



Mr. Grady Thomas "Tom" Bentley Jr.

April 2, 1924 - March 24, 2020

Today is the celebration of a life well lived and what would have been the 97th birthday of Grady Thomas (Tom) Bentley. Mr. Bentley, 95, of Americus passed away peacefully on Tuesday, March 24, 2020. The COVID pandemic, social distancing and safety for our loved ones certainly altered our usual and customary grief rituals. A private family service was held at Riverside Cemetery in Albany, GA on March 26, 2020 with Chaplin Albert Foster officiating.

Tom was born April 2, 1924 in Redan, GA to Mabelle Owens Bentley and Grady Thomas Bentley. He was part of The Greatest Generation and a veteran of World War II serving in the U.S. Army Air Corp. He started his optical career with Bausch and Lomb Optical Company in Atlanta, GA. He went on to hold two positions with Southeastern Optical Company before joining Robertson Optical Laboratories in 1963. In March of 1969, he opened Robertson Optical Laboratories of Albany. He remained owner and vice-president until his retirement in 1989. His friends and colleagues respected him as a professional and gentleman. Tom was a Mason, Shriner and part of The Cartoon Capers. He was an active member of the Hasan Shriners and Triangle Lodge 708 until 2004. Tom and Mildred lived at Lake Blackshear for 35 years. While you had to track him down...he would eventually be found in

the garden, tinkering in his shop or spending time with wonderful friends and neighbors. He was a travel enthusiast, avid vegetable gardener and volunteer. Tom never met a stranger and always had a story to tell. He was always filled with joy, a kind word and unceasing optimism. He is and forever will be missed. Tom left a mark on everyone he met.

Tom was predeceased by his parents, two sisters, two brothers, his sons Larry Bentley, Albert McDonald, Stephen McDonald and his wife Mildred Hatcher Bentley.

He is survived by his daughter Roberta Bentley of Houston, TX; sons Bill Bentley of Cleveland, GA; Rick Bentley of Walhalla, SC; Stanley McDonald of Albany, GA; Jerry (Claudia) McDonald of Oklahoma City, OK; Keith McDonald of Albany, GA; grandchildren, Mindy (Scott) Snyder of St. Petersburg, FL; Keith Bentley of Panama City, FL and Jennifer (William) Chumbley of Goodview, VA; Kellie (Casey) Chapman of Poulan, GA; Skye (fiancé Dale Ingram) Gardner of Warwick, GA; Marshall (Lindsay) McDonald of TyTy, GA; Hailey (Chris) Gutel of Oklahoma City, OK; Lacey (Albert) Harrison of Tuttle, OK; Madison McDonald of Oklahoma City, OK; Marlie McDonald of Oklahoma City, OK; Stephanie (Justin) of Blanchard, OK; Lindsay McDonald of Yukon, OK; Candie (Andy) Palmer of Grayling, MI; Mandie McDonald of Albany, GA; 22 great-grandchildren; six great, great-grandchildren and a host of nieces and nephews.

“When the sun goes below the horizon he is not set; the heavens glow for a

full hour after his departure. And when a great and good man sets, the sky of this world is luminous long after he is out of sight. Such a man cannot die out of this world. When he goes he leaves behind him much of himself.”

-Beecher

Tribute Wall



“ *Mr. Grady Thomas "Tom" Bentley Jr.*

May 22, 2023 at 10:29 AM



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May 22, 2023 at 01:29 AM



“ *Mr. Grady Thomas "Tom" Bentley Jr.*

December 24, 2022 at 02:54 AM



“ *Tom always had a smile on his face & a hug for me anytime I visited them at the lake, the manor, or at Skye's home. He was a Happy contented man, but why wouldn't he be since he had the most loving, caring wife in the world. He had the most amazing stories to tell. Had been so many places in his lifetime. To Skye, Repete, and Roberta (whom I never had the pleasure of meeting), so sorry for the loss of this great gentleman. My thoughts & prayers, and love will be with you all during this difficult time. Roberta, hopefully Skye or Repete will share a piece of their pound cake with you. Your dad loved it about as much as Mildred.*

Paula McGee - March 25, 2020 at 03:33 PM



“ *Uncle Tom was always such a kind, happy & caring person. Some of my favorite memories are at their lake house. I felt like he knew the right answer to everything & he was truly a remarkable man.*

Dena Cromer - March 25, 2020 at 02:59 PM

CM

“ I have been blessed with many wonderful Uncles and Uncle Tom was one of them . He set the example as to what a man should be. Loved him and Aunt Billie so much.

Carolyn and Clifton McDonald - March 25, 2020 at 10:33 AM

BW

“ I loved Mr. Tom and Mrs. Mildred. Lord knows they fed me well. But they were both dear people, good neighbors and good friends to have. I am heartbroken over his loss, but rejoice knowing that those two lovebirds are together again.

Becky Winkler - March 25, 2020 at 07:46 AM

KG

“ Uncle Tom you were the definition of what a true gentleman was. Everyone respected you but most importantly loved you. You were so easy to love. Go be with your sweetheart and enjoy each other forever! We are so jealous of the angels!❤️❤️

kim Graddy - March 25, 2020 at 07:44 AM

SF

“ I loved Uncle Tom & Aunt Billy. I know they are in each other's arms now and happy to be together again. Uncle Tom was a very kind hearted man and we will miss him dearly

sheryl Foister - March 24, 2020 at 11:14 PM

DS

“ Love me some Mr. TOM HE LOVED to come in Fat boys for fried green tomatoes..such a southern gentleman..

Diane Singletary - March 24, 2020 at 09:52 PM

SC

“ *He left such a legacy of what a true gentleman is . He will truly be missed* ❤️🙏🌹 *James and Shirley*

Shirley Causey - March 24, 2020 at 07:16 PM