



## Merrel P. Callaway Obituary

July 10, 1921 - February 3, 2009

Merrel Purvis Callaway, 87, died February 3, at Palmyra Hospital. The son of Thomas James Callaway, Sr., and Minnie Purvis Callaway, he was born July 10, 1921 in Milstead, Georgia. He was a graduate of LaGrange High School and Emory University where he was a member of Kappa Alpha fraternity. He served in the United States Navy during World War II. Mr. Callaway was Vice President and Senior Credit Analyst, and was responsible for Credit Administration at Citizens & Southern Bank from which he retired in 1986. Because of a strong community spirit and a lifetime dedication to Volunteerism, he was honored with the Harry Goldstein Lifetime Achievement Award for Volunteer of the Year and the American Red Cross Humanitarian of the Week award. The Thomasville Music and Drama Troupe honored him with a special award for longtime support in 2008; and he won the Exchange Club of Northwest Albany's Golden Deed Award, the service organization's most prestigious award honoring lifetime achievements in civic service. An active member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church where he was member of the choir for 30 years, he founded the Clothing Room which supplied uniforms for local elementary schools. He was active with the United Way, The Albany Museum of Art, the Sowega Council on Aging, and on the board of directors of The American Red Cross, Girls, Incorporated, Theatre Albany, the Albany Symphony and Albany Concert Association. He sang and danced his way through many musicals in Theatre Albany. He taught ballroom dancing and etiquette

for 25 years to Albany's sixth and seventh graders and served as the choreographer for the Albany Debutante Club for almost 20 years. He participated in the art scene with both time and financial commitments. He was preceded in death by his parents, his brother, Thomas James Callaway, Jr. and his brother-in-law, William Allen. Survivors include his sister, Mary Callaway Allen; his sister-in-law, Gladys Pace Callaway, of Albany; his nephews, Thomas James Callaway III and wife, Sherrie, of Thomasville, Georgia; Scott Allen and wife, Karen, and Richard Allen and wife, Janet, Marietta, GA; nieces, Cantey Callaway Tull and husband, Chris, of Charlotte, NC; Merrel Callaway Hattink and husband, Willem, of Atlanta, Georgia; Sandy Allen Gross and husband, Ken, of Cartersville, GA; Lori Allen of Salt Lake City, Utah; and many great nieces and great nephews. The Callaway Family would like to extend a special thanks to Mr. Callaway's very special friends, Will and Sue Carpenter, for their loyal service, support and devoted friendship for the last 10 years. Another special thank you goes to Jessica Riggins at Morningside and Evelyn Jones for their ever present care and attention. Kimbrell-Stern Funeral Directors will handle the funeral arrangements. The visitation will be held at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in the Parish Hall, Friday, February 6 at 1 pm followed by the memorial service in the sanctuary at 2 pm. A graveside ceremony will be held immediately after the service for family and friends at Oakview Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to The Thomasville Music and Drama Troupe, P.O. Box 284 Thomasville, GA 31799 or St Paul's Episcopal Church, 212 N. Jefferson St., Albany, GA 31701. You may sign the online guest book and share your own special thoughts with the family of Merrel Callaway by visiting Kimbrell-Stern's website at [www.kimbrellstern.com](http://www.kimbrellstern.com)

# Tribute Wall



“ *Merrel P. Callaway Obituary*

May 22, 2023 at 01:29 AM



“ *We just heard that Merrel died, and were very sorry to hear that. Merrel was very special. We met singing in the St. Paul's choir with Merrel. His public work, and his ongoing concern for those with less meant a lot to us, as did he personally. Merrel was special, and unfortunately there are not many more like him out there. We hope to sing with you again one day, Merrel, in the Episcopal Choir in the Sky!  
Go well, friend.*

Rebecca Bingham & Guil Prickette - May 22, 2009 at 12:00 AM



“ *The music is silent and the mold broken now that Merrel is no longer with us but his spirit will long live on in our memories. I shall miss him and will long remember and cherish his zest for life and compassion for others. Sister Martin*

Sister Martin - February 14, 2009 at 12:00 AM



“ *What a pleasant man. I remember him fondly as he taught us the grace of participating in the Albany Debutante Club.*

Kim Hood Hobbs - February 13, 2009 at 12:00 AM

GW

“ Dear Callaway Family, I can't begin to tell you what a wonderful influence Merrel and all the Callaways have been to our family. I to was one of the lucky ones who took ballroom dance lessons from Merrel and Gladys. Needless to say at first it was not something that I wanted to do. Shortly after beginning though, Merrel had a way of making you feel as though you were missing something special. For the last 35 years everytime I would see him my Heart warmed with affection. He was a very special person as are all the Callaways, for the future generation please know that you come from "Good Stock" My thoughts and prayers are with you but I can guarantee that God now has a special Angel.

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**Gus Walters** - February 12, 2009 at 12:00 AM

BF

“ A MAJOR PART OF ALBANY'S HISTORY HAS GONE, BUT HIS LOVE THIS CITY WILL NEVER BE FORGOTTEN.....A LEGACY WE SHOULD ALL SEEK.....

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**BUDDY FLEMING** - February 11, 2009 at 12:00 AM

SE

“ What sad news for us; what glorious news for heaven! I can't imagine growing up in Albany without Merrel being there. He was so much to so many - and it was all genuine. He will live on in many places and many people for a very long time. May God bless those who are left behind and may He hold you gently in His arms.  
Sara Joiner Eubanks

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**Sara Joiner Eubanks** - February 09, 2009 at 12:00 AM

TB

“ Gladys, Tom, Cantey and other family members:  
*I'm so sorry to hear of Merrel's passing, but thank God for what a full life he had. A flood of memories come to mind -- the many ballroom dance classes with Merrel and Gladys, wishing so badly I could dance like him, one very vivid memory -- dancing one night to a brand new song that I later learned was by a new group called "the Beatles" (I Saw Her Standing There), thinking how cool Merrel was with his Austin Healey and XKE, later working with him at C&S and learning at what an incredible mind he had. Our last communication was when I was in Albany and chanced upon the fact that it was his 80th birthday. I sent him a birthday card and he replied with a very kind note. Know that Marcia and I join you in rejoicing for his long and meaningful life and for all the lives he touched. He made his world a much better place for having been part of it. (I still wish I could dance like him!!) Much love to all, Toby Barfield*  
*Chapel Hill, NC*

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**Toby Barfield** - February 08, 2009 at 12:00 AM

MW

“ *Merrel was one of my longest and best friends in Albany. Always ready to listen and help in any way he could. When I worked at the C & S Bank we used to have a Chorus Line on St. Patrick's Day directed by Merrel. He will always be with many of us who knew and loved him.*  
*Mildred Huie Wilcox*

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**Mildred Huie Wilcox** - February 07, 2009 at 12:00 AM

HT

“ *I loved Merrell and I miss him already. I spent many happy evenings at Merrel's "up-stairs apt" with Ed, Howard, Keith, and Charles! I know he is very happy now!!*

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**Harriet Bragg Tate** - February 07, 2009 at 12:00 AM

CE

“ *My thoughts and prayers are with the family during this difficult time. Merrel was a joy and will be missed by many.*

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**Carlton Edwards** - February 07, 2009 at 12:00 AM

SP

“ *Merrel was a dear friend to those who worked at C&S Bank. Over the years our family has stayed in touch with Merrel. I am saddened by his death, but am grateful to have been blessed by knowing him.*

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**Sarah Portis** - February 07, 2009 at 12:00 AM

VD

“ *Merrill Has been a dear friend to me since 1989 when I first moved to Albany. He was a special client for years at Albany Therapeutic Massage Clinic. even though he has not been a client he continued to stay in touch with me I will miss his smile, compliments, and encouragement. I know he is finally at peace. God be with you. Love. Vivian*

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**Vivian Davis** - February 06, 2009 at 12:00 AM

JJ

“ *I always admired his flexibility in dance at the Albany Theatre. Many others did, too, I'm sure. My sympathy to the family.*

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**Janice Jordan** - February 06, 2009 at 12:00 AM

FH

“ *MERREL I WILL MISS YOU. WE HAD LOTS OF GREAT DAYS AT C&S*

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**FRED H. HANCOCK** - February 06, 2009 at 12:00 AM

TH

“ During a very difficult time in my life I received a note from Merrel that said:  
"I was just sitting here thinking about you and thought you might like to know it. I love you" and now my dear Merrel-  
same back to you.

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**Tina Harden** - February 06, 2009 at 12:00 AM

CR

“ Merrell will be missed--he certainly had no equal! He gave new meaning to a "wry" take on life--I'll always remember him. Regards to his family (I think I remember Cantey from school, a long time ago.)

*Charles Ring, Dallas*

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**Charles Ring** - February 06, 2009 at 12:00 AM

DW

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with the whole family. We will all miss Merrel!

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**Dimi (Pace) & Thomas Williams** - February 06, 2009 at 12:00 AM

MG

“ All of the Riley's were very fortunate to have taken ballroom dancing From Merrel & Gladys.Me being such a tomboy, Merrel would always tell my parents that he was "fine tuning" me and that he felt like he had gotten a workout after ballroom dancing with me. Our brother Ed cherished his friendship and would expend many new avenues with the knowlege that Merrel had bestowed upon him. What HUGE dancing footsteps he leaves for his family & friends to follow. My love to all the Callaways & all of their family. Love, Martha Glenn

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**Martha Glenn** - February 06, 2009 at 12:00 AM

MT

“ *Merrel was a great man in every sense of the word. In looking back over his life's record, we all admire how he supported his family that he loved so much, the causes that were dear to his heart. We will all miss him and the good humor that he always radiated.*

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**Martha and Tom Tate** - February 06, 2009 at 12:00 AM

PM

“ *Gladys, Tom, Cantey and precious "little Merrel":  
We all have heavy hearts today at the loss of a, truly, precious human being,  
"Uncle Merrel". I cannot begin to tell you guys what  
'big Merrel" meant to me, my life, & my career. He was such a friend and encouragement to everyone he loved....and there were SOO many that he loved. I am so privileged to be in those numbers. My love and sympathy to you all.*

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**Patsy Martin** - February 05, 2009 at 12:00 AM

WP

“ *I'm so sorry to hear about Merrel. Our group of ladies had been visiting him and took him out to eat on his birthday last year. He was very special and we're going to miss him.*

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**Wanda Proctor** - February 05, 2009 at 12:00 AM

CG

“ *i loved Merrel deeply and hope that he is at peace.*

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**Cheryl Gratton** - February 05, 2009 at 12:00 AM

KH

“ Albany has definitely lost a legend. I will never forget ballroom dancing classes on Sunday afternoon in Middle School, and definitely Mr. Calloway teaching us to bow for the debutante ball! What a sweet, sweet man. He will definitely be missed. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family at this time.

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**Kelly Rooks Haddock** - February 05, 2009 at 12:00 AM

SW

“ Merrel, my Merrel. How do I love thee? Let me count the ways. I love thee to the depth and breadth and height my soul can reach. You were my dear friend, my confidante, my most devoted supporter. My life without you in it will be much more lonely, but I hope you will save me a seat beside you in the choir of Angels. You will most assuredly be there. I will always love you! Shirley

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**Shirley Wirth** - February 05, 2009 at 12:00 AM

MB

“ I am so sorry to hear about the passing of Mr. Merrel. He was such a sweet and wonderful man. He loved trying to give us a hard time, but he just gave it back. He was like an uncle to all of us at Security Bank. We will miss him. Keep in mind that we have all of the family in our prayers.

*With deepest sympathy,*

*Mandy Joiner*

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**Mandy Joiner/Security Bank- northwest branch** - February 05, 2009 at 12:00 AM

HC

“ *A gentleman of extraordinary talent, generosity and kindness. Merrel was a true mentor to me (and so many), a steadfast and loyal friend. I will miss his encouragement and cherish many years of happy memories. My deep and sincere sympathy to all the Callaway family,*  
*Howard Christian*

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**Howard Christian** - February 05, 2009 at 12:00 AM

MT

“ During the early part of my banking career, which has spanned 30 years now, Merrel Callaway had a significant influence on formulating what, deep down, the direction was that I wanted my banking career to follow.

*Of course, Glenn Creech, Reba Stewart, and the late Frank Deming all contributed their insights and philosophies to me, many of which I still apply to this day.*

*I first worked for Merrel for six months in 1979-80, not long after joining C&S. In my first meeting with him, he said "Unless it makes you feel uncomfortable, call me Merrel; everybody does". It was working under Merrel's experienced tutelage during this brief time that allowed me to apply what I had learned in college. And that was important to me.*

*But it was working for him again in the mid-1980s, prior to his retirement, that I really learned from Merrel. He drove home to me the importance of (A) thirsting for more knowledge regarding both finance and commercial credit administration, and (B) diversification in the application of what I already knew. But most importantly, Merrel taught me the importance of being driven to exceed the expectations of others. It is the objective of exceeding others' expectations of me in my work environment that has followed me throughout my career. That is something I strive to achieve every working day.*

*But I would be remiss if I didn't mention how much Merrel did after his retirement. His volunteer work with so many local agencies that provide for others set a benchmark and standard that few will be able to equal. In that regard, Merrel Callaway exceeded the expectations of all who knew him.*

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**MILTON TATE** - February 05, 2009 at 12:00 AM

AW

“ *Our world has lost a great soul in losing Merrel. He was a wonderful human being, loved by his many friends.*

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**Adalyn Watts** - February 05, 2009 at 12:00 AM