



Sid McDonald

May 18, 1938 - May 15, 2015

Sid McDonald, 76, of Arab, Alabama, passed away Friday, May 15, 2015, in Colorado Springs, Colorado, while on a business trip.

McDonald was born in Springville, Alabama, on May 18, 1938, to Leighton D. (Mac) and Marie Oliver McDonald, both deceased. He had one sister, Sarah Jo McDonald Cox, who is recently deceased. Formerly married to Ann Burnham Key from 1961-1982, he is survived by Jane Plunkett McDonald, his wife of nearly 30 years.

He was educated in Arab schools and graduated from the University of Alabama in 1961 with a degree from the School of Commerce and Business. Always focused on improving education in Alabama, McDonald was a member of The University of Alabama Board of Trustees from 1992 to 2008, and served as Pro Tempore of the Board from 1999 to 2002. He was an ardent supporter of his local school system both vocally and financially. McDonald was instrumental in the establishment of the Arab City School system in 1971 and served as its first Board Chairman.

A dedicated public servant, Sid McDonald was among the first appointees named to the Alabama Commission on Higher Education when it was created in 1970. He also represented Marshall County in the Alabama House of Representatives for two terms from 1967 – 1974, and in the Alabama Senate from 1975 – 1979. He ran for governor of Alabama in 1978, the US Senate in 1995, and served as Alabama's finance director under Gov. Fob James from

1980- 1982.

McDonald began his successful business career shortly after college graduation when he became president of Brindlee Mountain Telephone Company, a local exchange telephone company started as Arab Telephone Company by his grandfather, Joseph E. Oliver, and developed by his parents. He managed the business until it was sold in 2000.

McDonald had many other successful business ventures. In 1983, he founded DeltaCom, a statewide long-distance telephone company, serving as its Chairman until it was sold in 1996. He was one of the first outside members of the Board of Directors of Intergraph Corporation, Huntsville, AL, from 1997 until its sale in 2006. Recently he led the start-up of CBX Holding, LLC (Cold Box), an Arab producer and marketer of temperature controlled cargo containers.

Throughout his life he was active in the development of commercial and residential real estate in Arab. He developed Pine Lake Village, a 130-acre residential development and Northgate Shopping Center in the 1970's, and Town Center Shopping Center in 1990's. In 1992 McDonald developed Cherokee Ridge, a 400-acre residential and country club development in Union Grove, Alabama, and in 1998 he began a significant golf and residential development in Highlands, North Carolina, now known as The Old Edwards Club at Highlands Cove.

McDonald was elected in 2001 to the Alabama Academy of Honor's One Hundred Living Alabamians for outstanding accomplishments and services to the state of Alabama. He was also elected to the Alabama Business Hall of Fame in 2010.

Sid's involvement with his alma mater came full circle in September 2014, when The University of Alabama dedicated Sid McDonald Hall, a 35,243-square-foot facility on its Tuscaloosa campus that is the new home of the

University System's Chancellor and the staff of the Board of Trustees.

McDonald is survived by his wife Jane Plunkett McDonald; his children Foster McDonald (Ginney) of Huntsville, AL, Kelly Thomas (David) of Decatur, AL, and Wes McDonald (Natalie) of Birmingham, AL; and his stepchildren Judge Liles Burke (Natalie) and Ashley Burke Spethman (Milo), both of Arab, AL. He is also survived by six grandchildren, by whom he was lovingly known as 'Big Daddy'; Matthew, Oliver and Drew McDonald; Sydney and Burnham Hawk; and Quinn McDonald; and six step-grandchildren, Mary Margaret, Madeline, and Milo (Jr.) Spethman; Claud Liles II and Camilla Jane Burke; and David Thomas III (Buck).

Visitation will be held Thursday, May 21, 2015, at the Arab First Methodist Church from 9:00 am until 11:00 am, followed by the funeral service at 11:00 am. Interment will take place immediately after the funeral service at the Arab Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, the family is requesting donations to either the Arab First Methodist Church Building Fund (1058 N Main St, Arab, AL 35016) or the Alabama Department of Archives and History (Friends of the Alabama Archives, P.O. Box 300100, Montgomery, AL 36130-0100).

Cemetery Details

Arab Memorial Cemetery

450 South Main Street
Arab, AL 35016

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 21. 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Arab First United Methodist Church
1058 North Main Street
Arab, AL 35016

Service

MAY 21. 11:00 AM (CT)

Arab First United Methodist Church
1058 North Main Street
Arab, AL 35016

Tribute Wall



“ *Sid McDonald*

October 23, 2023 at 12:35 AM



“ *Ruth M Smith purchased the Gift of Grace Bouquet for the family of Sid McDonald.*



Ruth M Smith - May 20, 2015 at 12:41 PM



“ *Sending My Deepest Sympathy & Love, Lisa Drew Hoop purchased the A New Sunrise Spray for the family of Sid McDonald.*



Sending My Deepest Sympathy & Love, Lisa Drew Hoop -
May 19, 2015 at 06:20 PM

CT

“ Sorry for your loss. He and his family was such pioneers of Arab. Many other Arab pioneers have already passed, including my father, Clyde Thrower.

In my nursing profession, I had the priviledge of caring for both Mr. and Mrs Oliver and Sally. In his passing, he and other pioneers made Arab what it is today.

I remember the tiny house in which Arab Telephone started. In the beginning, individuals would have to go down to this house to make a call. The house no longer stands but all the wonderful memories remains in my mind.

With everyone's past efforts. Arab remains such a wonderful place for families.

Again, I extend my Symapthy to all Sid's family. I Pray God gives family members Comfort and Peace during this sad time and remember he was loved by everyone.

Carolyn Thrower - May 19, 2015 at 12:35 AM

DS

“ I will always remember 2 weeks ago early one morning at Cherokee Ridge Dining Room I heard this wonderful sound coming from the piano. I go to see who is playing, and their sits Mr. McDonald playing away. I stand there for 10 minutes listening at the beauty coming from that piano. He told me how he learned to play the piano by ear. I told him that was truly a gift from God. He continued to tell me about the building of Cherokee Ridge and how much he loved living there. Mrs. McDonald Jennifer and I are praying for you and your family during your time of sadness. I am thankful to have had the opportunity to know this great man. God Bless.

David & Jennifer Sikes

David Sikes - May 18, 2015 at 10:50 PM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Sid McDonald.* ”



May 18, 2015 at 07:46 PM