



James B. Simpkins

February 21, 1949 - April 28, 2021

James B. Simpkins, age 72, of Delbarton, was called to his heavenly home on April 28, 2021. His untimely passing was the result of a work-related accident near Danville, West Virginia. Born in Matewan, West Virginia, on February 21, 1949, James was the son of the late Benny (“Benton”) and Belle Regina (“Jean”) Simpkins. He was also preceded in death by a beloved son, Benton A. Simpkins.

A devoted family man, James lovingly cherished the memory of his parents and his son, Benton, long after their respective deaths. He longed for the day when he would be reunited with them, and what a reunion that must have been when he was called home to glory.

A graduate of Matewan High School, James entered the United States Army to proudly and bravely serve his country. Following an honorable military discharge with the rank of Sergeant in 1971, James returned home to Mingo County to marry his wife of 49 years, Zelora (“Lora”) Perry Simpkins, who survives him.

James was the embodiment of a hard day’s work and entrepreneurial spirit. Having owned, co-owned, and operated 41 businesses in his lifetime, he was tireless in his commitment to provide for the wellbeing of both his family and the hundreds of individuals who worked for him throughout the years. An innovator and a visionary, James’ business ventures spanned multiple sectors, including the logging and timber industries, coal mining, agriculture, and most recently, industrial recycling. Well accomplished, yet modest of his

successes, James left an indelible mark on each of these industries. Not surprisingly, he seldom talked about plans to someday retire. Working hard actually fueled his contentment, and even recently, he was making plans to pursue new and innovative business opportunities in his beloved Mingo County.

In 1980, a call to public service led James to seek election to the West Virginia Legislature, where he served six years as a member of the House of Delegates from 1981 to 1986. During that time, he was instrumental in securing critical infrastructure funding for Mingo County, and he effectively provided a voice to his Mingo County constituents on the state political stage.

In 1989, James was selected to serve as one of five founding board members to the newly created Mingo County Redevelopment Authority. For more than 30 years, James remained committed to forging the Authority's mission of providing for the civic and economic welfare of Mingo County. As the Authority's longest serving board member, he led with passion, with vision, and with creativity, and the fruits of his contributions will be evidenced for generations to come by the longevity of Mingo County development projects such as the Hatfield-McCoy Trails System, the Appalachian Regional Airport, and the King Coal Highway, all of which he helped to pioneer.

With a true servant's heart, James' greatest call was the one which gave him immense and visible joy, and that was the call to serve his Lord, Jesus Christ. His witness and his testimony were ever present, allowing him to build lasting friendships with his brothers and sisters in Christ, and to be the Kingdom builder that God called him to be. He touched so many lives with his sweet and forgiving spirit and with his generous heart. He always counted it a blessing of his own when he was able to help others in need. And anytime he was asked how he was doing, his heartfelt and sincerest response was always "I'm blessed!". Little did he know the blessing that he, himself, was to countless family, friends and acquaintances. James was a member of the

Grace and Truth Bible Center

In addition to his wife and lifelong business partner, Lora, James leaves behind to cherish his memory three beautiful daughters: Sarah Simpkins; Beth (Jason) Cantrell; and Rachel Simpkins; one granddaughter, Kiara Cline; and three grandsons: Chance Cantrell, Brody Cantrell, and Knox Christian. James adored his children and grandchildren, and the unconditional love that he showed them will surely bless each of them all of the days of their lives.

The oldest of six children, James is also survived by three brothers and two sisters: Ira (Donna) Simpkins; Randy Simpkins; Greg (Ginger) Simpkins; Betty (Roger) Charles; and Shelia (Mark) Justice. The institution of family was incredibly important to James, and he leaves with his wife, his children, his grandchildren, his siblings, and a host of aunts, uncles and cousins a lifetime of beautiful memories of a heart full of amazing love.

Services to memorialize the life of James Simpkins are under the direction of Chafin Funeral Home of Delbarton. Visitation will be held on Wednesday, May 5, from 6:00pm to 9:00pm at Mingo Central High School, where there will be ample parking and sufficient space to properly distance in accordance with COVID-19 guidelines. The family would like to extend its gratitude to the Mingo County Board of Education and the Mingo Central administration for graciously allowing the use of this beautiful facility.

Funeral services will be conducted at Chafin Funeral Home the following day, Thursday, May 6, at 1:00 pm, with his Pastor Paul Caudill, officiating. Viewing and visitation will be allowed the day of the funeral beginning at 12:00 noon. Burial will take place at the Simpkins Family Cemetery on the Right Fork of Beech Creek.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Grace and Truth Bible Center.

Cemetery Details

Simpkins Cemetery

Right Fork
Beech Creek, WV

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 5. 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM.

Mingo Central Gymnasium

Service

MAY 6. 1:00 PM (ET)

Chafin Funeral Home
215 Riverside Drive
Delbarton, WV 25670
(304) 475-2071
chafinfh@frontier.com
<https://www.chafinfuneralhome.com/>

Tribute Wall



“ *James B. Simpkins*

November 21, 2022 at 02:05 PM



“ *In our lives, in our joys and in our sorrows, we've learned that there is a time for every matter under heaven, We laugh and we weep. We celebrate and we mourn.*

With God's amazing grace, we somehow bear what seems unbearable. "Love bears all things, believes all things, endures all things. Love never ends."

May the your precious memories of and your enduring love for James sustain you.

Henry Vinson - May 09, 2021 at 06:30 PM



“ *To Lora and family, I heard about his accident on the news, it hurt even though I have not seen him in over 20 years. He was my Sunday School teacher briefly at Rockhouse, about 98 when uncle Floyd passed. I will never forget all the kindness you and James provided as I struggled with my life starting over in WV. I wish I could be half the outstanding person he was.*



Susan Courtney - May 09, 2021 at 04:26 AM



“ To Lora and the girls ... I just heard yesterday, Tuesday the 6th, at a gas station, from a woman who went to school with Rachel. I'm very sorry, praying God will strengthen you during this time. I have great memories of kindness from James and all of you, many years ago. God bless you all. Mark Robinson

Mark Robinson - May 07, 2021 at 10:59 AM



“ Pam Dillon lit a candle in memory of James B. Simpkins



Pam Dillon - May 06, 2021 at 06:40 PM



“ Roger Ooten lit a candle in memory of James B. Simpkins



Roger Ooten - May 06, 2021 at 08:44 AM



“ Sue Light lit a candle in memory of James B. Simpkins



Sue Light - May 05, 2021 at 09:53 PM

SL

So sorry for your loss, my prayers are with you all. James was always good to us.

Sue Light - May 05, 2021 at 09:54 PM

AS

“ *So sorry to hear about the loss of our beloved cousin and sending many prayers and love to the family*

With Love

Anna Gail Simpkins Schaefer and Dottie Simpkins Cronin



Anna Gail Simpkins Schaefer - May 05, 2021 at 07:31 PM

BF

“ *Brenda Johnson And Family lit a candle in memory of James B. Simpkins*



Brenda Johnson and Family - May 05, 2021 at 06:56 PM

TH

“ *James was a great neighbor and friend to my husband and I... he will be missed tremendously... our prayers are with Lora and his precious girls and grandchildren.....*

Tammy and Keith Hess - May 05, 2021 at 12:24 PM



“ Roses For Sympathy was purchased for the family of James B. Simpkins.



May 05, 2021 at 11:55 AM



“ Nancy Simpkins Pay lit a candle in memory of James B. Simpkins



Nancy Simpkins Pay - May 05, 2021 at 09:50 AM



“ I met James on a professional level when he came to me to review his tax returns when I had a CPA Office in Williamson. He and his wife were fine people with a heart of service to those around them. I am sorry for his passing and I am sure all who knew him will miss him! Condolences to his family.

John D Jude - May 05, 2021 at 07:53 AM



“ Amanda lit a candle in memory of James B. Simpkins



Amanda - May 05, 2021 at 04:43 AM

DB

“ *David & Bonnie lit a candle in memory of James B. Simpkins*



David & Bonnie - May 04, 2021 at 11:41 PM

BQ

I worked for James on occasion, and I admired him.. he was a wonderful man, a true man of God.. he will be missed on earth, and celebrated with all who he loved and who loved this good man..

Bobby Queen - May 05, 2021 at 03:07 AM



“ *Classic Sympathy Dish Garden was purchased for the family of James B. Simpkins.*



May 04, 2021 at 11:26 PM

DM

“ *James was a wonderful person. He and Zelora were a special couple. James was highly intelligent and innovative. It seems that every time I was in his presence I learned something new. I pray God!s blessings on Lora and the family. Dan Moore*

Dan Moore - May 04, 2021 at 09:25 PM



“ *Such a great man and a great friend.really enjoyed working for him and playing ball with him.surely going to be missed.Reast in Peace my friend.*

mike vance - May 04, 2021 at 09:23 PM



“ *White Standing Spray was purchased for the family of James B. Simpkins.*



May 04, 2021 at 09:18 PM



“ *A true friend. It has been a blessing to know and work with James my entire 30 years in Mingo County. My prayers go out to Lora and the family.*

RAYMOND SCITES - May 04, 2021 at 08:53 PM



“ *Peace, Prayers, & Blessings- Lavender and White was purchased for the family of James B. Simpkins.*



May 04, 2021 at 08:42 PM

TP

“ Tina & Wayne Peters lit a candle in memory of James B. Simpkins



Tina & Wayne Peters - May 04, 2021 at 08:19 PM

TI

God gained an angel. Sending our love and Gods comfort to Aunt Zelora and family. Keeping you in our prayers.

Tina - May 04, 2021 at 08:22 PM

DC

I am so sad to learn of James Benny's passing. A wonderful man . I pray for God to give Zelora and the family strength during this difficult time. Darby Crews

Darby Crews - May 04, 2021 at 09:44 PM

TF

“ R.I.P. James



The Littell Family - May 04, 2021 at 07:19 PM

LH

“ Lois Brewer Hall lit a candle in memory of James B. Simpkins



Lois Brewer Hall - May 04, 2021 at 06:48 PM



Love, Prayers ad Comfort that only comes from God for Zelora ad Family!!

Lois Brewer Hall - May 04, 2021 at 06:50 PM



“ *Healing Tears - All White was purchased for the family of James B. Simpkins.*



May 04, 2021 at 06:25 PM



“ *Gail Hall lit a candle in memory of James B. Simpkins*



Gail Hall - May 04, 2021 at 06:04 PM



Sending positive thoughts, love, and prayers for the family/friends that our Heavenly Father will wrap His loving around each of you ~ giving you comfort, peace in your hearts, and strength/courage for these days and those ahead.

Gail Hall - May 04, 2021 at 06:06 PM

Arvil
Runyon

“ James was my boss at Cow Creek #7. He simply was the best boss and person could ever hope for. He knew what it was like to be an employee and he treated his employees as he wanted to be treated. I have often shared with people over the years how great it was to have a boss who truly cared for you and who appreciated you. God Speed James to your heavenly reward. Your work on earth is done, your accomplishments and care for Mingo County remain. Prayers for your family and you sir, will be missed.



Arvil Runyon - May 04, 2021 at 05:38 PM

JC

“ Jack & Missy Copley lit a candle in memory of James B. Simpkins



Jack & Missy Copley - May 04, 2021 at 04:22 PM