



Houston Austin Bates

August 28, 1928 - July 4, 2025

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Houston Austin Bates, 96, of Alexander, Arkansas, passed away on July 4, 2025. Born August 28, 1928, in Mena, Arkansas, Houston was a U.S. Marine Corps veteran, devoted husband, loving father, and a true woodworking genius.

He was preceded in death by his beloved wife of nearly 50 years, Ethel Marie Bates; his parents, John Little “Lit” Bates and Lucy Itura “Tura” Lively; his brothers, Jesse Hubert Bates and Herman Daniel Bates; his sister, Hazel Bates Wagner; and his step-son, Gary Williams.

He is survived by his son, Mike Bates (Teresa) of Alexander, AR; daughters, Londie (Bobby) Bell of Conway, AR; Glenda (Ricky) Smoke of Bismarck, AR; Karen Woodall of Hot Springs, AR; and Kimberly (Randall) Skaggs of Star City, AR. He leaves behind 16 grandchildren, 17 great-grandchildren, 2 great-great-grandchildren, and many cherished nieces and nephews.

Houston was a quiet man who earned the deep respect of everyone who knew him. He worked long hours to provide for his family and built a legacy of craftsmanship through Diamond B Enterprises, based in Hot Springs, which he co-owned with his wife, Marie. Known for saying, “If you can dream it, we can build it,” he brought beauty and function to life through his hands and his heart.

Later in life, he and Marie embraced adventure together. From four-wheeling

in the Colorado mountains to road-tripping across the country, they made wonderful memories with their children and grandchildren. These were treasured years filled with laughter, love, and family.

Pallbearers will be Michael Smoke, Jeremy Woodall, Nicholas Bates, Zachary Bates, Austin Sutterfield, and Trevor Sutterfield.

Honorary Pallbearers are Brian Smoke, Jonathan Bell, Jonathan Williams, John Sutterfield, Alec Bell, and Timothy Skaggs.

Funeral services will be held at Unity Missionary Baptist Church in Bismarck, Arkansas, on Wednesday, July 9 at 10:00 a.m., with interment to follow at Pleasant Hill Cemetery with Military honors by United States Marine Corps. Officiating the service will be Steve Garner and Bobby Bell. Visitation will be held Tuesday, July 8 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at Hot Springs Funeral Home.

Cemetery Details

Pleasant Hill Cemetery

Bismarck, AR

Previous Events

CHURCH SERVICE

JUL 9. 10:00 AM.

Unity Missionary Baptist Church
Bismarck, AR

Tribute Wall

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“ So sorry for the family, my father, Gail Taylor was such a fan and had most respect for Houston's woodworking genius!!! Houston was at my father's funeral, I'm not Abel to attend Houston's. Houston worked for my father at Taylor Millworks. Houston built the gorgeous oak cabinets in my house. He got involved with us making whetstone boxes. Anyway lot of history, such a great person!!!!

Alvin Taylor - July 08, 2025 at 07:55 PM