



# THE LIGATURE

"The Tie That Binds"

Official Publication of the  
John A. Gupton College  
Alumni Association  
Fall Edition - 2019



Want an electronic version of The Ligature?

Send us your email address!

Check us out on Facebook

**JOHN A. GUPTON ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**

Tag photos, leave comments and find old friends.



Email us:



**Tracy Hamm Allen**

Director of Alumni Relations

allen@guptoncollege.edu



**Bobby W. Cook**

Newsletter Editor

cook@guptoncollege.edu

## Letter from the President

Dear Alumni -

WOW!!! What an incredible showing by the **Alumni** at this year's reunion. A big thank you to all who attended and the sponsors who support this event every year. They always say, "The older you get, the faster time goes by". I think about this as it relates to many things in each of our lives. From my time at **John A. Gupton** in the early 90's, my kids being born and now off to college or to the passing of the seasons during the year. Of course, with age comes wisdom.....well that's what they say. I believe we all become a little wiser with age as we begin to really notice what's most important. I'd encourage everyone to take a moment and truly reflect on what's most important in your life. If you're passionate about it, then by all means go after it. The one passion each of us as **Alumni** of **John A. Gupton** share, is the passion to serve. But what we find in life is where we are called to serve. I've spent almost 25 years of my funeral service career on the vendor side of our industry. Some of you may ask, "How is that serving"? It's very simple, I found my passion helping funeral home owners, directors and assistants become better funeral professionals by providing them both products and solutions that advance our profession. A few years ago, I attended a 2-day class at the Ritz Carlton Institute. The Ritz Carlton is known for their unparalleled service to their customers and creating an "experience" from the time they pull in the drive to the time they leave. It's created by one simple belief that "**Emotionally Engaged Employees attract Emotionally Engaged Customers.**" Our profession today is reliant to the customer experience. The experience is created from the time the phone rings all the way through the grieving process.

So, whatever your daily responsibility, your Emotional Engagement is felt by each person you touch during this very special time of serving a family. From the immediate family to the funeral guests, your passion is relevant.

Enjoy every day of the passing seasons and share your passion with each other daily.



**Bill Hudson**

**Class of 1991**

### INSIDE THIS EDITION:

- Alumni Reunion 2019
- New Officers Installed
- Graduation Date
- Victorian Death Portraits
- Solidified Remains Article
- Obituaries

# Alumni Reunion 2019

Friday Night Reception Hosted by Wilbert Vault Company



The annual reception that is hosted by **Wilbert Vault Company** was once again held at the beautiful Loews Vanderbilt Hotel in Downtown Nashville. **Danny Hurt** did a outstanding job coordinating the event and was there to welcome the Alumni members as they arrived. As you can see by the photos below, everyone had a wonderful time during the **2019 Alumni Reunion** reception.





# Alumni Reunion 2019

Saturday Night Event at Ray Stevens' CabaRay





# Alumni Reunion Continued

## Saturday Morning Business Meeting



## New Officers Installed

**Bill Hudson**



**President**

**Bobby Cook**



**1st Vice President**

**Chris Jefferson**



**2nd Vice President**

**Keith Stapleton**



**Treasurer**

**Tim Bond**



**Secretary**

## Parting Stone Develops New, Solidified Form of Human Remains

Portions of an article published on Connecting Directors.com by Patricia Hartley on September 30, 2019.

For inventor and entrepreneur Justin Crowe, Parting Stone, a revolutionary service that transforms cremated ashes into **solidified remains**, is a passion project — a true labor of love.

As someone deeply connected with the **death care industry**, Crowe empathized with friends who passionately shared stories of a deceased family member or pet. However, more and more of these friends concluded their stories by sharing that they kept the cremated remains of these loved ones in their basements, closets, and garages.

“People who live with **cremated remains** desperately want to feel a connection with them,” Crowe says, “but they can’t. In their hearts people want to cherish the remains of their loved ones and pets but they feel frustrated because they don’t know what to do with them.”

As he dug deeper into the reasons for this disconnect, Crowe discovered that the underlying issue was almost always the remains themselves. People feared spilling **cremated remains**, or worried about touching exposed ash. Some were afraid to look at the remains because seeing the bone fragments conjured violent images of the cremation process.

“With the huge increase in people choosing **cremation** for themselves or their loved ones the options for cremated remains are abundant,” says Larry Stuart, Jr. of Cremation Strategies & Consulting. “However, many people can’t make a decision and end up with a temporary container of their loved one sitting on a shelf in a closet somewhere. Some actually never pick up the cremated remains at all, leaving funeral homes and crematoria with a room full of abandoned **cremated remains**. Folks want **permanent memorialization** of their loss but, sometimes, just don’t know what to do with a box of ashes. Grief is capricious and, for some, it can be hard sometimes to associate that box with a deceased loved one.”

For Crowe, the answer to this complex and heartbreaking problem was to create a new form of human and animal remains. A form that wasn’t messy, scary, or otherwise off-putting. A form that people could touch — even hold — as a therapeutic, healing component of a continuing relationship with the deceased. The answer was **solidified remains**.



“**Solidified remains** are about as hard as real stones and will not disintegrate in water,” explains Crowe. “Stones range from the size of your thumbnail up to the size of your palm.”

Offering solidified remains in a size, heft, and texture that encourages touching, holding, and even caressing was important to Crowe. “We designed Parting Stone solidified remains so they can be held and cherished without the typical mess and discomfort of ash,” says Crowe. “It is our hope that for the right person **solidified remains** can be a meaningful tool for helping continue a bond with a loved one.”

The solidification process uses the full amount of human or animal remains. This results in a number of stones — about 25 for a 100-pound person. Crowe has found that this makes **solidified remains** ideal for sharing with friends and family.

“Some people choose to carry the stones with them, and other leave them around in meaningful places,” shared Crowe. “We have been repeatedly told that our customers take their solidified remains stones to therapy.”

Families who choose **solidified remains** at the time of death never see the cremated ashes. The entire solidified remains service takes about three weeks from the time ashes are received. This includes cleaning, polishing and returning the stones.



## Summer Semester top 10%

Christopher Boggs  
Andrew Buttrey  
Gabriella Forsyth  
Jennifer Holladay  
Cayley Freeman  
Josiah Klouda  
Alex McAnally  
Logan Orr  
Lauryn Smith  
Stephanie Sylvester

Baltimore, Maryland  
Knoxville, Tennessee  
Cookeville, Tennessee  
Nashville, Tennessee  
Mount Juliet, Tennessee  
Knoxville, Tennessee  
Rutledge, Tennessee  
Paducah, Kentucky  
Piney Flats, Tennessee  
Winfield, Indiana



Don't forget to pay your annual **Alumni dues**.  
We greatly appreciate the support of our wonderful members.

Find us on  
**Facebook**

John A. Gupton  
Alumni Association



**CONGRATULATIONS**



## John A. Gupton College – Graduation Ceremony 2019



The **Graduation** ceremony for the **class of 2019** will take place on **Friday, December 13<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 P.M.** and will be held at **15th Avenue Baptist Church** located at 1203 9th Ave N, Nashville. We encourage any **Alumni** members who are able to plan on attending the **graduation** ceremony in support of the **new graduates** and the school.



## Mark Anglin – Dover, TN



It is with great sadness, that we announce the passing of Mark Link Anglin, age 58 of Dover, Tennessee. Mark peacefully went to be with our Lord Sunday, June 23, 2019 at his home. He was born June 2, 1961 in Paris, TN son of Herman and Margie Link Anglin.

Mark was a 1981 graduate of John A. Gupton College where he earned an Associate Degree in Mortuary Science. He was a second generation co-owner of Anglin Funeral Home, where he served his community for over 40 years. He is also co-owner and operator of Rose Ella Village and Centsable Storage.

Mark was a devoted husband and loving father. He was an avid golfer, playing weekly with the group, The Bandits. He was a founding member of the Stewart County Community Youth Council and the Spirit of One Youth Conference.

Most importantly, he was an active member of Dover First Church of the Nazarene, where he attended his entire life. For over 38 years he served in the music ministry and worked with the church youth, as both a Sunday School Teacher and NYI president. He also served 25 years on the leadership board as trustee and then as church secretary.

He is preceded in death by his mother, Margie Nell Link Anglin and mother-in-law, Marcella Lane. Survivors include his beloved wife of 35 years, Lisa Lane Anglin, sons, Landon Anglin and Jaden Anglin, father, Herman Anglin and his wife Edith, brother, Wayne Anglin and his wife Hope, and his father-in-law, Vernon Lane.

The funeral service took place at 11:00 am on Wednesday, June 26, 2019 at Anglin Funeral Home with Rev. Don Garrett and Rev. Jonathan Leonard officiating. He was laid to rest at Stewart County Memorial Gardens. Visitation was from 4:00 – 7:00 pm on Tuesday, June 25 at Anglin Funeral Home. Pallbearers were Martin Lane, Marvin Lane, Wayne Anglin, Stoney Odom, Neal Mathis, David Wallace, and David Allen.

Arrangements were entrusted to Anglin Funeral Home, Dover, Tennessee.

## James Martin – Clanton, AL

James M. "Jimmy" Martin, Sr., 80, of Clanton passed from this life into the arms of his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ Friday, May 31, 2019 at Baptist Medical Center East, Montgomery. Jimmy had a passion for service, and over the years has served our community in many capacities. He, along with his brothers, Donny and Bobby Martin have continued the legacy of their grandfather by operating Martin Funeral Home.



In 1962, Jimmy graduated from John A. Gupton College of Mortuary Science. Jimmy was elected to serve our community numerous times. He served as the Chilton County Coroner for 36 years and as Alabama State Representative for 17 years. Jimmy genuinely cared for people, all people, and wanted to make a difference in their lives. God gave Jimmy a heart and the passion for service, a gift that Jimmy did not take lightly and did not squander. He loved his family very much and sought to live as an example to them. Left to continue his legacy are his Wife, Norma Gail Martin of Clanton, AL; Son, Jim (Vicky) Martin; Daughter, Kim (Shane) Robinson; Grandsons, David (Jennifer) Gardner, Ty (Brandy) Byrd; Granddaughters, Kassie (Casey) Smitherman, Kristin (Kyle) Mims, Kamber (Ryan) Nwransky, Shayna (Trent) Wyatt, Shelbie (Jace) Maddox; 14 Great-Grandchildren, Brothers, Donny Martin, Bobby (Judy) Martin; Sister, Mary Mell (Bonny)Smith; Numerous friends and family. He was preceded in death by his Parents, PeeWee & Clyde Martin. Friends were received from 2-5, Sunday, June 2, 2019 at Clanton First Baptist Christian Life Center. Services were held Sunday, June 2, 2019, at 5:00 PM at Clanton First Baptist Christian Life Center with Rev. Matt DeBord officiating.

## Hal Laymon – Memphis, TN



Hal Q. Laymon, 93, retired General Manager of Memphis Wilbert Vault, passed away Sunday, August 18, 2019 after a long illness. The family received friends Wednesday, August 21, 2019 from 10am until the funeral service at 11am, all at Brantley Funeral Home of Olive Branch. Interment followed in Blocker Cemetery.



## Virginia Beasley – Murfreesboro, TN



Mrs. Virginia Love Woodfin Beasley, age 86 of Murfreesboro died Thursday, July 11, 2019 at her home. She was a native of Murfreesboro and a daughter of the late John T. Woodfin, Jr. and Virginia Black Woodfin. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by a son, Robert “Bob” Allen Beasley.

Survivors include her husband, Col. Harold L. Beasley, USAF Ret; sons, William Woodfin Beasley and wife Kelley of Nashville, Harold Miller Beasley and wife Myra of Murfreesboro; daughter-in-law, Lisa Beasley of Murfreesboro; brother, John B. “Bubba” (JAG graduate) Woodfin and Kay of Murfreesboro; sister, Sissy Follis and husband Don of Murfreesboro; grandchildren, Virginia and Katherine Beasley of Murfreesboro, Miller and Nash Beasley of Nashville, Joshua Woodfin Beasley and wife Ashley of Columbus, OH and Elizabeth Beasley of Murfreesboro, and Benton Beasley and wife Hannah of Franklin; and great-grandchildren, Haddie and Robbie Beasley of Columbus.

Visitation took place Friday, July 19, 2019 from 3:00pm until 7:00pm at Woodfin Memorial Chapel. Funeral services were Saturday, July 20, 2019 at 11:00am at Woodfin Memorial Chapel with Rev. Steve Odom officiating. Burial took place in Miller Cemetery with family and friends serving as pallbearers.

## Robert Garrett– Friendship, TN

Robert E. “DaddyBob” Garrett, age 67, passed away peacefully at his home in Friendship, TN on August 1, 2019 surrounded by his loving family. Mr. Garrett was born in Chicago, IL on July 17, 1952 to the late Mr. Robert Francis “Jack” Garrett and Mrs. Estelle “Nuddie” Stallings Garrett. They moved to Friendship when he was in elementary school and after high school, met the love of his life at the skating rink. Mr. Garrett and Mrs. Wanda moved to Walnut Street in 1971, Home Sweet Home. He was many things, an adoring husband, loving father and a servant to all and his magical charisma caused him to become your immediate, lifelong friend. He was a hero, not only to his family, but to the ones that he helped, if it had not been for his fierce bravery and blind love for others. He was a giver, showing kindness to everyone he encountered. He was a mentor and a true man of character and integrity. His love for music and laughs continues with us today. His sense of humor was unlike any other and could brighten your day with just his sheer presence. He had a magic and a light that will be so greatly missed.

Mr. Garrett was preceded in death by his parents; his infant brother: Robert Francis Garrett Jr. and his brother in laws: Finis Windell Baker and Tommy Sawyer.



He is survived by his wife of 47 years, Mrs. Wanda Gail Sawyer Garrett of Friendship; his two daughters: Cindy L. (Darron) Blalock, 2013 John A. Gupton Alumni of Four Points and Crystal Ellington (Shane) of Bells; his sister: Martha Lane Garrett Baker of Frog Jump; one sister in law: Sherry Daniel (Phillip) of Munford; four grandchildren: Robert Andrew Pace and James Conner Pace of Brownsville, Dacey Renee Ellington of Bells and Brilee Jane Blalock of Four Points. He leaves numerous nieces and nephews, cousins and a host of friends. And we can't forget Daddy's Baby Girl, “Lulu”.

A Memorial Service to celebrate the life of Mr. Garrett was conducted on Saturday, August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at 2:00 P.M. in the Chapel of the Bells Funeral Home, with Bro. Rowdy Davis officiating. A visitation for the Garrett family was held on Saturday, August 10<sup>th</sup> at the Bells Funeral Home from 12:00 P.M. until the service hour at 2:00 P.M.





## Joe Barlow – Murfreesboro, TN



Joe Bill Barlow, 83 of Murfreesboro, was called home to be with the Lord on Monday August 19, 2019. He was born in Hawkins County, TN to the late Homer and Effie Barlow, and was also preceded in death by his wife, Nancy Slemmons Barlow.

Mr. Barlow had served in the US Army 101st Airborne Group at Fort Campbell, Kentucky and in Japan where he was a paratrooper and medic. After his military service Mr. Barlow joined Berry Funeral Home in Knoxville where he learned to fly Berry's Air Ambulance. He was a 1958 graduate of John A. Gupton College, and had worked in funeral service with Southern Casket and Batesville Casket Companies for over 50 years. Mr. Barlow was a member of First United Methodist Church in Murfreesboro and was member of Burlington Masonic Lodge of 60 years.

He is survived by nephews, Larry Carpenter, and Steve Overton; nieces Betty Shelton, Teresa Conley and Cynthia Shank; brother and sister-in-law, Harold and Shirley Overton.

The family wishes to express special thanks to Joe and Nancy's neighbors Butch and Janie Campbell, and caregivers, and Avalon Hospice for their many acts of love and kindness.

Visitation was 5:00pm to 6:00pm with funeral following at 6:00PM CST Thursday, August 22nd at Woodfin Memorial Chapel. Graveside service was at 12noon EST Saturday August 24th at McCullough Cemetery in Bulls Gap, TN, with Reverend Ted Shelton officiating.

## Donavon Lakin – Pierce City, MO



Donavon "Don" Craig Lakin, age 78, of Pierce City, MO died on Wednesday, September 04, 2019, at Select Specialty Hospital in Springfield, MO. Mr. Lakin was born in Waterloo, IA on Tuesday, September 17, 1940. He was the son of Harold and Arlene (Roethler) Lakin.

Mr. Lakin was married to Mary Lou Kelly on Sunday, February 14, 1965. He graduated from Bolivar High School in 1957, attended SW Baptist University in Bolivar, MO, and then obtained his embalming degree from John A. Gupton School of Embalming in Nashville, TN. Mr. Lakin was appointed to the State Board of Embalming and Funeral Directors in 1986 becoming chairman in 1990.

Surviving are the following: his wife, Mary Lou of the home, two sons, Scott and Kelly Lakin, both of Pierce City, MO; one grandson, Logan Lakin of Pierce City, MO; and one brother-in-law, Allen Kelly of Springfield, MO. There are many other family members and friends who will miss him.

Masonic Services were held at First Baptist Church of Pierce City, MO on September 9, 2019 at 6:00 PM with visitation following until 8:00 PM. Funeral Services were on Tuesday, September 10, 2019 at 1:00 PM with Pastor Jimmie Copley and Brother Billy Harvill officiating. Burial followed at St. Mary's Cemetery in Pierce City, MO.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Shriner's Hospitals for Children in care of the funeral home.

## Claudia Adomat – Ohio



Claudia Adomat passed away suddenly on Saturday August 31 at her home after a long battle with cancer. She was retired from UT Hospital and a member of the Baptist faith. Claudia is preceded in death by her mother, Dorothy Ricks; brother, John Ricks Jr. and sister, Winona Large.

She is survived by her husband, Fred Adomat (1977 John A. Gupton Graduate); son, Chris Adomat; father, John (Marie) Ricks.; sister, Roxanne Ricks; sister in law, Missy (Ben) Chapman and many nieces and nephews.

The family received friends from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Wednesday September 4 at Click Funeral Home, Middlebrook Chapel followed by a Service at 8 p.m. with Pastor Bob St. John officiating. Graveside services were on Monday, September 9th at 12 p.m. at Hillside Memorial Park, 1025 Canton Road, Akron, Ohio



## Houston Abbott – Smyrna, TN



Houston Benjamin Abbott, age 21, of Smyrna, Tennessee, passed away on the evening of Wednesday, October 2, 2019. Houston is survived by his parents Harry (Gupton 2014 Alumni) and Chanel Posey Abbott; twin brother, Hamilton Abbott; sisters, Portland and Blythe Abbott; brother, Cannon Abbott; and a host of other relatives. Services were held to celebrate Houston at Three O'clock the afternoon of Saturday, October 5, 2019 at Roselawn Funeral Home in Murfreesboro, TN, with placement to follow in Roselawn Memorial Gardens. Houston didn't let anything slow him down or keep him from doing things he loved. You could often find him listening to his emergency scanner and then give up dates about what was happening or watching his favorite TV shows, COPS, Live PD and Family Feud. He also loved Country Music and one of his favorite artists was Tracy Lawrence, who once signed his cowboy hat. He especially loved to drink dark colored soft drinks and it didn't matter to him if they tasted good or not, he was going to drink it. His biggest thrill though was to watch and root for the Clemson Tigers Football Team with his dad. They spent many a Saturday afternoon or evening cheering on the Tigers. Please leave any thoughts or memories here on his page to be included in his "Life Remembered Book." Memorials may be made to The Shriner's Children's Hospitals.

## Carl Mark Barker – Kingston, TN



Carl Mark Barker, age 82, of Kingston, formerly of Chattanooga, passed away Wednesday, September 4, 2019 at Parkwest Medical Center in Knoxville. He was born October 18, 1936 in Cullman, Alabama. Mark was a 1956 graduate of John A. Gupton College of Mortuary Science where he received his license as a Funeral Director & Embalmer for the State of Tennessee; and has since devoted his entire life to serving families in Chattanooga, Kingston and Knoxville. For countless years, he served as an Independent Contractor for several funeral homes throughout East Tennessee as well as a Licensed Prearrangement Specialist. Over the years, Mark was a member of many organizations, often serving in an official capacity. He served on several professional and civic advisory boards including, but not limited to the Tennessee Funeral Directors Association where he served as Sergeant of Arms and District Governor; Board of the Greater Knoxville Funeral Directors Association; past President of Kingston Rotary Club;

Treasurer and Board member of Roane County Chamber of Commerce; Chaplain of Kingston Police Department where he sat on the Personnel Advisory Board; and past President of Roane County Genealogical Society. Mark was also an Elder in the Presbyterian Church of America. Preceded in death by his loving wife, Sarah Crowe Barker; parents, Carl Leon & Frances Dyer Barker.

Survivors include his children Rebecca Price and husband, Earl of Kingston, Scott Barker and wife, Kim of Knoxville; Sister Sharon Barker Tunnell and husband, Roy of Spring City; 3 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren A host of nieces, nephews and many friends.

The family received friends 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm, Friday, September 6, 2019 at Fraker Funeral Home in Kingston. A visitation was held 11:00 am – 1:00 pm, Saturday, September 7, 2019 at Turner Funeral Home in Chattanooga with funeral service following at 1:00 pm, in the chapel with Rev. James Staton presiding. Interment followed service at Benton Town Cemetery in Benton, Tennessee.

Send obituary submissions to:

allen@guptoncollege.edu OR cook@guptoncollege.edu





# Victorian Death Portraits

The history of a macabre trend can be traced back to the Victorian era, when death photography was all the rage. Life in Britain used to be short and brutal, and the BBC claims the Queen's public bereavement made mourning a very fashionable thing to be seen doing. Paying a painter to produce a portrait was too expensive, so families would instead get a photo with their loved one after they died as a way to remember them. Parents would cradle their children's corpses, or they would be propped up in chairs and the family would line up around them. Photos were often taken with long exposures, so the living subjects' movements would create a blurred effect, while the perfectly still body would appear clearer and more defined. In some cases, eyes were then drawn onto the photo to make it all seem more real.



## Alumni, Stay in Touch!

Moved? Changed your name? Different email address? Let us know so we can keep you informed about local events and JAG news that matters to you.

## THE SPOTLIGHT

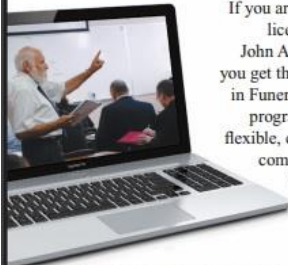
Anyone interested in being featured in the "Alumni Spotlight" section of a future newsletter, please contact Bobby Cook at [cook@guptoncollege.edu](mailto:cook@guptoncollege.edu)



# JOHN A. GUPTON COLLEGE

A Professional Tradition Since 1946

## ON-LINE ASSOCIATE DEGREE IN FUNERAL SERVICE



If you are interested in becoming a licensed funeral professional, John A. Gupton College can help you get there. The Associate Degree in Funeral Service is an accredited program. Our online program is flexible, career-focused and may be completed in 12 or 16 months. Financial Aid is available.

For information concerning cost and program call 615-327-3927, go to our website at [guptoncollege.edu](http://guptoncollege.edu) or email [admissions@guptoncollege.edu](mailto:admissions@guptoncollege.edu).



JOHN A. GUPTON  
COLLEGE

1616 Church Street | Nashville, TN 37203  
615-327-3927 | [www.guptoncollege.edu](http://www.guptoncollege.edu)



## CONTINUING EDUCATION ON-LINE

John A. Gupton College has developed online continuing education courses. These courses have been approved for CEU hours by both Tennessee and Kentucky Boards. The online subjects range from funeral service history, embalming techniques, funeral home management, grief psychology and bereavement counseling. For information concerning cost and program call 615-327-3927, go to our website at [guptoncollege.edu](http://guptoncollege.edu) or email [admissions@guptoncollege.edu](mailto:admissions@guptoncollege.edu).



JOHN A. GUPTON  
COLLEGE

1616 Church Street | Nashville, TN 37203  
615-327-3927 | [www.guptoncollege.edu](http://www.guptoncollege.edu)



## John A. Gupton Alumni Association

---

**TO CONTACT THE SCHOOL:**

1616 Church Street, Nashville, TN 37203  
Office: 615.327.3927 | Fax: 615.321.4518  
[cook@guptoncollege.edu](mailto:cook@guptoncollege.edu)