



James "Jim" Bruce

August 24, 1930 - December 21, 2025

James M. Bruce, known to family and friends as "Bay," joined his beloved wife Aileen with the Lord on December 21, 2025, after a brief illness. He was 95 years old.

Born in Habersham, Tennessee on August 24, 1930, Bay was the fifth of 12 children of Garrett F. and Margaret A. (Campbell) Bruce. From them, he learned early lessons that guided him throughout his life: the value of hard work, honesty in all he did, and lending a helping hand to those in need. Some of his earliest work experiences as a young man were in the coal mines of Appalachia. He soon moved north to the Upper Wenatchee Valley to work in the fruit industry, eventually becoming an orchard foreman and settling in Peshastin with his family. He worked in the orchards for more than 40 years before retiring in 1999. Even then, he continued to garden, maintaining a backyard apple tree and rosebushes well into his 90s.

While still in Tennessee, Bay met the love of his life, Ruthie Aileen (Baird) Bruce. They married on January 17, 1952 in Habersham and moved to Peshastin shortly thereafter. He took his young family back for winter visits to Tennessee for many years, his daughter Donna bouncing in the backseat of his '49 Ford for the 2,500 mile journey. That Ford was only one of many cars he enjoyed collecting and working on throughout his life. With his son Joe, other family, and friends, he enjoyed camping, hunting, and fishing for trout in

the Cascade Mountains. Though he quit hunting as he grew older, he remained a lifelong nature lover. Neighbors would often drive by his home, nestled on the bank of Peshastin Creek, and see him putting seed in his bird feeder or watching deer from his window. On a clear night, he could be found observing the stars. Bay approached the world with avid curiosity, never losing a sense of joy at God's creation.

Bay was dedicated to his family and loyal to his friends. At the end of a visit to Grandpa's house, his grandchildren and later great-grandchildren could count on a quiet smile and a \$20 bill to "get yourself a little something." Friends were welcome to drop by anytime and talk about the weather or the score of the last Gonzaga men's basketball game. When Aileen became ill later in life, Bay was her devoted caregiver and champion until the end. Long before the advent of livestreaming, he listened weekly to worship services at Stanfield Church of God in LaFollette, Tennessee, where his brother Delmus is senior pastor. He loved the Lord and looked forward to the day when he would be reunited with Aileen in the arms of God. In the words of Frank Sinatra, Bay "did it my way" for 95 rich and full years.

Bay is survived by his son, Joe Bruce and his wife Kathy of Spokane; his daughter, Donna Rice of Dryden; four grandchildren including Kelsey Rice Bogdan of Melrose, Massachusetts, William Bruce of Spokane, Elizabeth Hartnett of Spokane, and Rachel Rice of Dryden; and nine great-grandchildren: Gavin, Aaron, Hannah, Lincoln, Rhett, Raven, Alexander, Athena, and Malcolm. He is also survived by three younger brothers, Delmus, Ed, and Vernon Bruce, all in Tennessee, his close friend Ed Wright, and numerous, precious nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his wife of 64 years, Aileen, his parents, Garrett and Margaret Bruce, siblings Willie Claude Bruce, Raymond Bruce, Floyd Bruce, Jessie Hicks, Hermann Bruce, Ted Bruce, Willie Dople, and Ray Bruce, and his son-in-law, Richard Rice.

Services will be held on Monday, January 5, at 10:30 am at Chapel of the Valley, 378 Eastmont Ave., East Wenatche, with a private internment later in the week at Mountain View Cemetery in Leavenworth.

Memorial donations may be made to OCTN Senior Meals Program, 303 2nd Ave S, Ste A, Okanogan, WA 98840 or www.octn.org, with gratitude for the many friends who have delivered him weekly meals for more than a decade.

Arrangements by Chapel of the Valley, East Wenatchee.

Previous Events

Service

JAN 5. 10:30 AM (PT)

Chapel of the Valley
378 Eastmont Ave.
East Wenatchee, WA 98802
(509) 884-3561
info@chapelofthevalleyncw.com

Tribute Wall

NR

“ *Nora Bowlin Robbins lit a candle in memory of James "Jim" Bruce*



Nora Bowlin Robbins - January 01 at 08:02 PM

DC

“ *Deb Cox lit a candle in memory of James "Jim" Bruce*



Deb Cox - January 01 at 12:40 PM

NR

“ *Nora Bowlin Robbins lit a candle in memory of James "Jim" Bruce*



Nora Bowlin Robbins - January 01 at 10:59 AM