

Date  
Section(s)  
Byline

May 12, 2003  
Obituary

John Henry **Clifton** of Atlanta, an independent oil operator, died at his home on St. Simons Island on May 10. Known as Johnny, he had been an avid sportsman all his life. From backyard baseball to football to golf to fishing, he was an enthusiastic participant.

A talented athlete at Marist High School, he was a member of a number of state championship teams including football and basketball and was on the All Star team. He also played on several championship American Legion baseball teams.

Johnny attended the University of Georgia on a baseball scholarship and was a member of the SEC Championship team in 1953, scoring the winning run against Mississippi State to earn the title. A true Georgia Bulldog, he had always been an active supporter of UGA Athletics, especially women's gymnastics and football.

He served in the U.S. Army at Ft. Hood, Texas. Back home, he was a founding member of the Bachelors Club of Atlanta and coached Little League Baseball in Athens and Atlanta.

In retirement he relished the life on St. Simons, doing serious fishing, and joined the Island Newcomers Club and the Rotary Club.

He also was a member of St. James United Methodist Church; Chi Phi Fraternity, serving as president one year; the University of Georgia Gridiron Secret Society; the Capital City Club; a founder of the Atlantic Classic Foundation; and a member of the University of Georgia Alumni Association and the Atlanta Touchdown Club.

Born July 7, 1930, in Montgomery, Alabama, his parents were Julia Norton and John Berry "Jack" **Clifton**. Johnny lived almost his entire life in Atlanta.

Survivors include his wife, Judy Pate **Clifton**, and daughter Jacqueline **Clifton** Estes and husband Rick Estes of Atlanta; sons John Henry "Jay" **Clifton** of Paris, France, and James H. **Clifton** and wife Michelle Mixon **Clifton** of Atlanta; sister Emma Jean **Clifton** Shumway of New Haven, Conn.; and four grandchildren .

Graveside services will be held at Oglethorpe Memorial Gardens on St. Simons at 3 p.m. Tuesday. A memorial service will be held at St. James United Methodist Church in Atlanta at 2 p.m. on Thursday. A reception will be held prior to the memorial service.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the American Heart Association, the Parkinson's Association, the University of Georgia or St. James United Methodist Church Chancel Choir.

Edo Miller and Sons Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.