



Mr. Claude Edward Bell

June 3, 1918 - February 8, 2025

Claude Edward Bell, 106 years, eight months, and five days old, passed away on February 8, 2025. He was born on June 3, 1918, in DeWitt, AR, to Oscar and Mae Hornbeck Bell.

He was born near the end of WWI and during the Spanish Flu pandemic of 1918, and at 102, he tested positive for COVID-19 during the pandemic of 2020-21 but had no symptoms.

On February 18, 1942, he was inducted into the Army. He completed his basic training at Camp Robinson in Little Rock, AR, and became a surgical technician. He deployed to the European Theatre on August 30, 1944. He was stationed in England; Liege, Belgium; and Holland as a medic during the conflict. He was discharged on January 16, 1946, and then returned to the United States on board the Queen Mary, on February 17, 1946. He received the Victory Ribbon, the American Theatre Ribbon, the European African Middle Eastern Theatre Ribbon, the Good Conduct Medal, and two Overseas Service Bars. At the time of his passing, he was the oldest surviving WWII veteran in Arkansas.

He married Helen Frances Jacobs on December 31, 1947. They were married for 66 years before her death on September 28, 2014. They had three children, Claude "Eddie", Jr., Shirley, and Keith.

The family formed Oscar Bell and Sons Farms. In 1950, he began farming at Silver Lake and later at Gould. His family moved back to Gillett in 1975. He retired as a farmer in 1983. He was a lifetime charter member of the Turner-

Neal Hunting Club and a member of Dark Corner Christian Church.

Claude was preceded in death by his parents, wife Helen, four brothers Roger, twin brother Clyde, Harold, and Ephffous Bell, grandson Jonathan Bell, and son-in-law Randy Thrash.

He is survived by his three children Eddie Bell (Nancy), Shirley Bell Thrash-Foster (Mike), and Keith Bell; six grandchildren Shawn Bell, Andrea Thrash Davis (Brian), Hayley Thrash, Jami Bell-Calvert (Colby), Amber Hargraves (Lucas), and Ashley Bell; and seven great-grandchildren Jonah Lichlyter, Jadyn Lichlyter, Gabriel Thrash, Millie Bell Calvert, Levi Hargraves, Kevin Davis, and Sam Davis.

Visitation will be 1:00 p.m. February 17 at Essex Funeral Home with funeral services beginning at 2:00. Burial will follow in DeWitt Cemetery.

Cemetery Details

DeWitt Cemetery

Monroe and W 13th St
DeWitt, AR 72042

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 17. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Essex Funeral Home
1405 South Grandview
DeWitt, AR 72042
(870) 946-3104
<https://www.essexfuneralhome.com>

Service

FEB 17. 2:00 PM (CT)

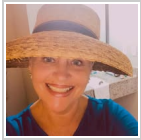
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Tribute Wall



“ To Eddie, Shirley, Keith, & all the family members, may God give sweet peace and comfort to your hearts. I'm thankful y'all had your dad with you for as long as you did, but not matter the length of time, goodbyes are hard. Praying for you all. Carnell Proctor

Carnell Proctor - February 14, 2025 at 06:42 PM



“ The Allison-Wilsons send their deepest condolences. What a legacy Mr. Claude leaves for his family and friends.

Janet Tullos Wilson - February 14, 2025 at 05:22 PM



“ Days of Sunshine Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mr. Claude Edward Bell.



February 14, 2025 at 12:55 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Mr. Claude Edward Bell.

February 14, 2025 at 12:55 PM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Mr. Claude Edward Bell.*



February 14, 2025 at 12:51 PM



“ *I will always remember Mr. Bell and his love for Rice Krispy Treats. He was a sweet man*



Nancy Wallace-Keys - February 12, 2025 at 01:30 PM



“ *Prentice And Sue Davis lit a candle in memory of Mr. Claude Edward Bell*



Prentice and Sue Davis - February 11, 2025 at 08:33 AM



He was a very nice man, we enjoyed doing one of his birthdays with him.

Prentice and Sue Davis - February 11, 2025 at 08:34 AM

EL

“ *Ester Hageman, LPN lit a candle in memory of Mr. Claude Edward Bell*



Ester Hageman, LPN - February 10, 2025 at 05:40 PM

TF

“ *The Linn family purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Mr. Claude Edward Bell.*



The Linn family - February 10, 2025 at 02:22 PM

BS

“ *Brian, Andrea, Jonah, Jady, Kevin, Sam purchased the Sacred Duty Spray for the family of Mr. Claude Edward Bell.*



Brian, Andrea, Jonah, Jady, Kevin, Sam - February 10, 2025 at 01:29 PM

LS

“ *Love, Amber, Crystal, and Shannon purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Mr. Claude Edward Bell.*



Love, Amber, Crystal, and Shannon - February 10, 2025 at 01:17 PM