



James P. Graham

November 27, 1926 - October 8, 2025

James (Jim) P. Graham, a resident of Paxton, IL, entered into rest peacefully surrounded by loved ones on October 8, 2025, at the age of 98.

Jim was born in Rossville, IL, to James Fredrick and Margaret Myrtle (Jacobs) Graham on November 27, 1926. He was drafted into the Army at the age of 17, serving in World War II. Initially he was with the 1st Infantry of the Army and later in the military government during the occupation of the Philippines and Korea. After his military service, Jim attended the University of Illinois in Galesburg, IL for two years, majoring in Architecture. He then attended Decatur Barber College and graduated in 1948, beginning his 65-year career as a barber.

Jim married Virginia L. Beckley on July 24, 1949, in their hometown of Rossville, IL, and were married 53 years. Jim and Virginia lived in Cissna Park, IL for the first 5 years of their marriage before moving to Paxton, IL in 1954 and opening his own shop; Jim Graham's Barber Shop. This became the social hub and meeting place for lively conversation and solving many of the world's problems over the years. Jim eventually sold the shop in 1997 but officially retired in 2013, after giving his final haircut to his great grandson, Ethan Oliver.

Jim also served as the Paxton City Treasurer for 20 years from 1973-1993.

Those fortunate enough to know Jim appreciated his sense of humor and loyalty to his community.

His hobbies included fishing, storytelling, gardening, winemaking, attending sporting events, and cheering on the Green Bay Packers and the Fighting Illini.

Jim is survived by his three children, Ronald (Susey) Graham of Gallatin, TN, Patricia (Geno) Herges of Bloomington, IL and Thomas (Linda) Graham of Camargo, IL; six grandchildren, Erin (Jarod) Oliver of Fenton, MO, Drew (Amy) Graham of Missouri City, TX, Thomas Herges of Albuquerque, NM, Amy (Michael) Adams of Carlock, IL, Derek (Kaitlyn) Graham of St. Joseph, IL and April Paige (Ian) Overstreet of Philo, IL; and eleven great-grandchildren, Ethan, Paxton, and Jack Oliver, Jaxon and Gage Graham, Sadie and Sam Adams, Skyler, Cooper and Titus Graham, Emmalyn Graham; and many loving nieces & nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents; wife; brothers, Jack and Donald (Dugan) Graham; sister Maxine Wilma Lundberg; half-brothers Earl and Howard Graham; and a great-grandchild Sawyer Adams (infant).

A visitation will be held on Wednesday, October 15, 2025, from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m., at Cox-Knapp Funeral Home in Paxton. Funeral service will be held following the visitation, on Wednesday, October 15, 2025, at 12:00 p.m., also at the funeral home. A graveside service will follow at Glen Cemetery in Paxton.

Memorials may be made to the Paxton-Buckley-Loda Academic Foundation in Paxton, IL.

Cemetery Details

Glen Cemetery

602 E. Summer St.
Paxton, IL 60957

Previous Events

Visitation

OCT 15. 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Cox-Knapp Funeral Home
142 W. Patton St.
Paxton, IL 60957
(217) 379-2353
coxknappfh@gmail.com
<http://coxknapp.com>

Funeral Service

OCT 15. 12:00 PM (CT)

Cox-Knapp Funeral Home
142 W. Patton St.
Paxton, IL 60957
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Tribute Wall

GH

“ I remember getting haircuts at Jim's during my youthful days in Paxton. He and his wife were special friends to my dad, Ralph Harrell, who was always appreciative of their assistance. My sincere condolences to the family.

Greg Harrell
Olathe, KS
I Thessalonians 1 4:13,14

Greg Harrell - October 14, 2025 at 02:19 PM

JB

“ Jim was a great friend whom we met at Heartland Healthcare. We resurrected many older players & taught many others to play euchre. We would visit my Dad (“Walter”, an excellent euchre player), and Jim spent many hours (extending to years), as one of our “regulars”. He was a “good man”, who always had an interesting story! He'll be missed.

Jan & Bill Bleich - October 14, 2025 at 01:22 PM

NV

“ My condolences to the family. Such a great person and family to have work with.

Nancy V - October 13, 2025 at 12:14 PM

BO

“ Very sorry to learn about Jim. Both my grandfathers knew him well and held him in the highest regards.

Bruce O'Brien - October 12, 2025 at 10:45 PM

AS

“ Jim was a treasured member of our family... We have so many memories, how could we ever pick just one. He had a great sense of humor, a BIG heart and always many stories to tell!! There was always lots of laughter when Jim was around!! We will always love him and cherish such great memories of our time with him. Ron, Tom, Patty and families, you will always be in our hearts. Our deepest sympathies during this difficult time.
With love, Al and Marge Schroeder

Al and Marge Schroeder - October 12, 2025 at 04:50 PM

JB

Millie became a good friend during those years, also.

Jan & Bill Bleich - October 14, 2025 at 01:29 PM

SO

“ We find comfort in knowing you are now reunited with Virginia for eternity. You will be greatly missed...thank you for all the beautiful memories

Sue (Bussone) Ohde - October 12, 2025 at 03:42 PM

M5

“ Matthew 5:4 purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of James P. Graham.



Matthew 5:4 - October 12, 2025 at 02:31 PM

TO

“ My deepest condolences to Ron, Tom and Patricia. I have many memories of Jim, from the early "butch " haircuts to the look on his face when I told him I didn't want him to cut it around the ears. And then just before he retired I needed a last minute cut(shorter than "butch" but not quite shaved). Always a joke, and interesting conversation, always a gentleman and respectful. He will be fondly remembered, and missed by many. I'll keep you all in my prayers.
Tadd Ostendorf

Tadd Ostendorf - October 11, 2025 at 12:38 AM

JW

“ To the Family of James P. Graham,
I was saddened to hear the news of Mr. Graham's passing. I met him years ago when my dad, Jerry V. Markarian Sr. moved to this area from Chicago & of course needed a haircut, lol.
No matter where I seen him, whether it was at the Barber, taking a walk, in the Arcade or simply just anywhere, he always had a smile, a joke or something positive and pleasant to say.
My dad took my son, Nick Williamson, for his very first haircut. Of course I knew nothing about it & I was so livid with my dad because Nick's hair at the time, had the most beautiful curls. Imagine my reaction when I seen Nick, but Mr. Graham was so proud of his work & the fact that Nick sat and behaved so well! So I let your dad know what had happened and we had a good laugh!!
Again, I'm so sorry for your loss. I hope the memories you have and the stories friends share will help you as you grieve.
Please know that I will keep you all in my thoughts and Prayers.
Love,
Joyce Markarian Williamson

Joyce Markarian Williamson - October 10, 2025 at 05:47 PM