



Gerald Wayne Mills

November 22, 1951 - January 17, 2026

Gerald W. Mills, aged 74, of Christiansburg, VA, passed away peacefully on January 17, 2026, surrounded by his loving family.

Gerald lived a life defined by devotion—to his faith, to his wife, to his family, and by the values he carried from childhood. He was a steadfast husband, a loyal son, a loving father, and a proud, playful papa whose quiet strength and gentle spirit shaped every life he touched.

Born as an only child in Altavista, VA, and raised in the Glenland community of Renan, VA, Gerald learned early the meaning of hard work and responsibility on his family's farm, tending tobacco and raising beef cattle. Those lessons stayed with him throughout his life, guiding his choices and grounding his character.

Gerald graduated from Gretna High School in 1970 alongside his high school sweetheart, Carolyn Tucker Mills. They met in the 1st grade at Renan Grade School. Their love story—rooted in friendship, strengthened by time, and blessed by 52 years of marriage—remained the center of his world. While Carolyn attended Radford University, they continued to build their life together, marrying in 1973. Gerald went on to graduate at the top of his accounting class from the Pamplin College of Business at Virginia Tech in 1974.

He had a long, successful career as a comptroller and financial controller, as well as plant manager, with a number of companies in Virginia. He worked for Cumulus Radio in Dublin; Mid-Continent Nail Corporation in Radford; Marshall Concrete in Christiansburg; Bova Distributing in Hollins; Radford Foundry in Radford; Lynchburg Foundry in Lynchburg; Piedmont Manufacturing in Altavista; and the Peaks of Otter Lodge on the Blue Ridge Parkway. His colleagues knew him as a man of integrity, diligence, and unwavering reliability.

Gerald was a girl's dad in every way possible. He went above and beyond to make sure his daughters, Angela and Heather, felt his presence and support in all that they did.

Attending their performances and games was a priority, each time with his video camera in hand. From bartering Cabbage Patch dolls when they were all the rage, to late night runs to get sodas for their friends coming over, to donuts on Sunday mornings for a sleepover, he always made sure that his girls and their friends were taken care of and had everything they needed before they even knew to ask. He always made the effort to connect with them and to find ways to share time and interests together.

Faith was a constant thread in Gerald's life. He served in many roles within the churches he and his family attended, most often offering his gifts as a treasurer, deacon, and chaperone for youth trips. More recently, he found joy volunteering with the St. Paul United Methodist Church Community Children's Choir, tapping his foot to their songs and faithfully tending the candy and toy treasure box. His service was quiet but steadfast, always rooted in humility and a desire to help.

After retiring, Gerald embraced a new calling: caregiving. With tenderness and patience, he provided childcare for his two grandchildren, Braxton and Zoey, from birth until they started school. He also provided full-time care for both his mother and mother-in-law, Estelle and Ann, as they went through medical challenges in their latter years.

Gerald delighted in simple pleasures—family trips, long conversations, good food, bowls of ice cream. He took special pride in their turn-of-the-century home in downtown Christiansburg. He lovingly cared for his flowers, the family pool, and lots of Christmas decorations, transforming the home into a place of beauty and joy. His family lovingly said he was the “Mills Concierge Service” —always providing for their needs.

He carried lifelong pride for his alma mater, Virginia Tech, and was an enthusiastic fan of the University of Tennessee Volunteers—hearing “Rocky Top” always brought a smile to his face. Music was a constant companion—whether bluegrass, country, easy listening, Motown or 60's rock, Gerald kept the beat and dreamed of one day being the drummer in the band. Listening to his wife play the piano brought joy to his heart.

In recent years, Gerald faced Alzheimer's, and specifically Lewy Body dementia, with courage and grace. His greatest concern was always how this impacted his family. Through every challenge, he was lovingly supported and cared for in their home by his devoted wife, Carolyn, with the additional support of his daughters and their families.

Gerald is survived by his beloved wife of 52 years, Carolyn Tucker Mills; his daughters, Angela Mills (Jamie Epperly) and Heather Mills McClaugherty (Brandon McClaugherty); and his treasured grandchildren, Braxton McClaugherty and Zoey McClaugherty, who will

forever remember their papa's playful spirit, his ready smile, and the dollar bills he kept tucked in his shirt pocket just for them. He is also survived by two especially instrumental people in his life, his cousin—more like a sister—Brenda Good Barfield, who served as godmother to his children; and his lifelong friend and Virginia Tech roommate, Mike Felts.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Shirley C. Mills and Estelle Updike Mills, and by his in-laws, Henry A. Tucker and Virginia Ann Edwards Tucker.

Gerald's family extends their heartfelt gratitude to everyone in their lives who has shown compassion, support and grace while traveling this most recent chapter of their journey. They are especially grateful for Dr. Rebecca King Mallory, who provided steadfast guidance and unwavering medical care. They appreciate Good Samaritan Hospice, whose in-home care team and the on-site care team at the Sheila S. Strauss Hospice House in Roanoke, VA, brought comfort and peace during his last month and final days. The kindness and services of Sonu, Adrian, Shannon and Leah were especially meaningful.

Funeral services will be conducted, Saturday, February, 28, 2026 at 2:00pm, in the McCoy Funeral Home Chapel, with the Pastors Neal Turner and Mike Derflinger officiating. The family will receive friends from 4:00 - 6:00 pm on Friday, February 27, 2026 at McCoy Funeral Home, 150 Country Club Dr. S.W., Blacksburg, Virginia 24060.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made in Gerald's memory to Good Samaritan Hospice, Attn: Development, 4751 Cove Road NW, Roanoke, VA.

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB **27**. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

McCoy Funeral Home Chapel
150 Country Club Dr S.W.
Blacksburg, VA 24060

Funeral Service

FEB **28**. 2:00 PM (ET)

McCoy Funeral Home Chapel
150 Country Club Dr S.W.
Blacksburg, VA 24060

Tribute Wall

LT

“ Love Erin and Travis Thorp purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of Gerald Wayne Mills.



Love Erin and Travis Thorp - February 26 at 09:17 PM

LT

“ Love Erin and Travis Thorp planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gerald Wayne Mills.

Love Erin and Travis Thorp - February 26 at 09:17 PM

SD

“ Would enjoy the times Mr. Mills would come visit Angela at her office when she worked for the University of Tennessee. Always had a smile on his face and enjoyed going to all the activities Angela had planned for them. Such a gentle soul.

Sue Denning - February 17 at 09:47 AM

Profile icon

“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Gerald Wayne Mills.



January 25 at 08:53 PM

BH

“ Briley H. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gerald Wayne Mills.

Briley H. - January 25 at 08:53 PM

PF

“ Pam, Tony, Patti, Eddie and Family purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Gerald Wayne Mills.



Pam, Tony, Patti, Eddie and Family - January 22 at 12:23 PM

BC

“ I am one of those Renan kids and have known Gerald and Carolyn all my life. Will always remember Gerald's infectious smile and hearty laugh. Carolyn, may you and your family feel God's embrace of love and His presence in the days that lie ahead. May his peace and comfort sustain you.

Barbara Hammock Caldwell - January 20 at 11:19 AM

MI

“ Gerald was such a gentle and kind teddy bear. We have loved all of you for many years. We are deeply saddened over your loss. Many prayers are being sent your way. Martha and Butch

Martha Irvine - January 20 at 10:17 AM

RH

“ So sorry for your loss. Mrs. Mills was my music teacher in 8th grade.



Rhondadevercelly@gmail.com - January 19 at 10:45 PM

DM

“ I knew Gerald and Carolyn from Gretna High School. We all were the Class of 1970! Prayers for Carolyn and your family. Gerald was a great man! To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord! RIP Gerald!

Danny Myers - January 19 at 10:14 PM

CP

“ I met Gerald while at Radford University studying Music alongside his then girlfriend Carolyn. I was blessed to be asked to sing at their wedding and always thought of him as a kind, gentle, and loving person. I pray that all his family and friends will feel the comfort from our gracious, Heavenly Father as they walk through this very difficult time.

Cheryl Phillips - January 19 at 08:49 PM

NR

“ Deepest Sympathy & Prayers to the Mills Family!! So sorry to hear of Gerald's passing!! Many fond memories of Gerald in Renan!! 🙏❤️🙏

Nancy & Henry Rowland - January 19 at 08:00 PM

DT

“ I have had the pleasure of knowing Gerald and Carolyn all my life. Both were great friends, although after high school we lost contact. Through reunions and Facebook I have been able to reconnect with them both. They are two of the kindest and giving people I know. Their faith in God, commitment to family, and devotion to their community was evident. I am sending prayers to Gerald's family during this time and praying they will find peace and comfort during these difficult days ahead. He will be greatly missed.

Dianne Travis - January 19 at 07:40 PM

PC

“ Phil & Jane Clay
Carolyn, so sorry to hear this, never forget playing basketball with Gerald and R J Rowland in our teens, will miss him, great person

Phil Clay - January 19 at 07:33 PM

EO

“ Carolyn, So sorry to hear of Gerald's homecoming, Knew him from Piney Grove.
Sandra Saunders Osborne

Emory & Sandra Osborne - January 19 at 06:43 PM

KH

“ Carolyn, I am so sorry for your loss. He was the kind of man one knew by his actions that he loved his family. My heart goes out to you.

Karen Haga - January 19 at 05:08 PM

CB

“ SO. SORRY FOR YOUR LOSS.



CECILE BARBOUR - January 19 at 04:43 PM

GR

“ God Bless you Carolyn. So sorry to hear of Gerald.



Granville - January 19 at 04:37 PM

BW

“ Although I was a year behind both of you in school, I will never forget your friendly smiles and your kindness to me. Cherish your beautiful memories that you made as a family.
Brenda E. Walton



Brenda Walton - January 19 at 04:10 PM

JL

James and I send prayers and condolences. May God bless you and family now and days to come.

James & Julia Lukin - January 19 at 05:13 PM

MG

“ Marlene S Giles lit a candle in memory of Gerald Wayne Mills



Marlene S Giles - January 19 at 04:05 PM

AS

“ Gerald was a kind and gentle person. He had the most infectious smile and laugh. He got me through trigonometry! With Jeff Pickerel's help. Love you all!

Ann Shortt - January 19 at 04:00 PM