



## Robert Barlow Clayton

January 20, 1950 - August 2, 2025

With deep sorrow and hearts full of gratitude, we announce the passing of Robert Barlow Clayton, a devoted husband, father, grandfather, educator, outdoorsman, and faithful servant of the Lord, who entered eternal rest on Saturday, August 2, 2025 at the age of 75.

Born January 20, 1950, in Corpus Christi, Texas, to Charles and Edna Clayton, “Bobby”, as they called him as a boy, experienced a childhood of frequent moves which formed his character and instilled strength, adaptability, and deep empathy. He moved to Rusk, Texas in high school, where his life took root and his purpose began to unfold, thanks in part to the mentorship of Bro. Grover and Wegi Talbert, Coach Doyle and Barbara Brooks, and Coach Doug and Sally Jordan.

Bob became a strong, determined young man and gifted athlete. After high school he worked full-time at Rusk State Hospital while attending Tyler Junior College and played baseball. He later earned his bachelor’s degree in Education from Stephen F. Austin State University. In high school, he met his sweetheart, Carlene Butler, who he married on December 26, 1970, and built a life together anchored in love, faith, and hard work. They raised two children, Bart and Ashley, and eventually welcomed treasured grandchildren, earning them the treasured title of “Boo” and “KeKe”.

For 41 years, Mr. Clayton served Rusk ISD as a high school ICT teacher and coordinator of the work study program, and elementary P.E. coach. He had a rare and powerful gift for reaching students. He touched the untouchable and opened doors for those who needed direction, giving them tools to build a future with purpose. His classroom was a place of second chances and his guidance a turning point in many lives.

His faith was the foundation of everything he did. As a young adult, he founded a youth center in Rusk as a ministry outreach. He was a devoted member of Rusk First Baptist Church, where he served as a deacon, youth Sunday School teacher, and faithful volunteer.

Bob found peace and passion in the outdoors. As an avid outdoorsman and lover of nature, he was most comfortable in camouflage “his signature attire”. If there was a season, he had a license: deer, duck, dove, quail; he hunted it all. He also loved the beach, and many of his favorite memories were made at a humble little spot in Sabine Pass, Texas, affectionately known as “The Get-A-Way.” Whether it was casting a line for saltwater fishing, scuba diving, beach combing or watching the waves roll in, he was happiest when surrounded by God’s creation and the people he loved.

After the loss of his beloved wife Carlene, God brought new light into his life through Lindy. Through a shared experience of grief and healing, their friendship grew into love. They were married in November 2020, uniting two families and continuing a life of faith, joy, and companionship.

Bob is preceded in death by his parents, his wife, Carlene Clayton and brother, Chuck Clayton. Left to cherish Bob’s memories are his son, Bart Clayton, and wife Sarah of Canton; daughter, Ashley Oliver, and husband, Todd of Rusk; his loving wife, Lindy; her children, Aaron, and wife Leslie of Rusk; Corry Lankford, and wife Adriana of Lufkin; grandchildren, Taryn and Trayce Clayton, Ainsley and Clayton Oliver, Courtne and Tallulah Lankford;

sister in law, Brenda Clayton of Gilmer; brother in law Steve Lee, and wife, Nancy, of Tyler, extended family, and a host of friends, and countless former students who were forever touched by his kindness, wisdom, humor, and heart.

We invite all who knew and loved Mr. Clayton to celebrate his life at a visitation on Saturday, August 9, 2025 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Wallace-Thompson Funeral Home Chapel in Rusk, Texas. A private graveside service will follow.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests donations be made to The Carlene Clayton Memorial Fund at Cherokee County Teachers Federal Credit Union, P.O. Drawer A, Rusk, Texas 75787, to continue the legacy of love, service, and impact that defined the lives of Bob and Carlene Clayton.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

AUG 9. 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

The Chapel of Wallace-Thompson Funeral Home

221 5th St.

Rusk, TX 75785

[info@wallacethompson.com](mailto:info@wallacethompson.com)

# Tribute Wall



“ *Classic Sympathy Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Robert Barlow Clayton.*



August 07, 2025 at 08:24 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Robert Barlow Clayton.

August 07, 2025 at 08:24 AM



“ *Bart and Ashley...sorry about your dad...Bob was always a friend to me and I respected him..  
Rest in Peace my friend.*

Dean Evans - August 05, 2025 at 10:27 PM



“ B

Dean Evans - August 05, 2025 at 10:00 PM



“ *Homer B. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Robert Barlow Clayton.*

Homer B. - August 05, 2025 at 09:10 PM

DE

“ *Bart and Ashley...sorry about your dad. Bob was always a friend to me and I respected him...Rest in Peace my friend.*

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**Dean Evans** - August 05, 2025 at 12:58 PM