

Coot Little

Coot, on his birth certificate was known as Howard Hollis Little. To his descendants he was known as daddy or Pawpaw. At his funeral, former Bishop Butch Green said he never knew he had any other name except Coot. That's the name he gave to all his friends, the name he preferred they use.

His obituary posted on the [Peoples Funeral Home](#) web site says simply:

LITTLE, HOWARD HOLLIS "COOT" age 82, of Hueytown passed away January 2, 2011. He is survived by his wife; Dot Little, Daughters; Sandy Hocutt (Jerry), Jodi Corbett (Gary), Son; Mike Little (Angie), seventeen grandchildren; thirty two great grandchildren, four great great-grandchildren; numerous nieces and nephews. He is preceded in death by his parents, Audie Lee and Mildred Prince Little, Daughter, Susie Vincent, Brother, Harley (Pat) Little. A Funeral service will be held Wednesday January 5, 2011 at 2:00 pm at Peoples Chapel Funeral Home, with burial at Village Falls Cemetery. Visitation be from 1-2 PM, Wednesday, at the Funeral Home.

Coot was born in Mt. Olive , Jefferson County, Alabama 25 May 1928 to Audie and Mildred Prince Little.



Audie 1969



Mildred 1969

Audie, known to his grandchildren as "Daddy Little", was a man with a very strong work ethic who valued his good name above all else. He walked 20 miles to work from Mt.

Olive to Birmingham, worked their all week, then walked 20 miles back every weekend to be with his family. Later he moved to the city and worked at [Birmingham Stove and Range](#), a company that made cast iron goods.

Mildred was skilled at sewing crafts and homemaking skills. She also had a strong work ethic. Coot learned from his parents the value of hard work while he was still young.

Before he reached his teen years the family moved to Wylam where Coot attended school. This is his Wylam Elementary School photo for the 1938 - 1939 school year:



He took a quick interest in craftsman skills that came easy to him over time. Of particular interest to him was automotive maintenance. Coot learned about cars by

working on them. He rebuilt his first carburetor when he was 12 years old. He often told how he had owned a number of cars by the time he reached his 21st birthday. He would buy an old clunker and get it running then trade for something better. Here he is on the trunk of 1949 Buick:



At age 20, Coot (at right) looked like his father, yet he had much of his mother's personality, wit, and remarkable talents.



Coot began working regular jobs at age 14. He quit school at age 16 and got a job at Air Reduction Company (formerly Airco) where he worked for the next 37 1/2 years. He had held many full-time and part time jobs over his work history. He was a race car driver, a car lot owner, a roofer, a car salesman, and automotive mechanic.

A favorite story of his was how he used lights to avoid a nighttime ticket for speeding. Once he was out of sight of the police, he would flip a few switches and slow down. Lights on his car would look so different the police would pass him by!

Coot spoke of how the draft passed him by during the Korean War. He was married when the war began. He said by the time they were drafted married men with no children his daughter Susie was born. When they began drafting men with one child, Sandy was born, and before they began drafting men with 3 children the war was over.

My brother Rick had a milk delivery route in Wylam and found out from Coot's old neighbors that Coot had a reputation around Wylam for being a "sweet boy" who never got into any trouble. By the time he was married with children, at 5 feet 5 inches tall, he had cultured a reputation for being a tough guy.

He became our next door neighbor in 1954 when he assumed the mortgage of a home purchased by a war veteran. He was very grateful to get the low interest rate, a rate which wasn't seen again until 2010. He still called the same home his residence until the family came there to celebrate his life and make preparations to attend his funeral.

Coot worked hard on his home by adding a room on the back with his brother's help and later building a roomy 2-car garage for his shop tools where he could work on cars.



Few who knew him in later years remember when he had hair. He had a rich, full head of black hair but photos from 1952, 1957, and 1969 show it gradually receding:



1952



1957



1969

Coot kept a cabin on the Warrior River for years and loved to go boating. Though he couldn't swim he enjoyed taking his daughters skiing every summer. He often spent the entire summer on the river driving the distance back and forth to work and going home only once a week. He once owned a house boat and kept it on the river as well until lugging the heavy thing around the winding river roads got to be too much of a task when he lost the houseboat over a roadside ditch once where it suffered minor damage.

He said it was lucky it didn't go over the other side of the road or it would have ended up at the bottom of a ravine.

Coot played hard and he worked hard. Eventually his hard work and long hours took their toll. His health began to deteriorate. He had knee problems, hearing loss, and heart trouble. His heart trouble led to a heart attack. He had to have a 4-way bypass. From then on he managed to slack off some of the hard work but he never really quit.

One thing the heart attack did was make him think about his life. His son, wife, and 2 daughters had joined the LDS Church. Though he was one the church's earliest supporters in the family he feared joining because of his parents. They were set against it. When he finally did join, he was baptized Christmas Day 1977 by John Archie Acker a former branch president of Bessemer and a member of the first temple presidency in the Atlanta Temple. Coot was right about his parents. They never accepted his new-found religion and shunned his efforts to tell them about it for the remainder of their lives.

Less than two years later, in July 1979, Coot and Dot were sealed in the Washington Temple:



I was grateful that John Acker, the man who baptized him, invited us to dinner afterward. Driving around the beltway and other things about the trip were particularly stressful to Coot. Years later, after the Atlanta Temple opened up, Coot was serving on the Bessemer Stake High council and was in charge of our monthly temple bus trips.

Eventually work stress and bad health got the best of him. He lost his job at age 53 and was out of work for two years until he could retire on disability. From then on his health seemed to improve to the degree that he might live a long life. He did just that!

During his retirement years, Coot enjoyed family most of all. He entertained us with his music at family reunions. He played harmonica.



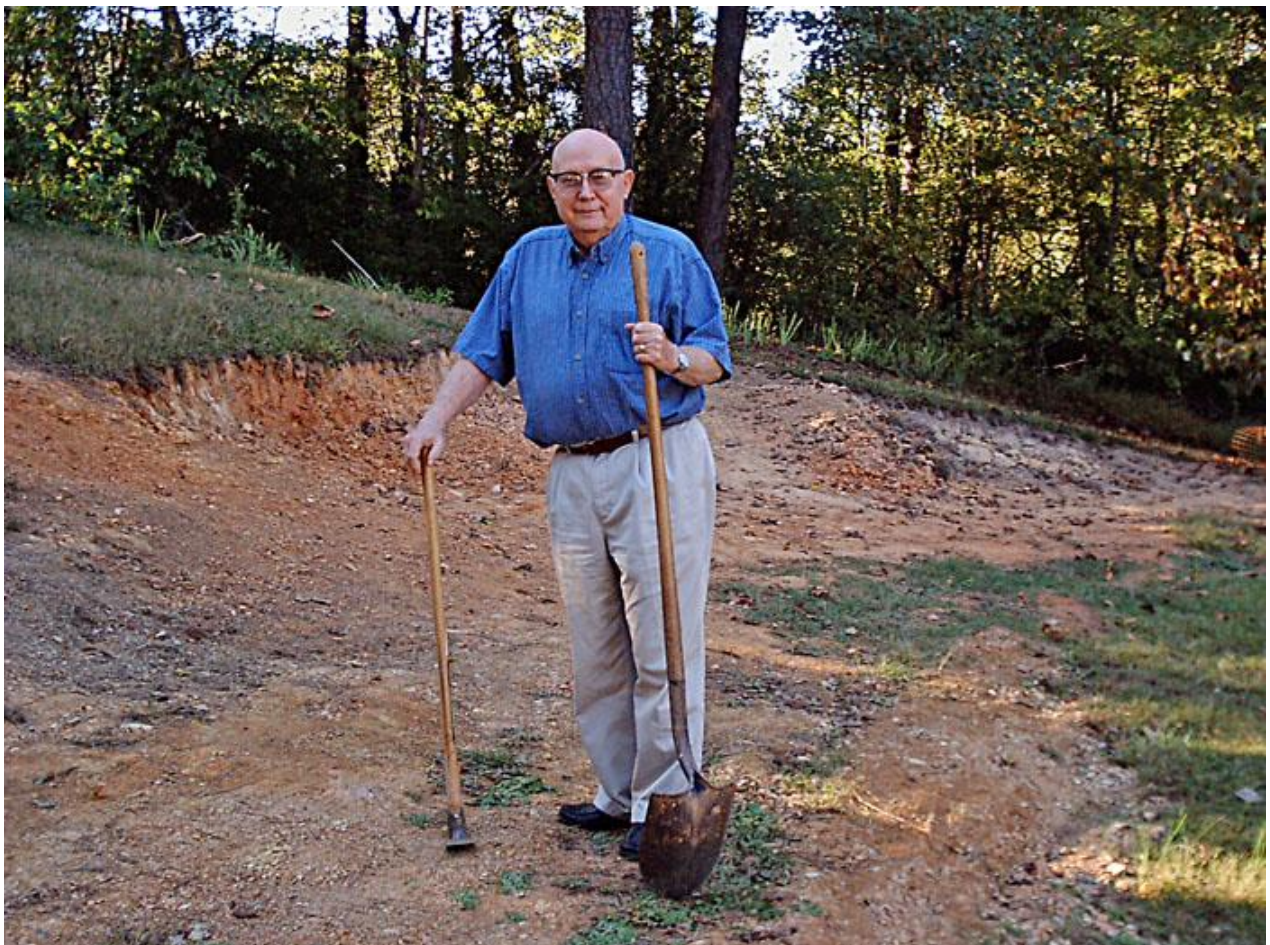
He really enjoyed his great-grandchildren and treated them as if they each were special:



He still loved antique vehicles so I enjoyed taking him to the auto museum in Tupelo, MS and the motorcycle museum in Birmingham:



Even though he was getting older and weaker, he still enjoyed hard work. He was so proud of the ditch he dug by hand, by himself, with a pick and shovel in the hard chert and clay soil on the hill behind his garden in 2005. At the time he was 77 years old:



Coot -- Pawpaw -- you lived great, you died great, and you left a wonderful legacy for us all. We honor you and we will love you forever. We hope we can follow your example to be with you forever. Enjoy the supper of The Lamb until we arrive to share it with you.



~ END ~