



E. Wayne Gilbreth

January 20, 1934 - February 27, 2026

E. Wayne Gilbreth, 92, passed away on Friday, February 27, 2026 in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Wayne was born January 20, 1934, on a farm south of Ozark, Arkansas, to Johnnie William and Bonnie (Childers) Gilbreth. He grew up on a farm in Pilot Grove and, despite the challenges of the Depression era, often described his childhood as a happy one—full of mischief shared with his brothers, especially his twin, Jimmy Ward.

He graduated from Ozark High School in 1951, where he played center on the football team and served as editor of the school newspaper, despite freely admitting he knew very little about grammar. After high school, he joined the U.S. Navy and served as an aircraft mechanic on the USS Essex during the Korean conflict. He completed three Pacific cruises before being honorably discharged on December 7, 1954.

Upon returning home, Wayne began working for Douglas Aircraft in Tulsa and married his hometown sweetheart, Janette Alston. After two years, he enrolled at the University of Arkansas, graduating in 1961 with a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering—and three children.

Wayne joined Phillips Petroleum Company as a design engineer in the

Engineering Department. After the birth of their fourth child, he and Janette spent three years in Spartanburg, South Carolina, followed by nine years in London, England. His time in London was the highlight of his career, where he played a key role in the design, construction, and placement of oil platforms in the North Sea. After returning to the United States, he spend the remainder of his 35-year career in Bartlesville. During his final decade at Phillips, he was appointed to the ASME B31.3 Piping Code Committee, a professional honor he took great pride in.

Wayne retired in 1995 and joyfully embraced new roles: blueberry farmer, shade-tree mechanic, duck wrangler, turtle racer, storyteller, and mentor. Above all, he was a devoted and deeply proud grandfather.

Wayne and Janette were married for 70 years. They raised “three kids and Janet”. Wayne took great pleasure in passing along his knowledge of machines, gardening, and his philosophies of life. He served as a Scout Leader for Troop 7 and Troop 111 in Bartlesville and was inducted into the Order of the Arrow.

Wayne is survived by his wife, Janette; his son Don and wife Madeline of Tulsa; daughter Gail and partner Ed of Boston; son Kevin and fiancé Beth of Phoenix; and daughter Janet and husband Michael of Tulsa. He is also survived by eight grandchildren—Douglas and wife Kim of Buffalo; Rebecca of Boston; Matthew and partner Ben of Tulsa; Megan of Enterprise, AL; Jenna and husband Eric of Cincinnati; Sam of Phoenix; Hannah and husband Sean of Phoenix; and Palmer and wife Anissa of Austin—along with ten great-grandchildren, Elizabeth, Claire, Kenneth, Eli, Oliver, Olivia, Charles, Camille, Juniper, and Violet; and numerous nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents; his sister Lorene of Ozark; brothers, J.W. of Greenwood and Kenneth of Fort Smith; his twin brother Ward of

Barling; and daughter-in-law, Danell Johnson Gilbreth.

Visitation will be 6:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M., Thursday, March 5, 2026 at Shaffer Funeral Home, 2315 West Commercial Street in Ozark.

Funeral service will be 2:00 P.M., Friday, March 6, 2026 at Shaffer Funeral Home in Ozark, with Brother Kevin Gilbreth officiating, with burial at a later date.

*In lieu of flowers, the family has asked that donations be made to any Veterans Organization of choice.

To leave an online memorial visit www.shafferfuneralhomeweb.com

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 5. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Shaffer Funeral Home
2315 West Commercial Street
PO Box 680
Ozark, AR 72949
(479) 667-4147
shafferfuneralhome@gmail.com

Funeral Service

MAR 6. 2:00 PM (CT)

Shaffer Funeral Home
2315 West Commercial Street
PO Box 680
Ozark, AR 72949
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shafferfuneralhome@gmail.com

Tribute Wall

DB

“ I loved and appreciated everything that Wayne did to make the Gilbreth reunions possible every year. I enjoyed doing everything I could to help with the bingo games and bringing gift bags for the winners. His grandfather and my grandfather were brothers and I am so proud to be a part of Wayne Gilbert's family. My love and prayers go out to Jan, Janet, Don, Gail and Kevin as well as all of their children.

Della Jean Beam - March 06 at 11:28 AM

BV

“ 1 file added to the album Slideshow



Byron Lasater V - March 05 at 02:08 PM

HC

“ Helen Church purchased the Days of Sunshine Bouquet for the family of E. Wayne Gilbreth.



Helen Church - March 05 at 01:05 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of E. Wayne Gilbreth.

March 05 at 12:29 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of E. Wayne Gilbreth.



March 05 at 12:29 PM



“ Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of E. Wayne Gilbreth.



March 05 at 09:58 AM



“ From your Cincinnati family purchased the Rose Remembrance for the family of E. Wayne Gilbreth.



From your Cincinnati family - March 04 at 08:54 PM



“ Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of E. Wayne Gilbreth.



March 04 at 01:21 PM

MC

“ Mike Cumming purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of E. Wayne Gilbreth.



Mike Cumming - March 04 at 12:30 PM

PF

“ Patsy & Family purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of E. Wayne Gilbreth.



Patsy & Family - March 03 at 09:14 PM

EA

“ We love you Uncle Wayne...

Evette Alston - March 03 at 06:46 PM

GM

Evette, Thank you for such a lovely statement. It really says it all. Gail

Gail Gilbreth McWhorter - March 10 at 01:45 PM