



## John Bennett Roberts, Sr.

April 18, 1935 - May 16, 2019

John Bennett Roberts, Sr., age 84, died on Thursday, May 16, 2019 at Johnston Memorial Hospital in Abingdon, VA. He was preceded in death by his parents Bert Alderson Roberts and Lillian Berry Roberts.

He is survived by his wife of 60 years Peggy Martin Roberts and four children: Lisa Roberts (Kathy) of Emory, VA; Dr. John B Roberts, Jr. (Reba) of Abingdon, VA; Lynne Roberts Carrier (Randy) of Bristol, VA; and Suzanne Roberts Byerley (Scott) of Mt. Carmel TN.

Grandchildren: Samantha Roberts Mitchell (Zac) of Abingdon, VA; Wes Roberts of Abingdon, VA; Celeste Byerley, Drew Byerley and Nicole Byerley of Mt. Carmel, TN

He is also survived by two sisters: Peggy Roberts McPherson of Montgomery, AL; Kay Roberts Stout (D.L) of Abingdon, VA and one first cousin: Ann Roberts Minton of Abingdon. He is survived by five nieces, and several great nieces and nephews and great-great nephews and nieces.

He was a graduate of Bethel High School, Emory & Henry College, and East Tennessee State University. He was a lifelong educator and passionate supporter of public education. He was a teacher and coach in Washington County Virginia at Abingdon High School and Liberty Hall High School. He moved into administration as Principal of Liberty Hall High School and was the first Assistant Principal of Holston High School when it opened in 1964. He continued his career as Director of Education at Blue Ridge Job Corp in Marion and then worked as a counselor of the Science and Engineering Division at Virginia Highlands Community College until he retired.

Always a champion of the underdog and striving to make life better for all in the community, he was an active civil servant, serving on the Washington County School Board, Washington County Board of Supervisors, IDA Board, Virginia Highlands Community College Board, Washington County Library Board, Board of Department of Social Services and the 4-H Advisory Board. He was a member of the Citizen Club of Damascus and the Democratic Party.

He loved his wife, his family, he loved his community and he loved the Lord. John was a member of Bethel Presbyterian Church where he served as Deacon and as Elder.

“A hundred years from now it will not matter what my bank account was, the sort of house

I lived in, or the kind of car I drove... but the world may be different because I was important in the life of a child. " Forest E. Witcraft

John touched the lives of many and made a difference to many in his community. "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have kept the faith." 2 Timothy 4:7

The family would like to give thanks to the special care given to John by Dr. William Baker, Dr. Mark Davis and the nurses and workers and JMH Cancer Center, Home Health nurse Samantha Wright and caregivers Pam Doss, Eula Grant, Nancy Honaker, Patsy Sexton, and Sharon Smith.

The family will receive friends from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM Monday, May 20, 2019 at Garrett Funeral Home. The funeral service will be conducted at 2:00 PM Tuesday, May 21, 2019 at Bethel Presbyterian Church in Abingdon, VA with Pastor Jim Walker and Pastor Jerry Eggers officiating. The committal service and interment will follow at Bethel Cemetery.

Pallbearers will be Wes Roberts, Drew Byerley, Zac Mitchell, Joe Mitchell, Mike Rush, and Russ Martin. Honorary Pallbearers will be Jim Doss, D.L. Stout, and the men of Bethel Presbyterian Church. In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial donations be sent to Bethel Presbyterian Church, c/o Jean Dunham, 27363 Osceola Road, Abingdon, VA 24211. Condolences for the family may be sent and viewed by visiting [www.garrettfuneralhome.com](http://www.garrettfuneralhome.com). Mr. Roberts and his family are in the care of Garrett Funeral Home, 203 N. Shady Ave., Damascus, VA 24236; ph.#: 276-475-3631

# Cemetery Events

---

**Bethel Cemetery** **MAY** **Visitation** **06:00PM - 08:00PM**

**20**

Abingdon, VA,

---

Garrett Funeral Home  
203 North Shady Avenue P.O. Box 950, Damascus, VA, US,  
24236

**MAY** **Funeral Service** **02:00PM**

**21**

---

Bethel Presbyterian Church  
Bethel Road, Abingdon, VA, US, 24211

**MAY** **Burial**

**21**

---

Bethel Cemetery  
Abingdon, VA, US

# Comments

---



“ A tribute video has been added.



**Garrett Funeral Home** - May 20, 2019 at 10:37 AM

---



“ We were SO sorry to hear of your father's death. He was a wonderful man, and was one of Joe's very best friends. We admired him so much. In his public service, he never "played politics", but always considered which action would be in the best interest of the people of Washington County. He was the same thoughtful, forthright gentleman in his dealings with people in all situations, individuals as well as groups. John Roberts, Sr. was a man of outstanding character, who probably didn't even realize how deeply he touched the lives of others as an educator, a co-worker, a friend, and a family member. He will be sorely missed by those of us who knew him and those of you who loved him dearly. May God be with your grieving family members at this sad time. If he could, Joe would be with me to convey his condolences to you.

At first we didn't tell Joe of John's death because we knew how upset he would be to hear that he had lost his good friend. When I visited him on Sunday, May 26th, he was more alert than usual, and I felt a strong need to tell him. He is unable to speak right now, because he isn't strong enough to expel the extra breath required to use the speaking valve when it is hooked to his tracheotomy tube. He stared right into my eyes as I told him, as I described meeting all of you at the funeral home, and as I described the funeral the next day at the church. I made sure he understood that we told you how MUCH John meant to him as a co-member on the Board of Supervisors, but much more importantly as a friend. His eyes teared up, and his chin trembled. I hugged him, cried a little too, and worried that it had been a mistake to tell him. He indicated that it had NOT been. It is very difficult to read his lips, but there was no mistaking he was distressed that he was not there to tell his friend goodbye. I told him that Tom and I represented him, as well as ourselves, and we made sure it was understood by all of you, just how important John had been to him. They knew he would have been there in person, if there had been any way on earth that it could have been arranged!

We will be keeping you in our thoughts and prayers,  
Sincerely,  
The Derting Family (Joe, Jan, Tom, and Anne)

Janet Derting - May 27, 2019 at 07:05 PM

---



“ Dearest Roberts family,  
You were like my extended family. John was one of the most respected people in my life. My dad, my family and I always thought very highly of Him. I know he will be greatly missed.

Gina Cox Hensberger - May 24, 2019 at 10:47 PM

---



“ We were so sorry to hear of the passing of John. He was a very special person and lived a life of service and lived life fully. Peggy, and all of John's family, you are in our hearts and prayers. Having just learned, we are so sorry to have missed the services, but know our hearts are with you  
Bill & Patsy McKee.

**Bill McKee** - May 22, 2019 at 10:43 AM

---



“ Paula Bradley lit a candle in memory of John Bennett Roberts, Sr.



**Paula Bradley** - May 20, 2019 at 09:25 PM

---



“ I remember John most for a great basketball coach at Liberty Hall High School and a nice kind person. Prayers to the family.



**Shirley Thompson** - May 20, 2019 at 08:23 PM

---



“ Dear John, Reba and family,

We are so sorry to hear of the passing of Mr. Roberts. It is our hope that you find comfort in the wonderful memories you have made with him. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Blake & Suzanne McKinney

**Blake & Suzanne McKinney** - May 20, 2019 at 02:44 PM



“ so sorry for your loss he was great person. prayers to the family in this sad time love  
Rabbit Sullivan

**james sullivan** - May 20, 2019 at 01:40 PM

---



“ James Sullivan lit a candle in memory of John Bennett Roberts, Sr.



**james sullivan** - May 20, 2019 at 01:39 PM

---



“ 44 files added to the album LifeTributes



**Garrett Funeral Home** - May 20, 2019 at 09:05 AM

---



“ So sorry to learn of John's passing . He was certainly someone that I was honored to call a true friend. He was a great Supervisor and I greatly loved serving with him for a number of years on the county BOS.

I would like to be able to attend the funeral for him but I have been going through some tough times with my own health and I will be unable to do so. However you will be in my thoughts and prayers.

RIP John  
Love,  
Bobby Ingle

**Bobby Ingle** - May 20, 2019 at 09:03 AM



“ Fields of Europe was purchased for the family of John Bennett Roberts, Sr..



May 20, 2019 at 07:49 AM

---



“ Peggy, I am so sorry to hear of Johns passing. I used to drive the Schwans truck, he was one of my favorite customers! May God give you and your family comfort and strength to get through this!

**Lynna Breedlove** - May 19, 2019 at 09:03 PM

---



“ DeloresFarmer and I are sorry to hear about your loss, he was a wonderful teacher and became a good friend. He will be greatly missed by all.

**Dennie and Delores Farmer** - May 19, 2019 at 06:45 PM

---



“ To the Roberts' family...Mr. Roberts was a very kind and supportive Assistant Principal for the five years I attended Holston High School (64-69). I am positive he will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved him. Remember, no one can ever take away the memories he left behind. Please find solace in that one day, you will meet again.

**Frank(ie) Parris** - May 19, 2019 at 06:39 PM

---



“ Blaine Tate lit a candle in memory of John Bennett Roberts, Sr.



**Blaine Tate** - May 19, 2019 at 10:08 AM

---



“ Peggy, your family is in my prayers. Our Bethel Bunch will never be the same.

**Luedell Bailey** - May 19, 2019 at 08:54 AM

---



“ Peggy Roberts and Family,

So sorry to hear about John. My thoughts and prayers are with you and the family.

Virginia Farris

**Virginia Farris** - May 18, 2019 at 08:16 PM

---



“ John was a strong supporter of education and treating all people with honesty and dignity.

George and Madelyn Stainback

**George Stainback** - May 18, 2019 at 08:11 PM

---



“ So sorry for loss. May God Bless and comfort your family in this difficult time your family are in my prayers and thoughts. Becky Keller Goodman



**Becky Keller Goodman** - May 18, 2019 at 06:01 PM

---



“ From: The Family of Travis O'Quinn purchased the Multicolor Bright Sympathy Floor Basket for the family of John Bennett Roberts, Sr..



**From: The Family of Travis O'Quinn** - May 18, 2019 at 04:26 PM

---



“ I was saddened to hear of John's passing. He was a giant in the community. A leader, a husband, a father and a friend who lived his life with grace and conviction; John was a role model for many. I was fortunate to have had the opportunity to see John in many of the capacities that I mentioned and to experience the positive influences that he had on us all. My thoughts and prayers are with the family that he loved so much.

God Bless,  
Gary H. McCool

**Gary H. McCool** - May 18, 2019 at 03:13 PM

---



“ Mr. Roberts was my Assistant Principal at HHS when I was in high school. I have warm memories of him being kind and fair. He will be missed.

**Mary Neely** - May 18, 2019 at 11:52 AM