



## Alla Mae Taylor

October 6, 1929 - February 27, 2015

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Mrs. Alla Mae Taylor

Mrs. Alla Mae Taylor, 85, of Renton, Washington, died at 12:15 a.m. February 27, 2015, under hospice care at her daughter's home in Renton. Mrs. Taylor was diagnosed with Progressive Bulbar Palsy (a form of ALS – Lou Gehrig's disease) in March 2014.

Funeral services for Mrs. Taylor will be held at 11 a.m. Friday, March 6, 2015, at the First Baptist Church in Barnsdall, Oklahoma, with Rev. Tom Cox officiating. Visitation will be at the Stumpff Barnsdall Funeral Home the evening of Thursday, March 5, 2015. Graveside services will be held at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, March 7, 2015, at the South Fork Cemetery in Gurdon, Arkansas, with Brother James McCain of the Sycamore Church in Whelen Springs, Arkansas, officiating. Local funeral arrangements are under the direction of the Stumpff Barnsdall Funeral Home.

A memorial fund has been established, and those who wish may send their contributions to the First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 939, Barnsdall, Oklahoma, 74002.

Mrs. Taylor was born at home in Dobyville, Arkansas, on October 6, 1929, the second daughter of Joseph Wheeler Barfield and Gracie Ophelia (McDaniel) Barfield. She grew up five miles from Gurdon, Arkansas, where her family farmed and attended a local country school, entering first grade at age 4. When her father learned that graduates of Arkadelphia High School would receive a fellowship to Ouachita Baptist College, they moved to Arkadelphia, Arkansas, at the start of her junior year of high school, and she graduated from Arkadelphia High School at age 16. She graduated with a bachelor's degree in English education from Ouachita Baptist College at age 20.

Mrs. Taylor taught high school in West Memphis, Arkansas, for a couple of years before getting married. She later served as a substitute teacher at Barnsdall High School. She married Hugh Gilbert Taylor, Jr., on August 31, 1952, at the Shady Grove Baptist Church near Curtis, Arkansas. Although Hugh lived in Oklahoma and Alla Mae in Arkansas, they became pen pals through a farmer's magazine, eventually fell in love, and Hugh came to Arkansas to meet her and her family in person. They made their first home in Beaver, Oklahoma, where she taught school until the birth of their son Hugh Gilbert Taylor III in Perryton, Texas, in July 1955. They moved to Pershing, Oklahoma, in 1956 where they lived when their daughter Sheryl Ruth Taylor was born in November 1958. Mr. and Mrs. Taylor made their home in Pershing until Hugh passed away in 2011. Mrs. Taylor learned to drive when Sheryl was in third grade so that both children could take piano lessons. She spent countless hours driving both children back and forth between Pershing and Barnsdall for piano lessons, basketball and band practices, as well as 4-H and other school activities. The Taylors also adopted almost any homeless cat that showed up at their door in Pershing, and there were many over the years. After her husband's death, she and her six cats moved to her old family home that her father built in Arkadelphia, Arkansas, to be near her only sister, Virginia Johnson. In October 2013, she moved with her remaining three cats

to live with her daughter, first in Maple Valley, Washington, and in July 2014 to their new home in Renton, Washington.

She was a member of the First Baptist Church in Barnsdall, Oklahoma, since 1956 where she served as a Sunday school teacher in the children's department for a number of years. In the 1960s, she belonged to the Pershing Ladies Home Economics club and sewed competitively for the Osage County Fair and Dress Review. She was a lifelong football fan, especially of the Dallas Cowboys who she got to the playoffs this year through the power of prayer, but even God couldn't get them to the Super Bowl. She rooted for the Seahawks instead. More than football, she loved her five grandsons and spent countless hours with them playing baseball, board games or whatever made them happy. They especially loved eating her Beef Porcupines which she made for every visit at their request.

Two of her favorite memories were seeing John Denver in concert with her daughter in Tulsa in 1982 and seeing Don Knotts perform the lead role in "On Golden Pond" in 2003 with her daughter's family at The New Theater Restaurant in Overland Park, Kansas. During the last two years, she saw the Rocky Mountains, took flights to Oklahoma and Arkansas, drove through the Glenwood Springs Canyon in Colorado and the Logan Canyon in Utah, saw the Snake River Canyon in Twin Falls, Idaho, drove through Mount Rainier National Park, dined at the Sky City Restaurant atop the Space Needle in Seattle, took a brunch cruise with her daughter's family on Lake Washington and Lake Union, and spent Mother's Day 2014 at Teatro Zinzanni, a dinner-circus-cabaret show in Seattle. She toured the Kubota Japanese Gardens in Seattle with three of her grandsons in September 2014, proclaiming it "a perfect day, if only Gilbert could have been here." (She always called her husband by his middle name.)

Mrs. Taylor maintained a rare determination to hold off each step of ALS as it progressively and inevitably robbed her of her independence -- one concession at a time, only when necessary and no sooner. The disease stole her voice and ability to swallow first, but she continued to communicate with notes in her beautiful handwriting and accepted the necessity of tube feeding in June 2014 with grace. As her lungs weakened and destroyed her stamina, she accepted a wheelchair as a necessity for longer trips, even flying to Arkansas in September 2014 for a last visit with her sister. When her balance became an issue and there was no other way, she used a cane. Even though she could no longer speak and her sister is deaf, they wrote each other two letters a week. She met each challenge that came her way without complaint, always greeting any visitors with a smile, a challenge in itself because of the nature of the neurodegenerative disease which paralyzed her lower facial muscles. She wrote her last two letters on February 19, but read the ones she received after that. She read her Bible and prayed daily. Mrs. Taylor was especially proud and grateful for the help of her grandson Grant who handled most of her lunchtime feedings, other daytime needs and took her to some doctor's appointments. She also was very grateful for the help of Edna West, her son-in-law's grandmother, who came from Texas to help on January 10, 2015, and whose previous experience caring for end-of-life patients was invaluable to both Mrs. Taylor and Sheryl.

Mrs. Taylor is survived by her sister Virginia Johnson of Arkadelphia, Arkansas; her daughter and son-in-law Sheryl and Trent Freeman of Renton, Washington; her daughter-in-law Gayla Taylor of El Reno, Oklahoma; five grandsons: Derek Houck of Van Nuys, California, Adam Houck of Independence, Missouri, Grant Houck of Renton, Washington, Michael Taylor of Weatherford, Oklahoma, and Travis Taylor of Wayne, Oklahoma; a sister-in-law, Blanch Taylor of Wichita Falls, Texas; three cats, Brandon, Raven and Katarina of Renton, Washington; another cat, Felix, who was adopted by Duane Bohannon of Covington, Washington; and yet another cat, Snowflake,

who went to live with Derek in Los Angeles in 2011 after her husband Hugh passed away. Mrs. Taylor was preceded in death by her parents, her husband, her brother-in-law Frank Taylor and her son Hugh Gilbert “Rocky” Taylor III, her beloved dog Fluffy and more rescued cats than any of us can remember.

PDF Printable Version

# Tribute Wall



“ *Alla Mae Taylor*

October 23, 2023 at 04:40 AM



“ *Alla Mae Taylor*

October 06, 2023 at 03:15 PM



“ *The Staff at Stumpff Funeral Home wishes to express our deepest sympathy to the family and friends. We hope that everyone shares a favorite memory and that this memorial brings the life experiences shared with Alla to her family and friends.*

**Stumpff Funeral Home** - March 06, 2015 at 12:00 AM