



John "Buggy" Lawson Delk

December 17, 1928 - April 15, 2020

Ecclesiastes 3:2 teaches us that there is a time to be born and time to die. In God's ordered plan, John Lawson Delk, 91, was born on December 17, 1928, the 11th child to the union of Decatur Dawson Delk and Virginia "Jennie" Johnson Delk. After a blessed life of service, John answered his Master's call to come home on Wednesday, April 15, 2020—at the close of the day in his sovereign peninsula cottage in the Historic Riverview community of Smithfield, Va.

"The Mayor of Riverview" or "Buggy," as he was affectionately called by those who knew him well, served his community with great pride. In his "griot" role, he was the preservationist and archivist of the oral traditions and history, telling the stories of families and life as it unfolded through the years in "Riverview" and town.

Having been reared in a supportive and well-grounded home, religion, education, work and civic responsibility were requisite components of his everyday life. A student of the segregated public educational system, he graduated from Isle of Wight Training School, the Class of 1948. He would later enter the United States military and serve as a field nurse/medic in the Army during the Korean War for two years. After an honorable discharge, he would go on to live in East Orange, New Jersey, and work for more than 20 years at the East Orange Veteran's Administration Medical Center as an orderly. Upon returning to Smithfield to care for his mother, he continued employment responsibilities and duties in the clinic at Newport News Shipbuilding. John would later retire from Isle of Wight County Schools' Smithfield High School as a custodian, having cultivated many lifelong and rewarding relationships with administration, faculty, staff, students and co-workers. In retirement he worked part-time at the Smithfield Times in preparing the newspaper for distribution. Brother Delk was a devoted member of the Main Street Baptist Church, where he entered to worship and serve God's people through his ministerial gift of hospitality and help on the Joint Usher Board. His one last desire, which he ultimately did not get to do, was to attend Sunday service physically one more time. Well, we think God let him know in His own mysterious way that there was a more solemn appointment that was to be kept with Him scheduled for April 15.

He was preceded in death by his aforementioned parents, and subsequently his ten siblings—five sisters and five brothers: namely, Mary Rose Holoman, Julia Lock, Dorothy Wilkerson, Frances Delk, Gertrude “Tex” Boothe, Decatur Delk, Robert Delk, James Delk, Richard Delk and George Delk.

John is survived by a loving and extended web of nieces, nephews, cousins, in-laws, other relatives and friends.

Countless family members and community friends gravitated toward and consulted with “Uncle Buggy,” “Buggy,” “Mr. Delk” or “John Lawson” for assistance regarding lawn and gardening, cooking, family connections, historical events, or just sage advice on almost any topic from this “old man who has been around a long time.” He took great pride in filling orders for his famous “tipsy-cake” or homemade ice cream during the holidays or any special occasion. His picturesque yard and well-maintained natural surroundings reflected the hard work and time he expended in keeping his iconic cottage reserve beautiful. To this day, John’s peaceful retreat—overlooking the scenic wildlife-filled marshes bordering the Pagan River—is a wonder to be observed by many native and tourist passers-by.

A people-person indeed, he was the generational linkage of family that connected all of the extended family; he knew where everyone was and had contact to most everyone by whatever means available. In later years, neighbors and family anticipated watching Smithfield’s Fourth of July fireworks display from his humble abode perched on the bluff of the Pagan on a midsummer night. Undoubtedly, Buggy’s ice cream and cake, reminiscent of olden days of family gatherings on the hill, would be the real attraction of the get-togethers.

Buggy was Buggy, and there probably was no one like him. You might not have “liked” everything Uncle Buggy said or did; but one thing for sure is “you just had to love him.” He was and always will remain family.

ACTS OF COMMEMORATION FOR JOHN LAWSON DELK

**Intermittent Visitation and Viewing: Monday, April 20, 2020

4:00 – 6:30 Visitation Hours

Main Street Baptist Church
517 Main Street

Smithfield, Va.

followed by

**Military Honors and Meditation by Pastor James M. Harrison

*6:30 – 7:00 Private Service (To be streamed)

**Private Interment: Tuesday, April 21, 2020, 10 a.m.

Albert G. Horton Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery

Suffolk, Va.

*To be streamed

** Limited capacity because of COVID-19 restrictions

In lieu of flowers, please make donations to Main Street Baptist Church.

Cemetery

Albert G Horton Jr. Veterans Memorial Cemetery

5310 Milner's Road
Suffolk, VA,

Events

APR 20 Visitation 04:00PM - 06:30PM

Main Street Baptist Church
517 Main Street, Smithfield, VA, US,
23430

Comments



“ A webcast video has been added.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SERVICE](#)

J. T. Fisher Funeral Services - April 20, 2020 at 01:30 PM



“ Buggy's service

Martha - April 20, 2020 at 06:33 PM



“ Tastefully done and respectful for the family. Thank you for sharing this webcast during this pandemic siege our nation is under. Dr. Harrison speaks as if there are thousands of people. He is a wonderful pastor and Main Street is fortunate to have such a caring individual. Thank you Mr. Fisher for your professionalism and attention to detail. The compassion you have for the grieving family is evident by the tender care for the deceased.

LaVerne Gray Davis

LaVerne - April 20, 2020 at 06:58 PM



“ May my Uncle Rest In Peace. The phone calls, his sense of humor and the love he had for his family will be missed. Your niece Robin Robinson

Robin Robinson - April 20, 2020 at 06:59 PM



“ Take your rest Soldier.

judith henderson - April 22, 2020 at 11:12 AM



“ To the memory and legacy of a great patriarch. The humor that laced his wisdom was a testament to God's grace and mercy in his struggle between spirit and the flesh. He reminded us that we are children of the light with the mission to show the love of Christ through our fruit.

Lee & Irene

Lee & Irene - April 22, 2020 at 01:36 PM



“ TO: The Family of John Lawson Delk

“A memory is a keepsake of time that lives forever”

In the Journey called life some people leave a mark so deep that it is impossible to forget them.

The Riverview Community mourns the deep loss of its Mayor who we knew as John Lawson Delk or Buggy- a kind soul who gave much good advice and shared much of what he had to neighbors and friends.

John Lawson was an integral part of our neighborhood; always jovial and interested in what was beneficial to all of the residents. When you heard him laugh it made you laugh too. Wednesday night, April 15, 2020 our community was changed forever as we learned that his physical time with us had come to an end. Riverview will never be the same!

We realize words of comfort cannot meet the magnitude of your grief. Sorrows are like ripples on the water. They come and they go. Memories remain forever. When you feel sad think of all the good times spent together of a life well lived. They surely will bring smiles to your faces.

Lovingly Submitted,
Riverview Community

Martha Jackson - April 19, 2020 at 05:33 PM



“ Martha Jackson lit a candle in memory of John "Buggy" Lawson Delk



Martha Jackson - April 19, 2020 at 05:29 PM



“ From Edna, Jennifer & Joe purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of John "Buggy" Lawson Delk.



From Edna, Jennifer & Joe - April 18, 2020 at 10:43 AM



“ Kimberly and Tord Malmgren purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of John "Buggy" Lawson Delk.



Kimberly and Tord Malmgren - April 17, 2020 at 10:27 AM



“ Uncle Buggy was a true original. I will always appreciate being lucky enough to have been a part of his life and to have had him in my life. I will miss hearing his laugh and all the stories he used to tell me.

Kimberly Golden-Malmgren - April 17, 2020 at 10:16 AM



“ Cousin Buggy was such a cool and funny dude! He is so missed.
Jocelyn

Jocelyn Morant - April 17, 2020 at 10:59 PM



“ Condolences to the Delk family. May you be comforted and blessed by the Almighty during your time of bereavement.

Evelyn Hamlin Blount - April 18, 2020 at 10:08 PM



“ To the memory and legacy of a great patriarch. The humor that laced his wisdom was a testament to God's grace and mercy in his struggle between spirit and the flesh. He reminded us that we are children of the light with the mission to show the love of Christ through our fruit.

Lee & Irene

Lee & Irene - April 21, 2020 at 12:38 AM



“ Buggy was funny as can be. He always made me laugh. I'll miss you, Buggy!

Cassandra Wilkerson - April 22, 2020 at 06:19 PM



“ The family of the late John Lawson "Buggy" Delk would like to thank each of you for all acts of kindness during his illness and passing. Your phone calls and visits will forever be remembered. May God be with each of you and stay safe as we go through this turbulent time.

Judy Uzzle

Judy Uzzle - April 23, 2020 at 08:22 PM



“ The family of the late John Lawson "Buggy" Delk would like to thank you for all acts of kindness shown during his illness and transition. Your prayers, phone calls and visits will always be remembered. He was a unique person and we all loved him because "Buggy" was Buggy. We will truly miss him. As we travel through this journey of coronavirus COVID-19, stay safe and call one another just to say "hi - how are you?". May God bless each of you .

Judy Uzzle - April 24, 2020 at 12:20 AM



“ Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of John "Buggy" Lawson Delk.



April 16, 2020 at 11:11 PM