

Highland , KS



A pillar of Highland's community, William Howard Batchelder, passed away at the age of 76 after a lengthy illness on October 17th, 2021, in his home looking over the fields he tended and loved, surrounded by his loving family.

Bill was born in Fort Benning, Georgia to Howard Nelson Batchelder and Hattie Alice Smith Batchelder and raised in Highland, Kansas, the oldest of four brothers. Bill's father passed away around Bill's 15th birthday. With unusual selflessness at a young age, he accepted the heavy mantle of responsibility to help his mother raise his younger brothers. Bill managed his family's dairy and grain farm for 60 years, even while graduating from Highland Community College and Kansas State University, ensuring his beloved brothers, Charles, Paul and Bobby, all attended college (all brothers are proud KSU alumni).

Bill watched his Final Harvest from his home over the last several weeks, culminating an incredible agricultural career. Despite a dairy farmer's schedule, Bill found the energy and time to better his community: he served as a Highland School District Board member, Highland City Councilperson, and Highland Methodist Church board member. Bill was a true gentleman. Conscientious and well-read thanks to his life-long love of reading, he was a calming, principled presence to all who knew him. His love of community extended to local sports, and to mentoring young men who lost their own fathers. His greatest love was reserved for his children and grandchildren - 'Papa' left both a tremendous legacy and a heart wrenching vacuum for them.

Bill is survived by his wife of 52 years, Glenna (Zimmerman) Batchelder, and his loving children David and Rebecca (Darst) Batchelder of Lee's Summit, Missouri, and Amy (Batchelder) and Jeff Handlin of Englewood, Colorado. His granddaughters Claire Batchelder, Amelia Handlin, and Ella Handlin were precious to Bill. His brothers and sisters-in-law mourn Bill as a father figure: Charles and Nancy (Johnson) Batchelder of Highland; Paul and Tricia (Fish) Batchelder of Louisburg, Kansas; and Robert and Kathy (Dunlap) Batchelder of Colorado Springs, Colorado. Bill was cherished by his extended family, and he leaves behind dozens of cousins, nieces and nephews.

A funeral service will be held on Wednesday, October 20th, 2021 at 10:30am at Highland

Methodist-Presbyterian Church at 101 South Avenue, Highland, KS, followed by a celebration of Bill's life and luncheon at the Highland Community Center at 501 West Avenue, Highland, KS. In lieu of flowers, please donate to Highland Fire/EMS, 203 N. Genesee Street, Highland, KS.

Friends may call at Chapel Oaks Funeral Home, Highland after 10 a.m. Tuesday until 6 p.m.

Condolences and remembrances may be sent to www.chapeloaksfuneralhome.com