

## William Henry Atkinson III

September 2, 2015

William Henry Atkinson, III, 51, died Wednesday, September 2, 2015 at Baptist Memorial Hospital in Oxford, MS.

Born in Miami, FL, Mr. Atkinson had lived in the Oxford area for many years. He was best known as "Big E" which was his persona when performing his act as an Elvis tribute artist with his band, The Mississippi Boys. Having a generous heart, Mr. Atkinson performed benefits, charity functions and many other shows at no charge. He took much pleasure out of helping people any way he could. "Big E" was a greeter at Walmart in Oxford where he welcomed everyone with a smile and often a hug. His miniature dachshunds, Elvis, Priscilla and Jessie will sorely miss him.

Visitation will be held Thursday, September 3, 2015, 5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. at North Oxford Baptist Church. A graveside service will be held Friday, September 4, 2015 at 11:00 a.m. at Cambridge Cemetery, CR 202, Abbeville, MS. Rev. Jim Peterman will officiate. Coleman Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

Survivors include his wife, Deborah Atkinson of Oxford, MS; his father, William Henry Atkinson, Jr. of Oxford, MS; five sisters, Janice McPherson, Vickie Atkinson, Jennie Foster all of Houlka, MS, Tiffany Atkinson of Bruce, MS and Michelle Brown of IL; one brother, Jerry Dixon of Houlka, MS.

His mother, Paulette Coleman, preceded Mr. Atkinson in death.

Memorial donations may be made to the Will Atkinson Funeral Fund, c/o Coleman Funeral Home, P.O. Box 160, Oxford, MS 38655.

Online condolences may be left on the Tribute Wall of this website.

# Cemetery Details

## Cambridge Cemetery

Bay Springs Road  
Oxford, MS 38655

# Previous Events

## Visitation

SEP 3. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

North Oxford Baptist Church  
304 County Road 101  
Oxford, MS 38655

## Graveside Service

SEP 4. 11:00 AM (CT)

Cambridge Cemetery  
CR 202  
Abbeville, MS 38601

# Tribute Wall



“ Coleman Funeral Home of Oxford created a Tribute Video in memory of William Henry Atkinson III



Coleman Funeral Home - September 03, 2015 at 09:30 AM

PI

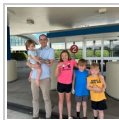
Just Monday James and I were in Walmart when the Big E came around the corner into the isle we were on and with that wonderful smile of his he greeted us asking us how we were. I asked him if he was going to sing us a song to which he broke into a verse of "Love Me Tender." James asked him where his microphone was. He reached into his cart, pulled out a cleaning brush, put it up to his chin and kept on singing. We all had a good laugh. The was just the fun loving guy he was. He will be missed.

Pamela Ivy - September 03, 2015 at 07:51 PM



He was the best brother anyone could ever had. When our mother died he became my mom as well as my big brother. I don't know what I am going to do without him!

Michelle Brown - September 07, 2015 at 08:07 AM



\*Have

Michelle Brown - September 07, 2015 at 11:30 AM

KB

I love him and miss him . He was a real friend . He served god . They are the kind that is an asset to the human race

Kas-Sondra Bowie - January 10, 2023 at 07:57 AM

DK

“ Rest easy my old singing friend .....

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**Dan K** - September 08, 2022 at 12:22 AM

LR

“ 9-8-15

*I just wanted to know that you & family are in my prayers of the loss of your Bill. I only knew him a short time, but he was a king, personable man who obviously loved life. May God comfort you & bless you during this difficult time. Lorraine Randall-Oxford, MS*



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**Lorraine Randall** - September 08, 2015 at 12:25 PM

DB

“ Deb Bonds lit a candle in memory of William Henry Atkinson III



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**Deb Bonds** - September 07, 2015 at 02:46 PM

LT

“ I saw Mr. Atkinson at Walmart time after time and always heard him from 1-2 aisles over humming Elvis songs and he always lifted my spirits after we chatted a few minutes. I hope his family knows how much happiness he brought to all of us who had the opportunity to know, or know of, him. He will be sadly missed!

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**lynn treas** - September 05, 2015 at 12:24 AM

LB

*I have been blessed to have had Will as my brother in law, from the first day I talked with him, he showed love and compassion, in a way that is not shown so freely in this day and time. Whenever you spoke with Will he shined. Taking such a beautiful soul so early, makes a very sad place in my heart. The world needs more caring and loving people...*

*Sing the never ending song Will, heaven is blessed with a Angel! !# Love, Lisa Monk Butler*

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**Lisa butler** - September 06, 2015 at 10:59 PM

DM

“ *Will was the most loving and most gentle person you`d ever meet. He made you feel like a long time friend when you meet him. He had the best sense of humor and a very quick wit. He was a fantastic entertainer and if you never saw him perform, you`ve really missed something. His heart was HUGE and he loved the Lord and was never ashamed to mention him in a show or casual contact....it was as if he had just got off the phone with his buddy Jesus a couple hours ago. Will made the world a better place and cared so much for people. We all cherish the time we had him and will miss him so!!! Thanks for the memories!!!! Rock on Big E !!!!*

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**Donna Morgan** - September 04, 2015 at 04:00 PM

MM

“ Although we didn't know Will personally I would like to share a memory. My daughter got married July 5th, 2013 and on the 6th we had the reception at The Lyric in Oxford. All of the guests were out of towners with about half the crowd from Virginia. The party was moving along well with The Kenny Brown Band playing with a few people on the dance floor. All of a sudden "Elvis" appeared! The crowd went berserk! It was mass pandemonium as EVERYBODY hit the dance floor! He electrified the crowd! Our reception became something other than just a "reception"! It turned into a party that none will ever forget! He sang his heart out and wooed the ladies with his charm!

Thank you for such wonderful memories and tons of fun pictures to show everyone.

Marcia McGlohn

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**Marcia Shurlds McGlohn** - September 03, 2015 at 05:16 PM

MM

“ Will, what a blessing you have been to so many. I first met you at the Oxford Campground many years ago. You came and sang to us during one of the services. I have never forgotten your beautiful voice! I'm so glad that I had the privilege of meeting you and hearing you sing.

Blessings to you Deborah, I pray for comfort and peace in the days to come.

Marie Mills

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**Marie Mills** - September 03, 2015 at 03:21 PM

TS

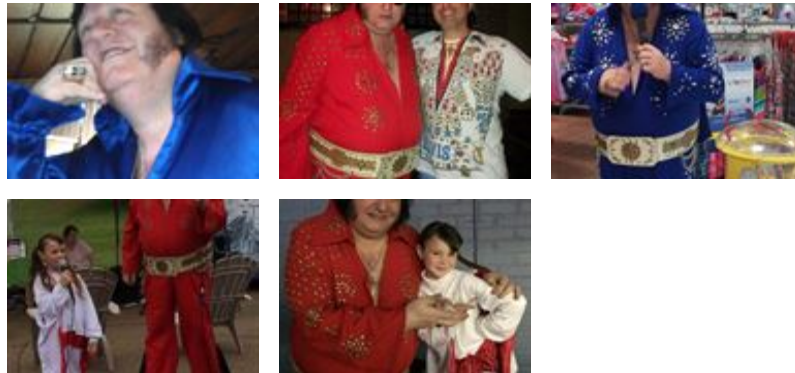
“ Sweet sweet guy! Will miss his smiling happy face at Wal-Mart!

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**Tonya R. Shultice** - September 03, 2015 at 11:00 AM



“ 38 files added to the album LifeTributes



Coleman Funeral Home - September 03, 2015 at 09:23 AM



“ Will holds a special place in everyone's heart. He had a kind word and a true smile for all he met, from the smallest baby to the old timers. He loved and entertained us all. Rest in Peace Big "E".

Lynda Sockwell - September 03, 2015 at 08:54 AM



“ Will you sure will be missed by me and so many. You touched so many lives during your lifetime. Sending prayers for Deborah and the rest of your family. Heavens choir just became a little sweeter!



Lori Yancy - September 03, 2015 at 06:03 AM

DC

“ Deborah Mills & Mike Carpenter purchased the Footprints Tribute Blanket for the family of William Henry Atkinson III.



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**Deborah Mills & Mike Carpenter** - September 03, 2015 at 03:00 AM

WB

“ I will always remember when will got his cd made and when he saw me at work when working at chili's,he said wendy I want you to have this cd,I will always cherish it! Love ya will! TCB FOREVER! !!

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**wendy bullard** - September 03, 2015 at 02:53 AM

BA

“ On Wednesday August 26, 2015 we talked with Will at Walmart. He was looking forward to doing the 50s show at the VFW. He said he looked forward to seeing me in my poodle skirt and saddle oxford's. A few months ago he did a wonderful show at the VFW and we were looking forward to his return. He will be missed by many including several VFW members. We all loved him much and we miss him. Good bye friend!

*Bill and Margaret Arnold*

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**Bill and Margaret Arnold** - September 03, 2015 at 12:55 AM

KS

“ I got to meet this sweet man working at Walmart last month when the college kids was moving in. my coworker & I was red lining & he stopped to welcome us to the Oxford store & told us he would sing for us before we go back to our store. Always greeted everyone with a smile . Prayers for his family . He will be singing with the true Elvis now in heaven & sharing how he carried on the Elvis songs n look.  
RIP Mr Will ( Elvis)

Kristine Seay - September 02, 2015 at 11:57 PM

RA

“ RAT sent a virtual gift in memory of William Henry Atkinson III



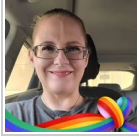
RAT - September 02, 2015 at 11:45 PM



“ Tricia Ladner lit a candle in memory of William Henry Atkinson III



Tricia Ladner - September 02, 2015 at 11:23 PM



“ I worked with Big E many years ago at Backyard Burger, and he quickly became one of my favorite people. Always smiling, always friendly, always awesome. I will always miss the time you broke out into "Love Me Tender" when I showed up for my shift in a bad mood, and from then on, I couldn't stop smiling. Heaven truly gained an angel today. I'm sure Elvis himself welcomed you into heaven! Go rest high on that mountain, Big E!

Tricia Ladner - September 02, 2015 at 11:23 PM



“ he just made your day anytime you when in wal-mart. a wonderful man.

phyllis anderson - September 02, 2015 at 11:09 PM



“ Mollie lit a candle in memory of William Henry Atkinson III



mollie - September 02, 2015 at 10:58 PM



“ Will never forget him rocking Walmart, to raise money for St. Jude, he was an awesome person.



Amanda Rodgers Guzman - September 02, 2015 at 10:47 PM

NC

“ *Nellie Crooms lit a candle in memory of William Henry Atkinson III*



Nellie Crooms - September 02, 2015 at 10:37 PM

SC

“ *Samantha Connell lit a candle in memory of William Henry Atkinson III*



samantha connell - September 02, 2015 at 08:31 PM

RB

“ *Reba Bland purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of William Henry Atkinson III.*



Reba Bland - September 02, 2015 at 08:29 PM

LI

“ *Oh how happy he made everyone around him. Many nights when he would perform, I would be driving by and he would call out my name and embarrass me. Other nights I would be on foot around the square and he would chase me down and give me a big Ole bear hug! He was such a kind and generous soul that will be missed by our community.*

Libby - September 02, 2015 at 08:20 PM

KM

“ I'll never forget your shows you did at the Veterans home our friend and your biggest fan you know who will be so sad when he finds out I'll never forget what a good heart you had and the love you had for others God bless your family for one will have a hard time getting over the pain of losing you love ya brother sing your heart out up there!!!! :)

Kourtney Miller - September 02, 2015 at 07:33 PM

GW

I can just hear you singing with the angels for JESUS. YOU WILL BE MISSED. I WILL MISS YOU SHOUTING , HEY CUZ

Gail wren - September 02, 2015 at 11:15 PM

PC

Oh! how my heart breaks to know that Will, the "Big E", won't be in WalMart to give me my big hug anymore. He was one wonderful sweet person whom I never saw without a smile! We would always talk a few minutes and I always ask him to sing a little of "Love Me Tender"...which he would do. I'll miss you, "Big E" but will certainly see you again some day. I love you. R.I.P.

Pat Croisant - September 03, 2015 at 12:43 AM

KM

“ I'll never forget your shows you did at the funeral home our friend and your biggest fan you know who will be so sad when he finds out I'll never forget what a good heart you had and the live you had for others God bless your family for one will have a hard time getting over the pain of losing you love ya brother sing your heart out up there!!!! :)

Kourtney Miller - September 02, 2015 at 07:30 PM



“ *My dear friend we are so saddened at losing you. you were such a hero and an amazing friend. We will miss you terribly. <3 Always Desiree and Bobby Andrews*

Desiree Andrews - September 02, 2015 at 07:09 PM



“ *The last time we heard him sing was at the Oxford Lions Club 75th Anniversary Dinner on August 29th. He sang encore after encore. Today, I know he is singing "How Great Thou Art" with the king to The King! Thank you, Will, for loving us and sharing your talent and love for Our Lord.*

Richie Dickson - September 02, 2015 at 06:26 PM



“ *He was always a joy to hear sing. We met him several times at Rocknrollcafe Graceland in memphis. He always made my daughter smile knowing she was sick he always asked about her and would sing just to her. Thinking of you Deborah. Debra ann and amy*



Debra Ann - September 02, 2015 at 06:15 PM



“ *What a sweet soul he was. He will be greatly missed! Such a young age to die, just like Elvis.*

Ken and Lisa Logan - September 02, 2015 at 05:54 PM

TM

“ *Awesome singer and always loved seeing him in town, such a sweet gentleman. Condolences to the family and praying for you all as well.* ”



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**Tashia Moody** - September 02, 2015 at 05:41 PM

KR

“ *He was such a wonderful man. He will be missed greatly.* ”



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**Katie Roney** - September 02, 2015 at 05:03 PM

DS

“ *We hired Will to sing for my mother in laws birthday, after seeing him sing at Holiday Lodge in Teckville. It was obvious that he was very talented and loved the Lord because he always included a few gospel songs into his shows. He also prayed. Such a wonderful man. We will miss him dearly.* ”



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**Dennis & Judi Sides** - September 02, 2015 at 05:02 PM

 Letty Taylor

“ *He was a sweet person always smiling.* ”



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**Letty Taylor** - September 02, 2015 at 04:54 PM

KB

“ *Karol Hudson Barmer lit a candle in memory of William Henry Atkinson III*



**Karol Hudson Barmer** - September 02, 2015 at 04:26 PM

TH

“ *I met him threw my mom Frieda Hankins he was singing outside Walmart , he was truly fine man I love to here him sing Elvis songs*

**tammy hudson** - September 02, 2015 at 04:13 PM

AT

“ *Will Atkinson came into our lives truly sent by God. He selflessly became my dad's driver when my mom could no longer drive. He drove for my dad after my mother's death. He blessed everyone he met with his love for people. His smile was infectious! His singing was truly a God given talent. He will always be a member of our family. He will be truly missed. My heart, thoughts and prayers are with his sweet wife, Debbie, and his family as they go though the difficult days ahead of them. Adranelle Cantin Tabor and Sam Tabor*

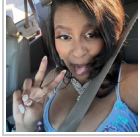
**Adranelle Cantin Tabor** - September 02, 2015 at 04:10 PM

LD

“ *Liz Deleo lit a candle in memory of William Henry Atkinson III*



**Liz Deleo** - September 02, 2015 at 03:43 PM



“ I met Big E at benefit for a friend husband cancer benefit . He was great. It's was a wonderful time with friends and family members. Then later Big E was at Taylor Catfish Place and come to find out he was married to another friends sister Ms Deborah. He has given his time love for Elvis to entrain us . Now he is sing with Elvis up in Heaven and til we meet again .



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**Michelle Berryhill** - September 02, 2015 at 03:35 PM



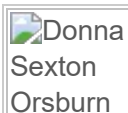
“ I remember Will, first as a 4th grade student whom I tutored in reading. Later, he would volunteer at various venues as an Elvis impersonator. His big voice reverberated throughout the auditoriums.

*Everyone loved Will, and I was no exceptions send my most sincere condolences to Paulette and Tiffany.*

*Trudy Green Forrest*

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**Trudy Green Forrest** - September 02, 2015 at 03:32 PM



“ Our dear friend big E...I couldn't go a day in walmart without you making us all laugh...singing always... your a great person, and this world will not be the same without your presence. ..R.I.P dear friend.

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**Donna Sexton Orsburn** - September 02, 2015 at 03:31 PM

AB

“ *Anita Burt lit a candle in memory of William Henry Atkinson III*



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**Anita Burt** - September 02, 2015 at 03:13 PM

AB

*I remember when you sung to me on my birthday, and when I worked in grocery with you I could always hear you on the next aisle singing your heart out. One last thing when I would walk in the breakroom you would always say " Hey new girl", that's something I will miss you saying. R.I.H Elvis you will be greatly missed.*

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**Anita Burt** - September 02, 2015 at 03:19 PM



“ *1 file added to the album New Album Name*



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**Jeremy Turner** - September 02, 2015 at 02:33 PM