



Mel Tillis

August 8, 1932 - November 19, 2017

Country music legend, Lonnie Melvin (Mel) Tillis left this earth for his heavenly home November 19, 2017 after a long illness. Mel was baptized at a young age at Canal Point Baptist Church. Mel was born August 8, 1932 in Tampa, Florida. He was the third child of Burma Rogers Tillis and Lonnie Lee Tillis. The family eventually settled in Pahokee, Florida. At a young age, a bout of malaria left Mel with a speech impediment, stuttering. His mother encouraged him to minimize his stutter with humor. He became a natural storyteller, learned the guitar and patterned his love of music after the greats of the day, Red Foley, Bob Wills, Carter family and others. Mel graduated from Pahokee High School with the goal of playing football for his beloved Florida Gators. He instead found himself serving as a baker in the Air Force, serving in Okinawa and fine tuning his talents with his first band...The Westerners. Mel's talent for entertaining led him to pursue a music career in earnest in Nashville. The record labels told him, they needed copywriters and thus began his songwriting career. "My songs are all blessings, they were just there." His songwriting success led him to a 60 year journey as a singer, actor, writer and successful business man. He won every major award he could for his accomplishments in the music field including a National Medal of Arts, induction into the Country Music Hall of Fame and was a member of the Grand Ole Opry. Modeling his mentor Burl Ives, he also found time to become a 33 degree Freemason. Later in life, he penned his first novel "Acting Sheriff" and also began painting. His paintings have raised thousands of dollars for the Shriners Children's

Hospital. Never one to be still for long, he traveled with his beloved band, The Statesiders until late 2015. His proudest role was that as a father. His children entertained with him at his Branson, Mo. Theater for many years. Mel is survived by brother Richard Tillis of Bolivar, Mo., sister Linda Crosby of Chapmansboro, Tennessee, partner Kathy Demonaco, five children Pam, Connie, Cindy, Mel Jr., Carrie from a first marriage to Doris; and, a daughter Hannah with Judy Edwards. He also has 6 grandchildren and one great grandson, Ray. He is preceded in death by both parents. Sister. Imogene Burdeshaw, and second wife Julia Edwards. Mel divided his time between a farm in Ashland City, Tenn. and his ranch in Silver Springs, where he lived the last year. He passed in his sleep after a respiratory and intestinal illness at Munroe Regional Hospital. A funeral service will take place at the Ocklawaha Bridge Baptist Church on Saturday November 25 at 3PM. Internment will be at a later date. Roberts Funeral Homes Bruce West Chapel made the arrangements. Condolences may be shared with the family through this online guestbook.

Tribute Wall

TA

“ Thoughts, prayers and love to the family. I am so sorry for your loss. I had the privilege of working with Mel on several occasions. What a wonderful entertainer and kind man. He will be missed by many. God Bless!!!

Tammy Askew - November 25, 2017 at 12:00 AM

HS

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with you Mary Tillis Brixey and Allen Tillis and the rest of the family. Mel will always be remembered and we will cherish the moments that we had with him and all of the laughter! God Bless and comfort you all!

Harvey and Martha Spears - November 25, 2017 at 12:00 AM

TW

“ Mel was a very kind, gentle and thoughtful man. He will be greatly missed by both of us. I loved all the humor, jokes and stories that he enjoyed telling. I enjoyed listening immensely, and I am sorry to see that end. Loved hearing him laugh, he could always make you smile. We enjoyed working for him all these years. He was a great man to work for. Thanks for all the smiles and laughs, Mel! Love ya!

Tina Madore and George White - November 22, 2017 at 12:00 AM

CT

“ My condolences and prayers to the family and their loss.

Clarence Koontz Amarillo, Tx - November 22, 2017 at 12:00 AM

LR

“ our prayers from my family to yours Mel Tillis is the best entertainer i have ever met in my life he invited me in his home in branson just like i was part of his family i will always remember him he was a great friend

Larry Richards - November 21, 2017 at 12:00 AM

KR

“ We are praying for ALL of your family since Mel took his heavenly journey. Cherish your memories and look to the Lord for your help and comfort. God bless you.

Kenny Robinette - November 21, 2017 at 12:00 AM

DG

“ Mr Tillis spoke to me one day when I was walking through the cemetery that was adjacent to his property on cemetery road. He was a kind and gracious man. I appreciate the few minutes that we were able to speak. May he RIP.

David Glorius - November 20, 2017 at 12:00 AM

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“ NASHVILLE - "Mel Tillis, born to play Country, toured as a troubadour across our Country and touched the hearts of Americans throughout this Country. He loved entertaining others which brought light to their lives and purpose to his own. My prayers are with Pam Tillis and the entire Mel Tillis Family in the loss of your loved one and the fans of this One Great American Mel Tills." - Larry Crim U.S. Senate (TN) - friend and fan of Country Legend Mel Tillis who meant so much to American Country and to this Country called America.

Larry Crim U.S. Senate (R-TN) 2018 - November 20, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JS

“ Prayers of comfort to your family! Mel was part of the music that I was raised on by my grandparents, along with some of the other giants in the business. He will be missed, but his contribution to country music will live on.

Jason Smith - November 20, 2017 at 12:00 AM