



Mr. William "Bill" Clay Dyess

January 17, 1940 - July 30, 2025

William "Bill" Clay Dyess, age 85, of Arab, Alabama, passed away on July 30, 2025.

Born in State Line, Mississippi, in January, 1940, Bill grew up in Mobile, Alabama. He earned a BS degree at Auburn University and finished an MBA at Mississippi State University. After college, Bill served in the U.S. Army, where he completed jump school.

In 1955, as teenage cadets in the Civil Air Patrol Camp in Montgomery, Alabama, Bill met Gayle Lee, who would later become his wife and lifelong companion. They married in 1960 and built a family and a home together, literally—in the mid 1970s, Bill constructed a two-story colonial house for them with his own hands.

Professionally, Mr. Dyess was a Certified Public Accountant, and he was an avid hunter, but his greatest satisfaction was a lifelong love of airplanes and flying. In his 50s, he began building an airplane in his garage, methodically working evenings and weekends. When the plane outgrew the garage, he moved the project to a hangar at a small local airport, where he completed the plane and flew it proudly until the age of 80.

Bill was a man of faith, a believer in Christ who served his church as a deacon, Sunday School teacher, and in various ministries. A patriotic man, Bill volunteered for years at the Veterans Hospital in Nashville.

He is survived by his wife, Gayle Lee Dyess; his daughters, Julie Dyess Kirk (Clarence S. Kirk) and Mary Anne Dyess Crowder (Patrick J. Crowder); his

grandsons, Theodore L. Ellis, William C. Ellis, and Joseph C. Crowder (Katelyn Bergey Crowder), and his sister, Betty Morgan. He was preceded in death by his parents, Henry Clay Dyess and Mary Vea Risen Dyess, and his sister, Joann Faggard.

A graveside service will be held on Tuesday, August 5, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. at Elmwood Cemetery in Birmingham. Friends and family are invited to attend and share in remembering his life.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Operation Heal Our Patriots. Arab Heritage Memorial Chapel, Directing.

Cemetery Details

Elmwood Cemetery

600 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive
Birmingham, AL 35211

Previous Events

Graveside Service

AUG 5. 1:00 PM (CT)

Elmwood Cemetery
600 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive
Birmingham, AL 35211