



# The Alford American Family Association

Serving the Alford community over 25 Years  
We Are Family!!

---

**William "Billy" Cutter Alford, Jr.**

**AAFA #0470**

**Charter Member**

August 6, 1930 – July 29, 2020



## **Obituary**

William Cutter Alford, Jr. passed away peacefully on July 29th, 2020. Billy, as he was known to many, was born in Nashville on August 6th, 1930, the son of the late William Cutter Alford, Sr. and the late Orlean Henderson Alford. His mother would often say it was the hottest day of the year. He attended Hillsboro High School (class of 1948). He went on to Vanderbilt University where he graduated cum laude from Vanderbilt University in 1952 and was a member of Sigma Chi Fraternity. He received his M.D. degree from Vanderbilt University School of Medicine in 1955.

Billy was preceded in death by his beloved wife of 49 years, Helen Tanley Alford and his sister Orlean Alford Jones (Terrill) Banner Elk, NC. He is survived by his brother Robert Alford (Marceline) of Nashville, his sister Eleanor Alford Dobson (Steve) of Chattanooga, TN, his two children, Allison Alford Fontenot (Rick) of Anderson, SC and David Tanley Alford (Melissa) of Brentwood, TN and his beloved grandson, David Addison Alford, also of Brentwood TN. Also survived by numerous nieces and nephews who have lovingly referred to him as “Uncle Billy”

Billy was a life-long resident of Nashville, often spending part of his summers at Camp Hy-Lake, where he was a camper, counselor and, eventually, becoming camp doctor. It was there, he first met the love of his life, Helen Marie Tanley. Their relationship would endure both near and far and they wed December 28th, 1958. They were long-time members of Woodmont Christian Church where Billy was a member of the church choir.

After graduating from medical school His medical training continued with a surgical internship at the University of California Medical Center in San Francisco, from 1955 to 1956. He was an assistant resident in surgery at Vanderbilt University Hospital from 1956 to 1957 and again from 1959 to 1962. The young Dr. Alford served as lieutenant in the Medical Corps of the U.S. Navy aboard the U.S.S. Shangri-La from 1957 to 1958 and at the U.S. Naval Air Station in Miramar, California, from 1958 to 1959. He was chief resident in surgery at Vanderbilt University Hospital from 1962 to 1963 and senior registrar in thoracic surgery at Leeds Infirmary in Leeds, England, from 1963 to 1964. He returned to Vanderbilt University as an assistant professor in September 1964. Along with Bill Stoney and George Burris, he was among the founding members of Cardiovascular Associates in 1974. He served as an associate clinical professor of cardiac and thoracic surgery from July 1985 through June 1993, and he was appointed a clinical professor of cardiac and thoracic surgery in 1993. Dr. Alford held memberships in a number of prestigious professional societies including the American College of Surgeons, the Southern Thoracic Surgical Association, the Society of Thoracic Surgeons, the American

College of Cardiology, and the American Association for Thoracic Surgery. Until his retirement, he was an active member of the Division of Thoracic and Cardiac Surgery at St. Thomas Hospital in Nashville, and a clinical professor of cardiac and thoracic surgery at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine.

In retirement, Billy and Helen would spend their spare time relaxing in Snowmass, Colorado, attending Vanderbilt basketball games, or watching their grandson, Addison, play youth sports. Billy loved to fly fish and traveled the world from Alaska to Chile in search of any fish that would take his fly. On many Saturdays, you could catch Billy along with dear friends, Bill Stoney, Joe Fredi, and Harvey Bender at Brick Top's plotting the next adventure.

Special thanks and sincerest gratitude is given to Donna Harbison who, in his final years, was his care-giver, advocate, good friend and best buddy along with the staff at Willowbrook Hospice and at Somerfield at the Heritage.

Graveside services will be conducted at two o'clock in the afternoon on Sunday, August 16th at Mt. Olivet Cemetery. Gathering of family and friends will be held from ten o'clock until two o'clock on Saturday, August 15th and one hour prior to the service on Sunday at Mt. Olivet Funeral Home.

In lieu of flowers please make donations to Friends of Warner Park, Harpeth Conservancy, your local chapter of Trout Unlimited or any non-profit of your choosing

Pallbearers - Addison Alford, Stephen Alford, Andrew Alford, Dan Alford, Chris Farris and David Farris.

Condolences may be offered at [MountOlivet.com](http://MountOlivet.com).

Information and photo were copied from the [Dignity](#) web page.

## Personal Data

Birth: 6 Aug 1930  
Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee, USA  
Death: 29 Jul 2020 (aged 89)  
Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee, USA  
Burial: Mount Olivet Cemetery  
Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee, USA  
Memorial ID: 214190226

### Family Members

- Parents  
William Cutter Alford, Sr., 1901–1982  
Orlean Palmer Henderson, 1909–2007
- Spouse  
Helen Marie Tanley, 1935–2006 (m. 1958)
- Siblings  
Virginia Orlean Alford Jones, 1927–1971  
Robert Henderson Alford, AAFA #0171  
Eleanor Alford Dobson
- Children  
Allison Alford Fontenot  
David Tanley Alford, AAFA # 1502

Information copied from the [Find-A-Grave](#) web page.

### AAFA Notes:

1. William's Alford lineage: William Cutter 1931 TN<sup>1</sup>, William Cutter 1901 TN<sup>2</sup>, Robert Lee 1865 TN<sup>3</sup>, William Madison 1818 AL<sup>4</sup>, John Bibb 1790 VA<sup>5</sup>, John 1760 VA<sup>6</sup>, William 1738 VA<sup>7</sup>, John 1696 ??<sup>8</sup>.

## Photos Provided by the Family

Photos were copied from the [Dignity](#) web page.



