



Douglas Maze Ponder

November 16, 1928 - April 15, 2026

On April 15, 2026 the patriarch of our family, Douglas M. Ponder, died at his home in Cullman, Alabama. He was born in the Crane Hill community to Howard and Leona Ponder, November 16, 1928. He was preceded in death by his parents, a sister, Norma Strimmel, and brother, Harless Ponder.

Doug was the epitome of a family man. He took great pleasure in camping under the stars and spending time on the lake with his boys. His memories of family trips were happily shared whenever anyone would listen.

As a pre-teen, Doug was helping his father at their family-owned cotton gin and later worked with him in the lumber industry. During World War II he worked in a shell factory where artillery casings were produced.

He was known as a man of integrity and outstanding work ethic. The majority of his work career was forty years with the National Linen Service out of Birmingham, Alabama. His delivery route covered a multiple of Alabama counties, servicing the majority of Cullman restaurants, beauty salons, barber shops, and motels. Over the years he received a multitude of awards and citations as a top salesman.

While employed by National Linen Service, he bought a run-down cafe and turned it into the popular Old Hickory Barbecue. Initially known as a “rough

crowd area”, he soon cleared out the riff-raff earning the nickname “Mr. Bad.” That moniker certainly did not reveal his true character.

Though he had little formal education, he became a jack-of-all-trades possessing a multitude of skills. Once he “retired” from the linen service, he became a master plumber. One room at a time, he built the house on Smith Lake in which he and Eunice lived for the past 50+ years. But his crowning self-achievement was building and opening the A-1 Muffler Shop in Cullman in 1995 which is still family-owned and operated.

He is survived by his loving wife of 79 years, Eunice Waters Ponder; three sons, Michael (Cathy) Ponder, Tommy (Tara) Ponder, and Bruce (Alicia) Ponder, all residents of Cullman. He was Papa to 7 grandchildren, Angel (Trent) Tomlinson, Tonya (John) Schwaiger, Tenina Ponder, Amy O. Watson, Tomi (Matthew) Scott, Erin Heaton, Eric Ponder; 21 great grandchildren, Dustin (Whitney) Schwaiger, Jordan (Jacob) Daniel, Caitlynn (Chandler) Higdon, Dustin (Sarah) Ouellette, Ashlynn Tomlinson, Tiffani Schwaiger, Taiya (Russell) Kolmin, Kier Ouellette, Matthew (Savannah) Ponder, Aaron Tomlinson, Nathan Tomlinson, Stephen Watson, Ariel Ponder, Madden Scott, Addison Heaton, Paityn Scott, Tatum Scott, Addison Ponder, Bradyon Ponder, Liam Ponder, Eli Ponder, Jacob Ponder, and 7 great-great grandchildren, Stella Kolmin, Lenny Kolmin, Ava Kate Schwaiger, Joshua Ouellette, Sage Daniel, Tate Kolmin, Cash Schwaiger; and loved by his youngest brother, John Wayne Ponder, nieces and nephews, and a host of friends.

Graveside Service for Douglas Maze Ponder, age 97 of Cullman, will be at 10:00 AM on Saturday, April 18, 2026, at Johnson Grove Cemetery Bremen (Brushy Pond), AL with David Richards officiating;

Visitation will be from 5:00 PM-8:00 PM on Friday, April 17, 2026, at Cullman

Heritage Funeral Home.

Cullman Heritage Funeral Home is honored to serve the family.

Cemetery Details

Johnson Grove Cemetery

275 County Road 151
Bremen, AL 35033

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 17. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Cullman Heritage Funeral Home
255 County Road 1435
Cullman, AL 35058
(256) 734-0208
info@cullmanheritage.com
<https://www.cullmanheritage.com>

Graveside Service

APR 18. 10:00 AM (CT)

Johnson Grove Cemetery
275 County Road 151
Bremen, AL 35033

Tribute Wall

LB

“ Mike and Cathy,
You and are your family are in my prayers during this difficult time. I especially pray for your sweet Mom during this time. May God’s presence bring a peace and rest that only He can provide.

Leanne Beavers - April 17 at 08:58 AM



“ Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Douglas Maze Ponder.



April 16 at 01:49 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Douglas Maze Ponder.

April 16 at 01:49 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Douglas Maze Ponder.



April 16 at 01:38 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Douglas Maze Ponder.

April 16 at 01:38 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Douglas Maze Ponder.



April 16 at 12:04 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Douglas Maze Ponder.

April 16 at 12:04 PM