



Dr. Benjamin Burns Williams

April 12, 1934 - June 30, 2021

Dr. Benjamin Williams, 87, transitioned peacefully on June 30th, 2021, in Hilton Head Island, SC. Since 1997, Dr. Williams and his wife Donna made Hilton Head their home, dedicating themselves to the Hilton Head Island Community.

Dr. Williams was a long-time educator and historian. Throughout his career, he served as a teacher, principal, administrator and associate superintendent in Illinois (Waukegan, Evanston, Chicago, Oak Park) and Denver, Colorado.

Dr. Williams was a prolific speaker and writer. After learning about the town of Mitchelville from Thomas Barnwell, he used his talents to build awareness and growth of the Mitchelville Preservation Project. Dr. Williams was passionate about Mitchelville and envisioned a destination where children and adults would gather to learn about this important part of American History. He wanted Mitchelville to be recognized and celebrated as the first village in the United States that governed itself just after freedom.

Dr. Williams attended Arkansas Baptist College on a scholarship and served in the 101st Airborne Division of the US Army. He was the editor of the 101st Airborne Division newspaper and coach of the basketball team. He attended Northwestern University and received his Master's in History and his Ph.D. in Educational Administration.

Ben was an extraordinary husband, father, grandfather and friend. He leaves a legacy of love and treasure trove of beautiful memories to his wife- Donna E. Williams, his son Bennett and daughters Kitt, Ayanna and four

granddaughters- Kennedy, Carson, Kai and Baylee. We will deeply miss his gentle and kind ways, his radiant smile and his humor. Benjamin's inspiring nature, his dedication to service and education positively impacted thousands of lives. Because he lived, we are forever changed.

A celebration of Dr. Williams' life will be held at 11AM on July 31st, 2021 at St. Andrews By-The-Sea in Hilton Head Island, SC.

Memorial donations can be made to Mitchelville Preservation Project in his name, <http://exploremitchelville.org/donate>

Cemetery Details

Beaufort National Cemetery

1601 Boundary Street
Beaufort, SC 29902

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

JUL 31. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Andrew by the Sea United Methodist Church
20 Pope Avenue
Hilton Head Island, SC 29928

Tribute Wall



“ *Ben Williams was a wonderful person, a loving father, and a fierce advocate for the best public education for black kids. I met him more than 40 years ago at an educational conference, and we kept in touch for years.* ”

Nicki King - December 13, 2025 at 05:19 PM



“ *Dr. Benjamin Burns Williams* ”

October 04, 2023 at 11:33 AM