



John Harrison Burney

January 20, 1913 - September 23, 2018

John Harrison Burney was born on January 20, 1913, in Line, Arkansas, to Eli Taylor Burney and Emma Caroline Garrett Burney. He was the third son of a country doctor in a sawmill town. After completing high school, he took the state teachers' exam, and worked as a bus driver for a dollar a day, teaching algebra and geometry for free (since he was going to be at the school anyway). When that school closed (many public schools closed during the Depression), he opened a contract school (\$3 per month per student) for a year. Then he worked his way through Chillicothe Business School, graduating in 1935.

In 1936, he accepted a job as secretary and bookkeeper at the Baptist Home in Ironton, MO. On his first day at the Home he met a nurse's aide to whom he was quite attracted. On July 23, 1937, he and Gladys Phillips secretly eloped. Gladys was a powerful, loving, and faithful companion for the next 73 years. They had three children: Ruth Ann; Jeanette Elaine, who is married to George Ashley; and John Taylor, who is married to Susan Wolfe Burney.

In 1953 he was elected the Superintendent of the Baptist Home. At that time the Home had a staff of 15 and 65 residents. When he retired in 1975, the Home had 185 residents and a staff of 62.

After retirement, he and Gladys volunteered at the Home for an additional 28 years, stopping only when he was told that if an accident happened while he was driving residents to hospitals, the Home would have difficulty explaining why a 90-year-old man was driving "old people" to medical facilities. At the age of 100 his eye doctor removed his restrictions for night and highway driving, but he asked to keep them because, he said, "everyone would be asking me for rides."

While in Ironton, John served as the chair of the deacons at the First Baptist Church, as financial secretary, as the head of pulpit committees, as the chair of the building committees, and (most importantly) a devout follower of Christ.

John died on September 23, 2018 at the age (as he liked to put it) of 105 years, 8 months, and 3 days. John was preceded in death by his parents, his brothers and sister, his wife, and his daughter, Ruth Ann. He is survived by his children, Jeanette and JT, four grandchildren, nine great grandchildren, and more friends than even he knew.

Events

SEP **Visitation** 10:00AM - 11:00AM

27

First Baptist Church of Ironton
111 North Knob St., Ironton, MO, US, 63650

SEP **Funeral Service** 11:00AM

27

First Baptist Church of Ironton
111 North Knob St., Ironton, MO, US, 63650

SEP **Interment**

27

Arcadia Valley Memorial Park
Ironton, MO, US, 63650

Comments



“ Mr. Burney was a dear friend of my grandparents and it wasn't until a few years ago that I got to know him personally. He was a kind and encouraging man that I always looked forward to seeing. I admired his warmth and his gracious way of talking to people. He was a fine example of living out the Christian faith and I am blessed to have known him.

I'm sad for all those he left behind. He will be dearly missed. - Kevin Harter

KEVIN HARTER - September 27 at 03:14 PM



“ The Burneys were dear friends of my parents. He and my dad were part of a bicycling group that rode miles around the valley several times per week. Occasionally we would be visiting and I would ride along. Those men were hard to keep up with!

Charles Harper - September 26 at 09:05 PM



“ John was a good friend of my dad and mine, also. The world would be a better place if more people were like John.

Tom Stamel - September 25 at 10:51 PM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of John Harrison Burney.



September 25 at 07:40 PM



“ John and Gladys Burney welcomed my wife, Barbara, and me to First Baptist Church, Ironton. We enjoying visiting at the Baptist Home. John was truly a mentor and Christian role model and we often enjoyed eating potluck meals with them.

Jerry and Barbara Gibbens
Williams Baptist University

Walnut Ridge, AR 72476

Jerry Gibbens - September 25 at 05:17 PM



“ I was privileged to know John and Mrs. Burnett for many of those years. He was a humble man of God they both blessed all of us with their ministries. We were all enriched knowing them.

Don Wideman - September 25 at 01:30 PM



“ John & Gladys also volunteered many years at the Iron Co. Senior center, serving on the board, site council & delivering home bound meals. Their friendship & support meant the world to me. I was a very young administrator & they taught me much & always had my back. John was a special man, I loved them both.
Sue Henry Wooten

Sue Wooten - September 25 at 11:59 AM



“ John was truly an amazing mentor to me personally. Not only did he exhibit great leadership but taught us all how to age gracefully. I thank the Lord that he shared the life of John and Gladys Burney to The Baptist Home family and to many others.

Steven & Kathie Jones - September 25 at 10:39 AM



“ Mr. Burney was my Dad's closest friend and fishing buddy. He was also was one of the finest Christian servants I ever knew. He finished his race and leaves this earth a much finer place.

Karen Wilkerson Harter - September 24 at 05:06 PM