his faith, his work,<sup>3</sup> and his support of the University of South Carolina Gamecocks. He was born October 9, 1932, in Haleyville, Alabama, the fifth of eight children. The son of the late Irene Faye Roberson Kilpatrick and the late Noley Blaine Kilpatrick Sr., Ben (or JimBen as his dad often called him) loved living on a farm and getting into escapades with his “partner-in-crime,” his younger brother Gip. The tales of the “fainting goat,” the pig, the wagon, and the mailman’s wrecked car and his adventures of building “cabins” with neighborhood friends always entertained his children and grandchildren. He worked on the family dairy farm, and he always swore that he and Gip

delivered milk when they were 12 and 11 years old – Ben driving and Gip working the pedals so Ben could see over the steering wheel.

When Ben graduated from high school, he headed to Nebraska to work with his older brother Blaine, putting up telephone poles on the plains. A trip 50 years later to Nebraska thrilled Ben, as he was convinced that those were the very same poles he had put up years before.

He served two years in the military during the Korean War – but he lucked out, as he was assigned to England as a supply sergeant because he could type. (He was always thankful to his typing teacher in high school for that!)

Then came probably the two most instrumental moments of his life: his sister, Rudi, and brother-in-law, Billy, encouraged him to attend the University of South Carolina, and he met his future wife of 65 years, Nettie Faye DeFoor, when he jumped in the backseat of a convertible as a joke and was confronted by a beautiful, shy young woman in Haleyville. At 24, Ben began his studies at the university in Columbia and married the love of his life four months later. Life as a South Carolinian began.

Ben started to work at Sonoco Products Company in 1959. He was thrilled to be offered a job at the very company that the University of South Carolina had used as a model of a modern business. He worked his way through the ranks, eventually retiring in 1991 as a general manager. He took such pride in working for Sonoco and what he had accomplished, but he also enjoyed the journey, meeting numerous people he held in high regard.

He and Nettie relocated to Hartsville with their baby daughter Tammy, adding their son Andy in 1963. The importance of family had already been instilled in both Ben and Nettie, and they worked to make sure that family always came first. Many adventures in camping at the lake, at the beach and in the

mountains followed, as did Ben buying a boat and learning to ski – off the dock if it was too cold to get wet! When he and Nettie bought a beach house, that became one of their favorite places to spend time. Numerous trips to Alabama to visit with grandparents, brothers and sisters, nieces and nephews also were included. He and Nettie loved their families, and the time they got to spend with them.

Ben attended West Hartsville Baptist Church, where he served as a deacon, sang in the choir, and cherished his many friendships.

When Ben graduated from the University of South Carolina, he began a journey – sometimes happy and sometimes miserable – as a loyal, devoted Gamecock fan. He was a member of the Gamecock Club from 1959 on – except for one brief year when he got disgusted at a coach – until the present day. He loved nothing better than going to Gamecock football games. He and his wife and children have sat through rain, thunderstorms, 25-degree cold, and 95-degree heat to cheer on the Gamecocks. He loved the football team, he loved the baseball team, he loved the men's basketball team, but he particularly loved the women's basketball team under Dawn Staley. When Ray Tanner's baseball team won the university's first national championship, his rejoicing could be heard all the way to Alabama! He was so devoted to the Gamecocks that both his children and two of his grandchildren continued in his footsteps to the University of South Carolina and faithfully attend games today. The third grandchild continues to be a devoted Gamecock, although she attended Wofford. (We forgave her.)

We can't leave out two of Ben's other favorite pastimes. He loved to fish – lake, ocean, if it had fish in it, he would be out there trying to catch one. He began to take his son Andy fishing when Andy was old enough to walk. One of Andy's favorite memories was going to Santee with Dad when he was

about 7. It was pouring rain when they started out to the lake, and it continued to downpour the whole trip. When they arrived, more rain. Ben and Andy sat in the car for about 30 minutes, and then Ben said, "I think it's slacking up. Let's go ahead and put the boat in." Andy said it was still a monsoon, but they were going to fish – and they did in the pouring rain!

He also took great pride in his yard work. He has one of the most beautiful yards in Hartsville, and he enjoyed every moment of digging in the weeds and grass and planting bushes and trees. Even when his health began to fail, he would sneak out to the yard, get on his riding mower, and take off with his assistant instructed to pick up debris behind him!

One of his other very favorite pastimes was playing with his three grandchildren. They were definitely the joy of his life: Connor, Julie and Mia. When Connor was a toddler, Ben turned to his daughter and said, "I just don't remember you and Andy being as smart as Connor is." We've had a lot of fun with that comment over the years. He loved spending time with the three children, doing puzzles, hanging out at the beach, riding in the boat, going to the "bottom of the sea," shelling with the kids, fishing, pulling the kids on the float behind the boat – you name it, he loved it. He traveled all over the country to go to choral competitions, band competitions, and cross-country competitions – all with a smile on his face. He also was thrilled to be able to attend Julie's wedding to Devin Champ in January, adding one more grandchild to the list.

Ben brought so much happiness to so many people. He is survived by his daughter Tammy of Mount Pleasant, S.C.; his beloved grandchildren, Connor Watkins of Lexington, S.C., Julie Champ (Devin) of Indianland, S.C., and Mia Kilpatrick of Spartanburg, S.C.; sister, Patsy Rayfield of Mobile, Ala.; sister-in-law Era Martin of Bryan, Ohio; sister-in-law Iva Kilpatrick of Haleyville, Ala., and numerous nieces and nephews who loved him very much.

In addition to his parents, Ben was preceded in death by his wife, Nettie Faye DeFoor Kilpatrick, and his son, James Andrew "Andy" Kilpatrick, as well as by his brothers Noley Blaine Kilpatrick Jr., William Jerry Kilpatrick and Gipson Columbus Kilpatrick, and his sisters Fayerine Patterson, Frenetta "Rudi" James, and Nancy Posey.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to the Andy Kilpatrick Memorial Scholarship, a fund set up after Andy's death that awards a senior of Hartsville High School who will continue his or her education. Ben and Nettie were very proud of this scholarship since they believed it helped keep Andy's memory alive while helping others – The Andy Kilpatrick Memorial Scholarship, The Citizens Bank, % The Kilpatrick Family, P.O. Box 2255, Hartsville, S.C. 29551.

# Cemetery Details

## Magnolia Cemetery

140 South Cedar Lane  
Hartsville, SC 29550  
(843) 383-3004

# Previous Events

## Funeral Service

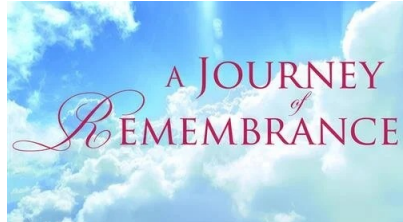
AUG 18. 2:00 PM (ET)

The Chapel of Brown-Pennington-Atkins Funeral Home  
306 W. Home Avenue  
Hartsville, SC 29550

# Tribute Wall



“ *Brown - Pennington - Atkins Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Mr. James Benjamin Kilpatrick*



**Brown-Pennington-Atkins Funeral Home** - August 17, 2024 at 05:43 PM

JF

*Such a beautiful tribute filled with sweet memories.*

**Jeannie Fox** - August 17, 2024 at 08:44 PM

DR

“ *Dennis Richards lit a candle in memory of Mr. James Benjamin Kilpatrick*



**Dennis Richards** - August 22, 2024 at 01:05 AM

DR

*I got to know Ben years ago at West Hartsville Baptist Church. We were in the Sunday School class. The last time we met was at Roy McCall's funeral. I am saddened to hear of his passing away. My condolences to his family.*

**Dennis Richards** - August 22, 2024 at 01:17 AM

GM

“ GAIL S Mobley lit a candle in memory of Mr. James Benjamin Kilpatrick



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**GAIL S Mobley** - August 19, 2024 at 08:12 PM

SH

“ Sandra And Larry Huggins lit a candle in memory of Mr. James Benjamin Kilpatrick



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**Sandra and Larry Huggins** - August 18, 2024 at 03:58 PM

JS

“ Jerry Sumner lit a candle in memory of Mr. James Benjamin Kilpatrick



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**Jerry Sumner** - August 18, 2024 at 02:35 PM

JS

*Ben was my favorite boss at Sonoco, starting in 1973 in the GPD Accounting Group and working with the most capable group of people one can imagine, or hope for. Those were the days of the hand ledgers, before PC's and it was a joy to work in an open environment with this group, putting these operating statements and work papers together. These folks were amazing!*

*This group reported to Ben and we all much appreciated his ability, and thoughtfulness toward each of us. I knew Ben throughout my career at Sonoco, but the years in GPD Accounting were the most enjoyable.*

*Rest in peace my friend.*

**Jerry Sumner** - August 18, 2024 at 03:10 PM

LL

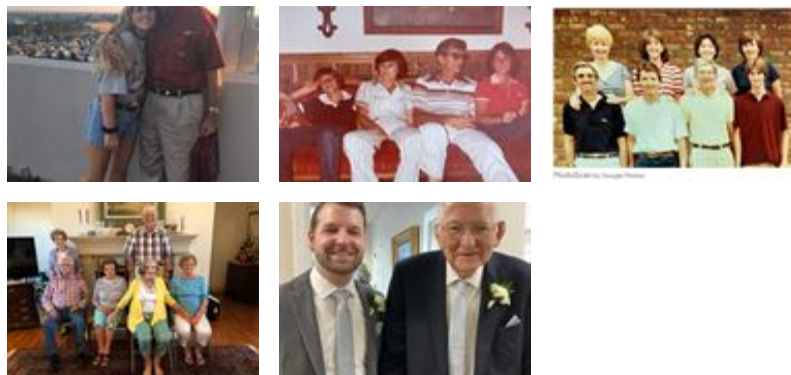
“ *Sending prayers and deepest condolences to family and friends. I went to school with Andy*



**Lori Lesieur** - August 18, 2024 at 02:19 AM



“ *60 files added to the album LifeTributes*



**Brown-Pennington-Atkins Funeral Home** - August 17, 2024 at 01:38 PM

EH

“ So sorry to learn of Ben’s passing. He was such a sweet soul and a true southern gentleman. We will surely miss him at West Hartsville Baptist Church. Hugs and prayers for his sweet family. Eric and Kay Hayes

Eric Hayes - August 17, 2024 at 12:09 PM

TK

“ So sorry for your loss!  
He was such a sweet man!!  
I use to wait on him when I worked at Heritage Community Bank.

Terry C King - August 17, 2024 at 12:07 PM

TB

“ So sorry for your loss Ms.Kilpatrick, Tammy and family.



Tonda Jacobs Bunch - August 17, 2024 at 09:04 AM

CG

“ Connee Gamble Grantham lit a candle in memory of Mr. James Benjamin Kilpatrick



Connee Gamble Grantham - August 17, 2024 at 07:26 AM

LT

“ Ben was one of my favorite people that I worked with at Sonoco. He was a true southern gentleman. Sending my thoughts and prayers to his family and friends. RIP my friend!



Linda Thompson - August 16, 2024 at 10:57 PM

LT

“ Ben was one of my favorite people that I worked with at Sonoco. He was a true southern gentleman. Sending my thoughts and prayers to his family and friends. RIP my friend!



Linda Thompson - August 16, 2024 at 10:54 PM

DT

“ Dave Thompson lit a candle in memory of Mr. James Benjamin Kilpatrick



Dave Thompson - August 16, 2024 at 07:59 PM

WT

“ Wally and I will miss our dear friend and neighbor, Ben Kilpatrick. He was a true gentleman and a very caring person. Prayers for his family.

With much love,

Wally and Sarah Turbeville



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**Wally and Sarah Turbeville** - August 16, 2024 at 06:31 PM

CB

“ So very sad to hear of Ben’s loss. He was such a gentleman and a delight to be around. He and Nettie were a wonderful couple and Tom and I enjoyed many hours on the tennis courts with both of them. Our deepest condolences to all of the family. Love, Cecelia & Tom

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**Cecelia D Brown** - August 16, 2024 at 05:59 PM

SH

“ Shannon Hutson lit a candle in memory of Mr. James Benjamin Kilpatrick



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**Shannon Hutson** - August 16, 2024 at 05:50 PM

JR

*Lit a candle in memory of Ben Kilpatrick*

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**James w Reynolds** - August 16, 2024 at 06:01 PM

JL

“ *A very special friend! I had many good times working with Ben at Sonoco and also with Andy! My thoughts and prayers go out to all his friends and family!*



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**judy and Marion Lane** - August 16, 2024 at 05:16 PM

RM

“ *So sorry to hear about Ben. Prayers to his family. I worked with Ben at Sonoco beginning in 1969.*

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**Robert McWatty** - August 16, 2024 at 04:56 PM