

## *The Legacy of Papa Mackey*

*I arrived home from the Niagara Falls Winterfest on Sunday night to find out my Papa Mackey went to be with Jesus on Saturday. I knew he was dying but I don't believe we are really ever ready for the news of the death of someone we love dearly. I loved my Papa dearly. I spent about as much time at his house in my childhood and teenage years as I did at my house. I went on lots of trips with him and my grandmother. His house was just behind the Recreation Center, so every day during the summer after swimming I went to his house for a snack (one of my grandmother's homemade biscuits with cucumber and green pepper from the garden). One summer my dad had a construction job in Albany, Georgia. My family went to stay with him but I chose to stay in Williamston with Papa & Grandmother Mackey because I already had lots planned for the summer. That was a memorable summer as I had the whole upstairs of their large mill home to myself and I had more freedom than ever before. Papa was really cool. He cared deeply for his family. He loved God and his church and was faithful to both. He would have been 87 years old in April. He told his family many stories (sometimes over and over) during the last months of his life that we will cherish forever and pass along to our children and grandchildren. When I was home this past Christmas we stayed at his house and he told us the story of the collie he had when he was a young boy and how his collie always followed him to school and waited for him until he went home. What kind of legacy did Papa leave? Well, a legacy is money or property left to someone by a will or **anything handed down as from an ancestor**. Papa Mackey didn't leave behind great worldly riches but he did leave great riches in the lives of his family. He left with us a deep love for God and for family, a love and appreciation for wonderful gardens (like the one he always had and kept us all fed with) and fresh vegetables and beautiful flowers (red tulips were his favorite), an appreciation for life and the simple things life offers. He was **satisfied** with the simple things of life. He will be missed but part of his legacy is that he still lives on in all of those he left behind: 4 children (he had 5), 16 grandchildren, 22 great-grandchildren and 1 great great grandchild (with another on the way). I can't speak for the other 42 people but I'm going to follow Papa's example and live life to the fullest by loving my God and my family and enjoying and being satisfied with the simple things in life. What an example you left for us Papa. I love you! When I think of you the pictures that go through my mind are of you walking down the hill from the mill with that swift, long stride; you at church worshipping God; you playing with and enjoying your great-grandchildren; you sitting in your chair; you asking me - "Cheri, How's that church up there treating you? Do you like what you're doing? Are you ever going to come back home to stay?"; you working in your garden; you laughing. I miss you but I'll see you again one day soon!*

*Love,*

*Cheri*