



Edmund E. (Buddy) Prestridge

April 1, 1938 - November 14, 2025

Edmund E. “Buddy” Prestridge, a devoted husband, father, grandfather, and one of Mississippi’s most respected community banking leaders, passed away surrounded by his family. His life was marked by integrity, service, deep faith, and a steadfast commitment to the people and communities of Mississippi.

Buddy was born in San Diego, California, on April 1, 1938, to Rayford E. Prestridge and Bena Hurt Prestridge. He spent his early years following his father’s naval stations, later living in McComb and attending McComb High school. He graduated from McComb in 1956 with a close knit class. In the past few years, his remaining classmates, John Gordon Roach, J. W. Burt, and Rita Dunn Roberts would have coffee together in person or a conference call each week. They would keep all the classmates updated on everyone’s milestones. He met his wife Vallie Clark in 1958 at a church dance just down the road from his grand parents’ farm. They were married for 66 years until Vallie’s death in 2024. He was devoted to her and his two daughters. Buddy and Vallie lived in McComb before moving to Hazlehurst in 1976, the community he proudly called home for the remainder of his life.

Buddy’s banking career began shortly after he completed his service in the United States Navy. In 1960, he accepted a teller position at Mechanics State Bank in McComb. Mechanics State Bank later merged with Deposit Guaranty National Bank in 1967, and Buddy continued to advance in leadership. In

1974, he was elected a Selectman for the City of McComb, further demonstrating his commitment to public service.

In 1976, with the support of several trusted friends, Buddy became President and CEO of Bank of Hazlehurst. Eventually, the institution transitioned into a national bank, becoming Copiah Bank. Buddy retired from Copiah Bank in 2001.

Following retirement, he joined the Small Business Administration, working on disaster loans. The work was meaningful and impactful, though the SBA's approach—much different from traditional banking—gave Buddy stories he enjoyed telling for years.

His retirement was brief. In early 2005, his longtime friend Mays Magee called seeking help with management succession at Bank of Franklin. Buddy joined the bank soon after as CEO. A few years later, Buddy moved into the role of Vice Chairman of the Board. He continued working one day a week—"to tell them what to do if they'd listen," he joked.

Buddy served more than 20 years with Bank of Franklin, including over 17 years on the Board of Directors and four years as Chairman of the board. On July 21, 2025, the Board of Directors passed a formal resolution honoring his extraordinary service and lifelong dedication to community banking.

In 2022, he was recognized at the Mississippi Bankers Association Annual Convention for 60 years of service in the banking industry—an achievement that later reached 65 years.

Buddy's influence extended far beyond the institutions he served. He was active in the American Bankers Association, serving on the Community Bankers Council and later the ABA Communications Council, where he had

the honor of serving as chairman.

In 1995, Buddy was elected President of the Mississippi Bankers Association, a role he treasured. He found joy in collaborating with bankers across the state, many of whom remained lifelong friends. At MBA conventions, he was honored to sit among past presidents—“and being the oldest,” he often noted with humor, “I have to sit first at the table.”

Through every stage of his career, Buddy believed in the essential role of community banks: taking care of people, going the extra mile, and strengthening the communities they serve. As recently as a week ago, a customer from 48 years ago knocked on his hospital room door. He reminded Buddy of his name and thanked him for the help Buddy had given him when he was getting started. These sorts of encounters were a regular occurrence. Each time was a blessing for Buddy to be reminded of the impact he had on people’s lives. Buddy held firmly to the conviction that there would always be a place for community banks to help people

Buddy was a faithful member and elder of First Presbyterian Church in Hazlehurst, where he served with dedication. His church family was an essential part of his life, and he cherished the opportunity to serve and support its ministries over the decades.

Buddy and Vallie loved to travel. They had wonderful opportunities through bank meetings to develop friendships that lasted their lifetimes. It was a joy for him to take his family on trips. From their annual trip to Camden, Maine to cruises with the whole family to trips to New Orleans

He is survived by his daughters, Andrea Clark of Hattiesburg, Ms and Amy Brunt and her husband David, his favorite, of Crystal Springs, Ms; his

grandchildren Andrew Clark, Ian Clark, David Brunt IV and his wife Brittany, Alexandra Brunt Herrera and her husband Carlos, Levi Brunt, and Eliza Brunt; and his six great-grandchildren. He is also survived by his sister Martha Wilson and nephew Max Wilson of Paso Robles, Ca.

The family extends their heartfelt gratitude to the staff of the Copiah County Medical Center for their tireless care and endless patience. They made Daddy's last year so much better with their sense of humor and tolerance of his grumpiness and pathological need for coffee.

In lieu of flowers, please send donations to the First Presbyterian Church of Hazlehurst, Ms.

Visitation will be held Sunday from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Stringer Family Funeral Home in Hazlehurst, Mississippi. Visitation will continue Monday from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at First Presbyterian Church in Hazlehurst. Funeral services will follow at 11:00 a.m. Monday at First Presbyterian Church, with interment at Hazlehurst Cemetery.

Cemetery Details

Hazlehurst Cemetery

Sinclaire St.
Hazlehurst, MS 39083

Previous Events

Visitation

NOV **16**. 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM (CT)

Stringer Family Funeral Home - Hazlehurst
PO Box 884
28023 Hwy 28
Hazlehurst, MS 39083
(601) 894-1331
stringerfuneral@bellsouth.net

Visitation

NOV **17**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

First Presbyterian Church, Hazlehurst
133 Downing Street
Hazlehurst, MS 39083

Funeral Service

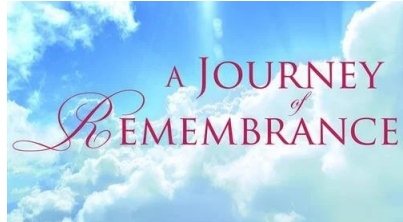
NOV 17. 11:00 AM (CT)

First Presbyterian Church, Hazlehurst
133 Downing Street
Hazlehurst, MS 39083

Tribute Wall



“ *Stringer Family Funeral Service created a Tribute Video in memory of Edmund E. (Buddy) Prestridge*



Stringer Family Funeral Service - November 17, 2025 at 10:03 AM

BD

“ *Buddy, may you rest in peace. We'll miss you at Manresa but know you'll be there in Spirit ! Barney*

Barney Daly - November 17, 2025 at 11:22 AM

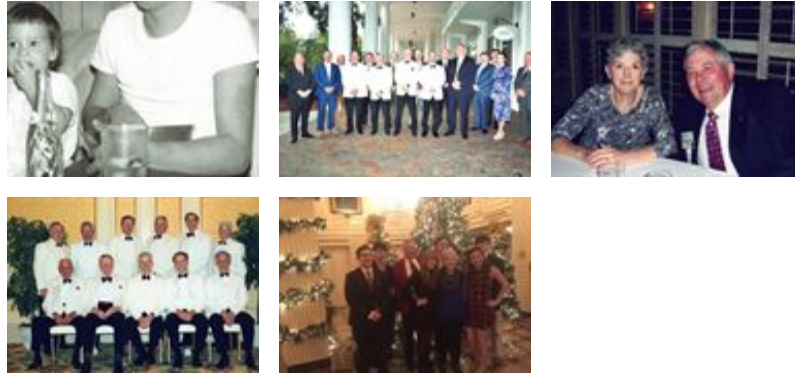
LS

“ *Buddy hired me in 1981, taught me a lot about banking and allowed me many opportunities to grow at Copiah Bank. I will certainly miss him. My prayers are with all of his family, he was so proud of you all!*

Lawanna Sandifer - November 16, 2025 at 05:02 PM



“ 326 files added to the album *LifeTributes*



Stringer Family Funeral Service - November 16, 2025 at 01:16 PM



“ *Buddy and I met at daylight and walked about 3 miles 5 days a week unless the weather was bad or one of us had to be out of town. We had others who would join us from time to time but Buddy and I hung in there for several years. You get to know a person pretty well when you spend an hour or so at daylight with someone 5 days a week for several years! I can tell you without any doubt Buddy loved his Lord and his church and his family! Buddy had adopted Copiah County as his home and put a lot of effort and money into trying to make Hazlehurst and Copiah County a better place to live and raise a family! He will be missed but I know I will see him again!*

Johnny Johns - November 16, 2025 at 05:57 AM



“ *Prayers with ya'll...John 14*

Sandra Cliburn Montgomery Texas previously Hazlehurst Mississippi

Sandra Cliburn - November 14, 2025 at 06:26 PM

CR

“ *Cole, Laura, Gray & Rhett purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of Edmund E. (Buddy) Prestridge.*



Cole, Laura, Gray & Rhett - November 14, 2025 at 11:15 AM