



## Tollie P Yates

June 20, 1937 - December 26, 2017

TSgt Tollie “Tod” Preston Yates, Retired Air Force, 80, of Huber Heights went to be with the Lord on Tuesday, December 26, 2017, while surrounded by many members of his loving family.

He was born June 20, 1937, in Wise, Virginia, to the late William Carl and Alta Blanche Yates. He had a large family, with brothers Billy, Darrell, Emory “Butch”, Eddie, and Steve, and sisters Charlotte and Judy. Raised in the hills and hollers of Virginia, he claimed there was no one who could drive those mountain roads as quickly as he could, and often tried to prove with his infamous “lead foot” that in later years his children would inherit from him. It was these early years with his close-knit family that instilled the foundation of the two words that are synonymous with him—love and family.

Tollie’s love of God was something he carried with him daily, sharing with anyone who would listen. He was baptized into the Church of Christ and attended every service that he could, even finding services to attend when he was on the road. Many of his years in Ohio, he and his family attended the Huber Heights Church of Christ, forging bonds with members there throughout the years, following them to their new place of worship, Castle Hills. He taught his love of God to his children and his grandchildren, and would even make sure to pick out their favorite songs when he would lead singing. Tollie read his Bible daily for as long as he was able to, and encouraged others to do the

same, leading by example along the way.

The bond that Tollie shared with his family was unbreakable. He would often pack his wife and children into the car and head down to Wise, spending as much time with his parents as he could while they were still here. He continued close relationships with his brothers and sisters, sharing their love of music and camping. As adults, Tollie, his brothers, and sisters formed the YSP&F Camping Club. Together they enjoyed yearly vacations full of family, adventure, and everyone's favorite morning dish, corned beef hash with eggs on top, also known as Camper's Delight. They would spend their days exploring the wonders of God's earth and an occasional amusement park, which they insisted was to amuse the younger generation. In the evenings they'd surround the campfire with their extended families and their guitars, pickin' and grinnin', their harmonies blending together perfectly. He'd pull out the Ovation that his wife Roberta had given to him, its distinct tone ringing out as he would play so beautifully. His rich voice filled the air and his laughter filled our souls. Sometimes he would bring his banjo, playing Dueling Guitars with his brother, Butch. Music remained a large part of his life even after the camping adventures were over. Tollie, along with his brothers Butch, Eddie, and Steve formed Duncan Gap. They performed together for family and friends and recorded albums that are pure cherished treasures. His family will always be able to hear him sing "Folsom Prison Blues," "One Woman Man," "Remember When," and "Why Me Lord."

Tollie's love for his country led him to the Air Force at a young age, proudly serving for twenty years with the security police before retiring as a TSgt. He continued with Civil Service for another twenty years before retiring from Civil Engineering. During his time in Civil Service, he donated blood regularly with the Armed Services Blood Program, recruiting family members to give as well. The boy who'd left Virginia and entered the military with a GED earned his Associates Degree along the way. His determination, drive, and dedication

oftentimes had him leaving home before his children woke up for school and not returning until long after they'd gone to bed.

Tollie married the love of his life, Roberta, on May 8, 1969 by candlelight during a storm. He often told the story with a laugh, just as he would say how she was from Maine, he was from Virginia, and they met in Alaska. Their blended family soon expanded, giving him eight children that he loved dearly and to ensure that he named them all, he would go in order and count along the way: Lynda, Wanda, Tracey, Tom, Scott, Cyndie, Nickie, and Carla. This may or may not have been because of that one time Scott was temporarily left at a gas station.

His wife and children were his whole world, and he dedicated himself to ensuring they had everything they needed. Together, Tollie and Roberta were a united front, doing their best to not let their children see their struggles. He often said one of the best things you can do for your children is love their mother, and he showed this daily. Sometimes he would take one or more of his children with him Christmas shopping for her, his eyes lit up with excitement as he asked them if they thought she would like what he'd chosen for her.

As a father, Tollie knew it was his job to raise his children to be responsible adults who knew the value of love and family. Best described in song, "Daddy's hands were soft and kind when I was crying. Daddy's hands were hard as steel when I'd done wrong." Like when at far too young of an age his daughter Nickie had ridden her tricycle to the playground, even though she knew she wasn't allowed to, and when Tollie found her, he made her peddle that tricycle all the way home, even through her tears as she told him if she had her own swingset she wouldn't have done it anyway.

He bought that swingset shortly after.

Tollie would often take his family on trips, telling the children even when they were tired and cranky they would thank him someday. He'd pull out his camera, capturing these moments, living them with laughter and love. Often, he'd let his children pick the music they'd be taking and listening to on the road. He would laugh and tell Roberta, "It's Alabama, Alabama, Alabama, Ricky Skaggs, Ricky Skaggs." He would sing with his children in the car, creating lasting memories and instilling his love of music in them.

Every Sunday, both morning and evening, and every Wednesday evening, he would load everyone in the car and take them to church. This wasn't an option; he wanted his children raised in the church, learning the Bible and about God's love. As the years progressed, and his children grew and had children of their own, he would bring his grandchildren as well. His Bible that he took to church with him every Sunday has treasures that he would stick between the pages—pictures and notes from his children and later from his grandchildren. He never took them out, except to occasionally show that he still had them should he be on the page he put them in.

Holidays at the Yates household were always full of love, chaos, and food... lots and lots of food with one of the few rules being "keep one foot on the floor at all times." Above all the chatter, you'd hear Tollie's laughter, and many times it was followed with a chorus of "Daaaaad" as he told one joke after another. When he wasn't telling jokes, he would regale the family with his stories from his youth: the famous "We had to walk 10 miles barefoot in the snow uphill BOTH ways" or the one time he was able to play with Boxcar Willie. These were the days he loved the most, surrounded by family. "Remember this," he'd say. "Cherish it. Keep it going." He would say his children would understand when they became parents. And then, as one by one they did, and Tollie would shower his love upon them as well, he'd say his children would

understand this kind of love when they became grandparents. When the day came when someone could say, "Aren't you a great-grandfather now?" his answer would be "I've ALWAYS been great." He would then laugh and say that yes, his grandbaby had a baby. As the family continued to grow, so did his love and affection.

Once retired, Tollie was able to focus his attention on his family that he loved so dearly. He and Roberta traveled often, spending winters in Florida, making friends everywhere they went. Each day isn't promised, and he knew that all too well. Alzheimer's, the disease that had taken his father and would eventually claim his brother, was in its beginning stages, and it was time to begin the long goodbye.

Even with this horrible disease, he held onto what he valued. His daughter Nickie wrote, "As my dad progressed in Alzheimer's he lost the ability to speak fluently so he would clasp his hands together and say, "we are good, we are together!" Which meant FAMILY! Family was probably the most important thing to my father." He was always telling them that he loved them, always ready with a hug or a kiss. When he would forget names, he would still know who was "his." In the latest stage of the disease, even this was lost. His family watched "Big, strong Daddy" deteriorate, watched as the roles reversed, became the ones caring for him. And as the end came, those who could gathered around him, letting him know that he was loved, that it was okay to go, and he could be with the Lord and the ones he loved who had gone before him.

Tollie's legacy lives on. Through him, his children learned and continued his love of God, dedicating themselves to His service. They also share Tollie's love for his country, with both children and grandchildren serving in the military. Most importantly, they understand the meaning of family, of creating the moments that will remain behind long after they leave this earth to join

him.

Tollie was preceded in death by his parents, William Carl and Alta Blanche Yates, and his brothers Billy, Darrell, and Emory "Butch" Yates. He is survived by his wife, Roberta Yates, eight children: Lynda LaFleur of Washington Township, Wanda and John Loy of West Milton, Tracey Spencer of Rural Hall, North Carolina, Thomas and Susan Yates of Anchorage, Alaska, Charles "Scott" Yates of Colorado Springs, Colorado, Cynthia and Dean Vande Water of Lewis Center, Nickie and Todd Fritschie of Springfield, Carla Limbert of Englewood, four siblings: Charlotte, Eddie, Steve, Judy, numerous grandchildren and great grandchildren. A visitation will be held 11-1 Tuesday, January 2, 2018, in Adkins Funeral Home, Enon. A funeral service will be conducted 1:00 Tuesday in the funeral home. Burial with military honors will follow the service in Dayton National Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Kindred Hospice of Dayton or Disabled American Veterans (DAV).

# Cemetery Details

## Dayton National Cemetery

4100 West Third Street  
Dayton, OH 45428

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JAN 2. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (ET)

Adkins Funeral Home  
7055 Dayton Road  
Enon, OH 45323  
(937) 864-2288

## Funeral Service

JAN 2. 1:00 PM (ET)

Adkins Funeral Home  
7055 Dayton Road  
Enon, OH 45323  
(937) 864-2288

## Military Honors

JAN 2. 2:30 PM (ET)

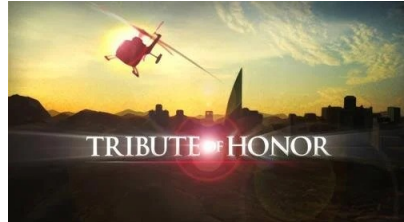
Dayton National Cemetery  
4100 West Third Street  
Dayton, OH 45428



# Tribute Wall



“ Adkins Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Tollie P Yates



Adkins Funeral Home - January 02, 2018 at 12:18 PM

CV

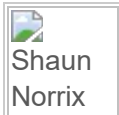
Fannie Steele this tribute was done by the funeral home. I bet you'll recognize some of these friends!

Cynthia Vandewater - January 02, 2018 at 08:35 PM



Steve Yates

Cynthia Vandewater - January 02, 2018 at 08:36 PM



That was a real nice tribute. See you on the other side, Uncle Todd.

Shaun Norrix Bennett - January 02, 2018 at 09:50 PM

JS

Beautiful Tribute

Jan Stimmel - January 03, 2018 at 06:49 AM

DC

Awesome video. He sure was surrounded by a lot of love!

Dwayne Cooper - January 03, 2018 at 08:47 AM

TS

*I miss you daddy*

**Tracey spencer** - July 29, 2020 at 08:22 PM

TS

*I'll see you on the otherside*

**Tracey spencer** - July 29, 2020 at 08:34 PM



“ *Susan Reft lit a candle in memory of Tollie P Yates*



**Susan Reft** - January 02, 2018 at 05:15 PM

FI

“ *From all your friends at NACS, Inc. purchased the Bountiful Rose Basket for the family of Tollie P Yates.*



**From all your friends at NACS, Inc.** - January 02, 2018 at 03:52 PM





“ We have lost our Cornerstone, our Dad, our important guidance tool and seal of ultimate approval when he yelled at us, "Alright!" It rings through my soul that such a simple word could have SO much meaning. As the oldest Boy and his son he has taught me lesson after lesson. Our first project together is still testament to-measure twice, cut once. Yes, the main cross rafter in his garage has a sweet splice on a 2x10. He is the largest man in my life, I could always go to him with anything on my mind. If the conversation started with me saying "I really screwed up this time", I knew he and I could come to a solution. That tone of voice he used when he'd say "well Son, that's not that bad or you got this. My Dad is my Eastwood, he took a wild, wirey young fella-Me, exposed me to an amazing world of Love, caring and how to be the Big Brother. Dad knew I was more comfortable with a hammer or ax in my paws than any toy he could ever give me. Dad tested me in many ways and as his boy ,I'm quite sure I've tested him in so many others. His largest test by far was a job offered by his pal Jake Book. Dad came home with a grin after work one fall asking me, "wanna stack some wood for a good friend?". I replied right off, no problem. We drove his work truck over to Mr. Books after dinner and Dad introduced me to a gentleman larger than him and larger than life. Dad looked at him like-here he is. Mr. Book belted out-well he don't look like much, can you earn a buck? I had already seen a mountain of seasoned firewood behind him replying "Yes Sir". Before my dad left me with who I figured had ties with Hulk Hogan, he asked "you got this?-I shook my head, you start a job, you have to finish it, I shook my head yes and he told me he'd check on me in a few. I respect my Dad with everything he had done for me and respected him enough not to complain and finish a job. I earned my weight he gave me and the physical capabilities to enter the armed forces. The wood stacking job to me was a one wheel barrel at a time deal to move a mountain of wood dropped in a mans driveway by a dump truck. I believe he started me where he did is because he believed in Me. As a Man, we carry a lot on our shoulders, my Dad and I both earned ours. Now it is time for you to Rest Dad. The laughter, turmoil to get a big family to church on a Sunday morning and best of All, your the Father that pulled it off

*and Kept Us together like glue. I will take you with me wherever I go because Dad's heart is large enough to be shared by all, and man has he ever shared it. I am proud to have you leading the way, again.....Lord Willing-you would say.*

---

**Travis Reft** - January 02, 2018 at 02:17 AM

BS

*I went to school with Todd at Duncan Gap Always remembered him as a quite nice boy. Never did really know what happened to him after school but tonight as I read hall the good things that wasz said about him I began to realize what a wonderful man he became and what a blessing to have known him for a short while and I hope someone will be able to say all those good things about me. we are put here to make a difference in lives of people and show them God's love sounds like he fought a good fight and finished his race. Rest in Peace Todd there is a better day coming. We will see each other again.Lots of good things come out of those hills in Va.*

---

**Betty Faye Greene Stanley** - January 03, 2018 at 08:30 PM

DC

“ *Heaven gained another angel. Tod was my first cousin. I loved the family reunions and all of the talking, singing, and laughing. Whenever we lose a loved one I think of the song when we all get to heaven what a day of rejoicing that will be. When we all see Jesus we will sing and shout the victory. Donna Mullins Cable*

---

**Donna Cable** - January 01, 2018 at 03:18 PM

AW

“ *Remember him well we were raised in Duncan Gap. Sorry for your loss Alice Fae Mullins --Willis*

---

**Alice Fae Mullins Willis** - December 31, 2017 at 08:11 PM

SG

“ Rest in peace dear cousin I am remembering so many good times growing up and looking forward to the reunion in heaven❤️



Sue Hamilton Gobble - December 31, 2017 at 08:03 AM

JL

“ I will always remember him playing music at our reunions, his smile, his love for his family and the big bear hugs i always got when he came to visit, i will miss him...praying for the family and sending my love to all of you

Jen Iarrabee - December 30, 2017 at 04:40 PM

TA

Tod was a terrific person. For many years Tod and I rode to work together from Huber Heights to Area B Air Conditioning shop. We enjoyed many laughs going back and forth as well as during the day. Tod was always a bright spot in my day. He always demonstrated his love for his family and his Heavenly Father. Each of us that were fortunate enough to have known Tod were given the opportunity to know one of the very best. Prayers for all of Tod's family. Rest In Peace my friend.

Tom Ayers - January 01, 2018 at 12:17 AM

CD

“ That was one of the most beautiful obituaries I've ever had the privilege to read. It just reinforced what I knew about Tod and made me cherish our family a little more. You are all blessed to have all these wonderful memories of a cherished man. He will now continue watching over you from his glorious spot in Heaven. Love to all!  
Sister-in-law,Carol

Carol Durfee - December 30, 2017 at 08:26 AM

LS

“ I always loved to listen to his narrations on the videos he would make from our family reunions. We gave him the nick name "Cam Man". My favorite song I loved to hear him sing was "Remember When" and I clearly can see him singing it in the crowded living-room where we all gathered after Mom's 90 Birthday Reunion. This wonderful man will be so missed. Love you Tod!  
Sister in Law Linda

---

**Linda Schott** - December 29, 2017 at 10:15 PM

 Patty  
Yates

“ Patty Yates lit a candle in memory of Tollie P  
Yates



---

**Patty Yates** - December 29, 2017 at 08:22 PM