



## Dr. George Marvin Bilbrey Jr.

October 15, 1936 - February 9, 2017

George Marvin Bilbrey, Jr., M.D, died Thursday February 9th 2017 following a brief illness. He was born in Tuscaloosa, Alabama on Oct 15, 1936. He was the son of the late Lucy Skinner and George Marvin Bilbrey, Sr.

A 1958 graduate of the University of Alabama, Dr. Bilbrey graduated from the University of Alabama Medical School in 1962. He completed his internship at St. Vincent's Hospital and residency at the University of Alabama Hospital, where he met Diana Roscoe. They were married on May 11, 1963.

Dr. Bilbrey was commissioned into the U.S. Army Medical Corps in 1967, serving on Okinawa during the Vietnam conflict.

In 1971, Dr. Bilbrey moved to Asheville where he began his practice as a cardiothoracic surgeon. Dr. Bilbrey performed the second open heart surgery in Asheville. Over the years, Dr. Bilbrey twice served as Chief of Staff at Mission Hospitals (1980, 2003-2007). He served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Mission Health System, Mission Hospitals and Mission Medical Associates. Dr. Bilbrey also worked as Consultant Cardiac Surgeon at the Asheville VA Medical Center.

Dr. Bilbrey was proud to call Asheville home and was active in many community organizations. A lover of classical music, he served on the Board

of Directors of the Asheville Symphony. He was a Director of the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce and also served as a volunteer physician at the ABCCM clinic.

Dr. Bilbrey had many interests outside of medicine and family. He was an avid tennis player, golfer, and traveler. He was a certified SCUBA master diver and travelled on many dive trips with Diana - frequently assisting with marine biology research studies. He took great pleasure in the world of ideas and could frequently be found with a book, a cup of coffee and a journal.

Dr. Bilbrey is survived by his beloved wife of 53 years, Diana Bilbrey of Asheville; two children: son George and wife Bethany of Boulder, CO, son Neville and wife Wyn of Charlotte, NC; four grandchildren: Hilton Bilbrey of Greensboro, NC, David Bilbrey of Charlotte, NC, Nate Bilbrey and Ben Bilbrey of Boulder, CO. Brother-in-law Lt. Col. Ronald Roscoe and wife Gail of Conover, NC, Nephews Jeff Roscoe and Jason Roscoe of Conover, NC and niece Jill Cessna and husband William, grandniece Megan Cessna and grandnephew Grayson Cessna of Tega Cay, SC.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation Greater Western Carolinas Chapter, 205 Regency Executive Park Drive, Charlotte, NC 28217 ([www.jdrf.org](http://www.jdrf.org)); the Mission Health Systems Foundation (designated to the heart program), 890 Hendersonville Rd. #300, Asheville, NC 28803 ([www.missionphilanthropy.org](http://www.missionphilanthropy.org)); or the Asheville Symphony Society, P.O. Box 2852, Asheville, NC 28802 ([www.ashevillesymphony.org](http://www.ashevillesymphony.org)).

The funeral service will be at Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church at 1pm, Friday, February 17, 2017. The family will receive friends at the church after the service.



## Cemetery Details

**Private**

## Previous Events

### **Memorial Service**

FEB 17. 1:00 PM (ET)

Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church  
789 Merrimon Avenue  
Asheville, NC 28804

# Tribute Wall



“ *Dr. George Marvin Bilbrey Jr.*

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October 07, 2023 at 11:15 AM



“ *We have enjoyed traveling with George and Diana and spending time with them years ago in Hilton Head. He was a fine man with a great sense of adventure and humor. He will be missed by all who knew him. Our condolences to Diana and his sons and their families.*

*Clement and Sharon Markarian*

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**Sharon Markarian** - February 21, 2017 at 07:11 AM



“ *Our condolences to Diana in your loss fo George. We were saddened to here the news but we will always have the great memories of UAB Med Shool. May God give you courage in our time of need and Bless you always  
Manny and Darlene De Los Santos  
Feb. 18, 2017*

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**Dr, Manuel De Los Santos** - February 18, 2017 at 11:43 PM

BB

“ Over the past several days Jan and I have been recalling our times with George, Diana, and their family. We met them over forty years ago as we shared educational efforts for our children. George was caring, sincere, and ready to help despite his busy professional life. I always liked his sly grin, as though we shared some unspoken bit of irony or humor. I respected this man and he left a legacy of great skill and kindness.

-Bob Brunk

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**Bob Brunk** - February 18, 2017 at 06:52 PM

NT

“ Sympathy and prayers are extended to the family of Dr. Bilbrey. He was a special man and it was my pleasure to have known him. May you rejoice in his wonderful life.

Neil Thagard  
Neil k's Hairstyling

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**Neil Thagard** - February 17, 2017 at 07:30 PM

TG

“ Please know that are thoughts are with you all at this difficult time. Our prayer is that the peace and love of our Lord and Savior will be present in all your hearts at this time. Sorry we can't be there for the service and to honor George. We're in Florida until the end of the month.

Barbara & Jeff

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**the Goulds** - February 16, 2017 at 12:51 PM

ER

“ I have plagiarized him for over twenty years - "Sometimes lucky is the best thing you can be." He would have been legendary among his peers based on skill and performance alone, but what endeared him to me, and I think most of us, was his humble, kind and caring soul. The epitome of an old-school professional physician. God speed to you Sir. - Ernie

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**Ernie** - February 16, 2017 at 12:29 AM

TK

“ Prayers for the family. He did several surgeries on my dad and was always honest and kind to me.

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**Tina Knight** - February 15, 2017 at 10:18 PM

MW

“ I worked with Dr. Bilbrey for nearly 20 years at Mission Hospital in the CVOR. He was a great surgeon. I remember he was pretty particular about prepping and draping the patient for surgery. Especially in regards to the germs and making sure we got them all off. We had worked on call all night so the hospital let the O.R. Staff off the next day. When I got home and fell asleep I dreamt that we had operated on our patient outside! And thinking that Dr. Bilbrey would of been beside himself. When I told him about the dream, he turned and looked at me and said just as serious as he always did, "Mona, you know I would never do that", winked and smiled. I learned a lot from Dr. Bilbrey and feel honored to have known him. My deepest sympathies to his family.

*Mona Williams, LPN*

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**Mona Williams** - February 15, 2017 at 08:28 PM

BR

*I too worked with Dr. Bilbrey in CVICU for almost ten years and am honored to have known him. My story is that the day I came to work after being "lost" in the woods, he looked at his compass watch and said with a smile "here let me help you find your way" and of course we were in CVICU at the time. Deepest sympathies to his family.*

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**Betsy Smith RN** - February 16, 2017 at 09:58 AM

RI

*“ We were saddened to hear of George's death. We have not often seen him and Diana since the old St. Genevieve/Gibbons Hall days, but we certainly enjoyed reminiscing and catching up when we did. Unfortunately we must leave town Friday morning, but we send our deep sympathy to Diana, George and Neville. Rob and Chris Israel*

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**Rob and Chris Israel** - February 15, 2017 at 01:43 PM

JH

*“ We can't begin to express what it meant to us to have George as a neighbor and a friend. He was such a kind, thoughtful and caring man who we admired so much. He always had a smile, possessed a great sense of humor and had a way of lifting the spirits and easing worries. He cared so much about everyone--his patients, his family and his friends.  
Our thoughts and prayers are with you, Diana, and the family during these difficult days.*

*Jill and John Hurd*

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**Jill and John Hurd** - February 14, 2017 at 06:19 PM

LD

“ *Lincoln Anesthesia Dept purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Dr. George Marvin Bilbrey Jr..*



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**Lincoln Anesthesia Dept** - February 14, 2017 at 03:50 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Dr. George Marvin Bilbrey Jr..*



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February 14, 2017 at 02:25 PM

MA

“ *"The Bilb." My heart swells when I think of this man and the phrase, "they don't make them like they used to" comes to mind. Dr. Bilbrey was a class act. Excellent surgeon, provider, and human-being! It was an honor to care for his patients.*  
*ML*

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**Marisa** - February 14, 2017 at 07:30 AM

TE

“ *Loved caring for his patients after surgery because he cared for them so much during surgery.*

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**terrie** - February 13, 2017 at 08:30 PM

PW

“ Dr. Bilbrey was a wonderful gentle man who truly cared about his patients. Gale Wichmann

Patricia Wichmann - February 13, 2017 at 07:28 PM

VL

“ Dr. Bilbrey was a kind and gentle soul . He was the true definition of a gentleman and always dressed impeccably. He made a genuine effort to get to know the staff and his patients. I worked with Dr.Bilbrey for 34 years at Mission Hospital. He was greatly admired by his colleagues, staff members,patients and their families. With his vast knowledge and experience he was a great asset to the medical profession and our community . Dr. Bilbrey 's dedication to all endeavors made you want to achieve your best. It was a honor to know and work with him.

One of my fondest memories was the blizzard of 1993. After being stuck at Mission,the first morning in comes Dr. Bilbrey in a suit,starched white shirt and a tie. I hear his soft and gentle voice asked if we had any coffee. I knew we would all make it though this storm with him at our side.

Diana,I know you will be lost without him for quite awhile. His face would always light up and break out in a smile when I inquired about you. Please know you and your family are in my thoughts and prayers. May he rest in heaven where I know God took him.

Virginia Kaye Long,RN - February 13, 2017 at 06:22 PM

MM

“ Dr. Bilbrey was a joy to work with at Asheville VA. He was always for the Veterans and was kind and a great colleague. Prayers for you all as you celebrate his life well lived.

MaryAnn Curl, MD

Former Asheville Chief of Staff

MaryAnn Curl, MD - February 13, 2017 at 03:56 PM