



Elbert B. Lindsey

July 3, 1934 - March 6, 2026

Builder, Innovator, Patriarch

Elbert Brunell Lindsey, born July 3, 1934, in Fort Payne, Alabama, was a man who believed that if something was worth doing, it was worth doing right. He passed away surrounded by family on Friday, March 6, 2026, leaving behind a legacy stitched into the fabric of his community and loved ones.

In a town once proudly known as the “Sock Capital of the World,” Elbert was more than a participant in the hosiery industry — he was one of its largest contributors. By day, he labored in local mills. By night, in his own backyard, he built his future — machine by machine, stitch by stitch. Every dollar he earned was reinvested into the mill he was determined to grow. There were no shortcuts in his world. Only precision. Only standards. Only work done right.

A perfectionist by nature, he became known for producing hosiery with fewer faults and fewer errors than competitors across the county. Finishing mills actively sought his product because it carried his reputation — precise, dependable, and uncompromising.

His ingenuity led to the patenting of a mechanical component called a “tension regulator” that became standard in hosiery machines throughout the region. His contribution was so foundational that he is featured in the local hosiery

museum, recognized as one of the men who helped shape what the industry became. When it came time to expand, he built his final mill himself with the help of some friends — walls, plumbing, and electrical — with the same precision that defined his product.

Before his entrepreneurial success, Elbert served his country as an Air Force Corporal in Strategic Air Command, stationed in Altus, Oklahoma, from 1957 to 1961. As a mechanic in the 11th Bombardment Wing, 42nd Bombardment Squadron, he worked on and built B-52 aircraft, a role requiring meticulous skill and responsibility.

His inventive mind carried into other chapters of his life after the Air Force, including his time with Uniroyal Tires, where he rose to Vice President of Research and Development and developed multiple innovations. He also spent time in New Orleans operating a mechanic shop, buying, repairing, and selling vehicles to servicemen in need of dependable transportation while on leave.

He was meticulous in all things. A careful instructor, he gave detailed driving directions down to the exact turn and minute — and expected them followed precisely. Anything less simply wasn't good enough. His standards were high, not out of harshness, but because excellence was the only way he knew how to live.

He was daring as a boy — building motorcycle ramps, outrunning police in his pickup, fishing for hours, shooting squirrels with a BB gun, and even making turtle soup from turtles found in a nearby pond. That boldness never left him; it simply matured into calculated risk, disciplined ambition, and the courage to build what others only imagined.

He was deeply frugal — timers on hot water heaters, dollar bills rubbed

together to make sure none stuck together. He studied bank interest rates across the state, always searching for the best return and knew exactly when to spend. He invested wisely, and gave generously. However, his generosity was profound; he quietly funded college educations and vehicles for children and grandchildren, investing in their futures just as faithfully as he invested in his businesses. He didn't just build wealth. He built opportunity.

In his early years, he came home greasy, tired, and ornery from building machines — settling into his brown leather chair, watching television, the household carefully orbiting around his fatigue. Everyone, that is, except one small granddaughter.

At barely two years old, she climbed right into that chair beside him, scrunching her face to match his mock scowl until his stern expression broke into roaring laughter — a moment that marked the beginning of a softer grandfather for all who followed.

As his business prospered, the grease-stained work clothes gave way to crisp attire and a signature scent — a custom blend of colognes he mixed himself. Some would often ask what he was wearing, unaware they were chasing a formula he had quietly perfected.

He loved to travel with his family, especially in pursuit of great food. Seafood was a favorite, but nothing was off-limits. He loved corny jokes and surprising those around him with unexpected humor. He was well read, having completed thousands of books and the Bible multiple times.

He married Barbara Ann Brown Lindsey in his early twenties, and their marriage endured for decades until her passing in 2012. Together they raised three daughters, one of whom, Felicia Lindsey, preceded him in death. He is

survived by his daughters Cynthia Zayn and Kim Crow (Chris), his brother JP Lindsey, eight grandchildren, and twenty-one great-grandchildren.

He gave the best hugs — the kind that felt firm, grounding, and safe.

Elbert Lindsey was demanding. Exacting. Brilliant. Frugal. Funny. Well-read. Visionary.

But above all, he was devoted.

Elbert's life was defined by discipline, ingenuity, generosity, and humor. He leaves behind more than buildings, patents, or professional accomplishments. He leaves a family shaped by his standards, strengthened by his discipline, supported by his generosity, and warmed by his unexpected laughter. His legacy, both in the textile industry and in the hearts of those who loved him, will endure for generations.

Funeral services will be 4 p.m. Sunday, March 8, 2026, at Wilson Funeral Home with Adam Crow and Rev. Denny Mashburn officiating. Burial will follow in Glenwood Cemetery. The family will receive friends Saturday evening from 4 until 8 p.m.

Wilson Funeral Home and Crematory of Fort Payne is in charge of arrangements.

Cemetery Details

Glenwood Cemetery

1002 Grand Avenue SW
Fort Payne, AL 35967

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 7. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Wilson Funeral Home
3801 Gault Ave. N
Fort Payne, AL 35967

Funeral Service

MAR 8. 4:00 PM (CT)

Wilson Funeral Home
3801 Gault Ave. N
Fort Payne, AL 35967

Tribute Wall

SL

“ *Rest assured*

Scott Lindsey - March 09 at 05:43 AM

LH

“ *Lindsay Holbrook planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Elbert B. Lindsey.*

Lindsay Holbrook - March 07 at 03:02 PM

LH

“ *Lindsay Holbrook purchased the Divine Light for the family of Elbert B. Lindsey.*



Lindsay Holbrook - March 07 at 03:02 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Elbert B. Lindsey.*



March 07 at 01:16 PM

CL

“ Cheryl Little sent a virtual gift in memory of Elbert B. Lindsey



Cheryl Little - March 07 at 10:06 AM

LC

“ May he rest in peace. We Love you all. A cousin L.C. and Trudy Cupp



L.C. Cupp - March 07 at 09:38 AM

OF

“ Orfale family purchased the Beautiful Heart Bouquet for the family of Elbert B. Lindsey.



Orfale family - March 07 at 08:58 AM

SL

“ Rest assured



Scott Lindsey - March 07 at 05:04 AM

MT

“ I worked with As Close As Family in Rainsville and sat a few times with Mr. Lindsey! He was such a sweet man and extremely funny! Prayers go out to the family!

Megan Talley - March 06 at 09:36 PM

JL

“ I sure grew to love him with the family members I set with including him some we would talk about so much. He is loved and will be missed. My thoughts and prayers are with you all
Love
Jennifer Lindsey

Jennifer Lindsey - March 06 at 08:57 PM