

## **Graveside Service - Tall Tree Cemetery**

Welcome and Prayer	Pastor Randy Von Kanel
Song	Jealous of the Angels – Donna Taggart
Remarks & Committal Prayer	Pastor Randy Von Kanel
Song	My Island In the Sun – Barefoot Man
Closing Prayer	Pastor Randy Von Kanel
Songs:	Go Rest High on That Mountain – Vince Gil
	Angels – Robbie Williams
	My Way – Frank Sinatra

## **Pallbearers**

Kenneth Thompson
Donald Thompson
Tyler Thompson
Miles Thompson
Alex Sabillon
Jay Hurlston
Christopher Echenique
Leonard Holder

# **Honorary Pallbearers**

Brainard Watler
Albert Thompson
Ollin Thompson
Lewie Ceato Hydes
Larry Cayasso
Charlie Murray
Errol Bush
Kurt Tibbetts
McKeeva Bush
Arek Josephs
Spurgeon Miller
Paul Pearson
Dr. Randall Pinder

## **Guest Book Attendants**

Rhonda Terry Charmaine Phillips

# **Celebration of Life**

Welcome & Prayer
Pastor Randy Von Kanel
MC - Kurt Tibbetts

**Eulogy** *Kurt Tibbetts* 

Song: My Way
Sung by: Kurt Tibbetts

# **Tributes:**

**Donald Thompson** *Read by: Dr. Randall Pinder* 

Virginia Thompson
Read by: Suzanne Howden

Spurgeon Miller
Mayor of Guanaja, Honduras

Wanda Thompson
Read by: Sid Snayzzarl

Ken Thompson
Read by: Mark Jordan
Song: Scars in Heaven – Casting Crowns

Acknowlegement & Thanks

Pastor Randy Von Kanel

Song and Video

"My Island In the Sun"

Written by Graham Thompson and Recorded by Barefoot Man

Please join us for refreshments and drinks on the great lawn.

Release of Chinese Lanterns as a final farewell to Mr. Graham

## Eulogy - Ira Grayham Thompson

Ira Grayham Thompson was born 16th January, 1938 in George Town, Grand Cayman to, Ira and Norma Thompson. He was brother to Eileen, Maxine and the late Laverne Daykin. Sadly in 1942, his mother, Norma passed away in Jamaica. A few years later, Ira married Sylvia West of Savannah and together they had three children: Ellen-Rose, Albert and Ollin. The family lived in a modest home, located where Hard Rock Café is today. Graham was always getting into something or other.

As a young boy Graham went to sea at the young age of 17 as a messman and when he came off two years later he had progressed to an oiler. On his return to Cayman he worked and ran a gas station and was a mechanic there.

Always looking for the next project....In his early years Graham was the first distributor of Coca-cola in the Cayman Islands. He was the first person to bring an international band to perform in Cayman which was Byron Lee & the Dragoneers to perform at his, Colin Powell and Guerney Panton's club "Club Inferno"...Yes, he opened Club Inferno! He started Graham Thompson and Associates and became the distributor for Pabst Blue Ribbon Beer. He helped start Cayman Insurance Center. He had a business called Island Patio selling patio furniture made out of PVC pipe. (I'm sure some of you may still have some of this). He had a business selling Welcraft Boats. He brought Reverse Osmosis machines to Cayman and installed them in many peoples homes so they could make fresh water for their houses. Of course these are just to name a few "

On April 9th, 1962 Graham married Virginia Bodden of Savannah at a beautiful chapel in Liginea, Jamaica. To this union two children were born, Donald Ira Thompson and Kenneth James Thompson. Graham worked hard to provide for his family not always being there for them but making sure they had what they needed. In 1963 Graham purchased the bar and restaurant at the airport "the Pub" later known as Hungry Horse Bar & Restaurant. This was managed by his late sister Laverne Daykin back in the day..... He needed somebody to keep him straight. Boy what a job she had!! ....This was later run by Ken & his wife Wanda. Graham loved to greet his guests and have a chat. !! Hungry Horse operated for the next 57 years until 2020 when COVID closed everything!!

Still looking for the next project....In 1975 Graham and Virginia put hands and heart together and started a small business called Island Taste. It was only supposed to be a pattie shop, but being the person Graham was he cooked lunch every day and invited his friends to join them. They told him he should start selling the lunches and soon they added these local lunches to the menu. This was a thriving business and has continued to grow, now being run by his son Ken, his wife Wanda and Tyler, Graham's grandson. It is still known as Island Taste which now offers a variety of breads, pastries, patties, local lunches and catering.

It came alive is 75 and we still do it for you in 22!! ...

In the mid 90's after representing the first airline to offer flights between Honduras and Cayman Graham decided to set up residence in in Guanaja, Honduras, where he eventually purchased an uninhabited cay and this was the start of Graham's Place, where he resided at the time of his passing.

For the first 20 years Graham lived in a 16x16 2 bd 1 bath and kitchen house with a large patio. If you know Graham, you know this patio saw many parties over the years.

On the first visit that Ken, Wanda and their 3 kids went to visit for the weekend they stayed in that same 16x16 house. Graham, Ken & Tyler in one room and Wanda, Kayla and Amanda in the other room. Keeping in mind that there was only one double bed in each room. I think Ken slept on the floor in their room. There was no A/C, and electricity was only by generator. At about 7:30 in the evening Graham would ring the bell and the generator would be turned off...so guess what....no fan either. The first night was ok as there was a nice breeze and the windows could be left open. However, on the 2nd night it rained and the windows had to close. Boy was it ever HOT!!! It was still a great trip!!

The second trip was much of the same, only for a weekend, but a great trip and memories. This is when Graham decided he needed to build a bigger place for his children to bring their families. Ken had 3 children already and he was hopeful at the time that Don would be having some soon.

He and Ken got together and decided to build 2 one bedroom suites with a connecting door. These rooms definitely got put to use when the grandkids were coming as they always brough friends every summer. There were normally about 10 kids and he loved every minute of it.

Well of course when the family was not there the rooms would be empty and he started getting requests to rent the rooms by fly fishermen that came to visit, he asked Ken what he thought and Ken said it was a great idea, so there's the start of Graham's Place his final and most passionate project.

Over the years it grew to be an amazing 26 room boutique resort. He loved having guests and treated everyone like royalty. Whatever they wanted he made sure he could get it for them. He provided a beautiful beach for the locals to come and hang out with their families as the other places in Guanaja don't allow locals. He hosted many weddings, birthdays, honeymoons and other events at his resort. His granddaughter had the privilege of having her wedding there and what an event he put on for her.

He was always giving back to the community and helping those less fortunate. He believed in working hard and playing hard as I'm sure most of his friends can attest.

He received many awards for Grahams place. He was in Forbes Magazine as one of the best beaches in the Caribbean, he received Trip Advisors "Hall of Fame Award" which is given after 5 consecutive years of "Service Excellence" and those ratings come from the guest that visit the resort. He received an award from the Honduran Tourism Department for one of the best attractions in Honduras and many others along the way.....these were just some in Honduras and he received several in Cayman as well over the years in his many businesses.

It is with great sadness that we are here today to say a final farewell to the man so many loved. Mr. Graham Thompson, lovingly known as Mr. Graham, Hammy and Thompson. He has left behind a legacy and will never be forgotten.

As we all know he did it His Way!!

#### Dad....

You were a man who lived your life in a way that although might not have been approved by all, most will agree it was a life of laughter and joy and giving. You lived to see people happy and laughing and when it came to providing a service you went above and beyond. Everyone was a VIP for you at your businesses and your goal was to make sure they had a great time and wanted for nothing.

This goes back from apparently when you started out in life as an entrepreneur (one of the greatest I can say) and everything you did you did a brilliant job at as your heart and soul went 1 million percent into it. You didn't believe in unfinished work or hap hazard work and everything had to be done right, kept clean and in good working order. One of your favorite lines was "leave not for tomorrow what you can do today". You always said you never know what tomorrow might bring so get it done today.

You were not just a father to me but also one of my best and greatest friends. We like everyone else had our differences of opinions sometimes but that only made us stronger and closer as we could talk and agree and to disagree sometimes but still get on with whatever it was we were doing. Sometimes I won the disagreement and sometimes you won but we made sure whatever we were doing was done to its best. You could fix and solve anything and I was always fascinated by how you knew what to do with anything. I have learnt so much from you and hope I can pass on the same to my children and grandchildren.

I will miss you forever, I hope you will keep a close eye on me and let me know you are there. I speak to you sometimes when I have a quiet moment just to let you know I still love you and miss you.

You created a life for us (my mother my brother and myself) and although in your younger years maybe you didn't take the time for us as you were busy making sure we (and many others first) wanted for nothing. It was tough times and the world refers to this as Tough Love but it made us stronger I think and better prepared for Life. You sometimes don't appreciate these things when you are younger and feel not loved or that you don't count but you knew this so you definitely made up for it in your later years as we then became much closer and you could take the time to spend with us.

When the grand children came along you again transformed into an Amazing and Proud grandfather and if that was not enough when your Great Grand Daughter arrived we saw a side of you we had never seen and your time with her from a baby holding her, walking with her around your place and singing school songs from your childhood many times brought tears to my eyes. You unfortunately never got to meet your Great Grandson who is to be born around May 8th but you did get to talk with Amanda (his granddaughter) about when she might be coming to visit you after he was born. You said to me one day in your hammock "Ken I never thought I would have lived to see grandchildren and now look at me with a Great Grand Child and another one on the way".

"I am so happy to have them and love all of you"

To the man that made so many dreams come true for others whom he always put first before him and made sure his employees or friends in need got what they needed. He was eager to help those not so fortunate and believed everyone should have a chance at life if they had ambition and were willing to work. You always taught us to help the less fortunate and give back to the community. To see the appreciation and happiness you brought to people is priceless and yes I have continued this and will continue to do this as it is simply the right thing to do.

To the man that made absolutely sure each and everyone one of his guest and friends from his restaurant days to his resort days were greeted and treated with smiles and you rolled out the proverbial red carpet for them. You made sure they wanted for nothing at your places and again always wanted to speak with each and every one of them to ensure they were happy and didn't need anything. Your passion was making people happy and it gave you a feeling second to none. You would often say it is so easy to treat people good and make sure they have a good time.

He was also always first as well if you weren't a good person to tell you where to go quickly and not beat around the bush. He hated foolishness, arrogance, thieves and liars so if you brought those around him you would quickly be set straight and asked to leave while you could.

Those traits of honor, honesty, ambitious, compassion, integrity, manners, pride, fairness, forgiveness and pride of country came first were just some of the things you represented. They seem nonexistent these days or perhaps they weren't taught as we were many years ago and it shows in so many people now a days the lack of those important lessons and traits. Thank you for instilling those traits in me and Wanda and I have taught and passed these traits on to our children and grandchild soon to be grandchildren..

I have a lot of memories together with you and I will cherish those for the rest of my life. My children got to know you well and to them you were the best "Papa" anyone could have. It made my heart full watching you with them. Thank you for being so good to them.

You often said to me "Ken, How many other people you know have their own island and can enjoy it with their families". You were so very proud and had every right to be of the place you envisioned, created and built. Your tag line for Graham's Place was "Keep this place in mind, a better place is hard to find" which has gone all over the world in pictures taken by your guests. Your shoes will not be easy to fill and your legacy will be hard to replicate but I will do my best in your honor to fill those shoes and build upon your legacy as I am so proud to do

To my father, my dad, my friend and my role model.....I will love you forever and will never forget you and all that you stood for.

Now it is time for me to let you go. This is the hardest thing I have ever had to do. I am envious of the Angels that now have you but happy you have a great view of your place and know you are watching over us. They say God looks in your heart as to what you do and well let me just say I think he has been thoroughly satisfied with yours in all the good you have done in your lifetime without looking for any reward or acknowledgement and you will be welcomed in Heaven with open arms.

As your sign at Graham's Place says, "Wish You Were Here".

"I watched you suffer
I saw you die
But all I could do,
Was sit close by
You went away
We had to part
God eased your pain
But broke my heart"

Your loving Son,

Ken

This song is for you dad..... I Love You!!

#### Dear Dad

It is not easy to find the words to say how much you really meant to me each and every day. I know at times you got discouraged and thought I would never learn to stay straight on the path of life. You always tried to guide me around the turns and although sometimes I stumbled it helped to know you were always there. Your guidance was not wasted, in my heart I know you REALLY cared. While it is not always easy to choose the right path, I'm trying to learn to choose the path that you would want me to choose.

Dad the eternal God is your refuge, and his everlasting arms are under you.

With love

Don and Dilcia.

Papa,

Thank you for being the greatest Papa and always making time for us. My memories with you will forever be cherished, from visiting you during the summers to surprising you during Christmas. I'm so sorry you didn't get to meet your great grandson, Brantley, and son in law, Dylan, but I promise to make sure they both know about you and all the incredible memories we have shared. I promise to bring them to your place and introduce them to your beautiful Cay. I love you so much and miss you terribly.

Your loving Granddauther,
Amanda

Graham,

We little knew that morning
That God would call your name.
In life we loved you dearly.
In death we do the same.

But you did not go alone.
For part of us went with you
That day God called you home.

You left us beautiful memories.
Your love is still our guide.
And though we cannot see you
You are always at our side

Our family chain is broken
And nothing seems the same
But as God calls us one by one
The chain will link again

May your soul Rest in Peace

Virginia

WINE.

Lps. 70.00

BAR MENU

Rum Extra Seco SENCILLO Lps. 50.00

lor de Caña Gold Lps. 50.00

"Your Life was a Blessing,
Your Memory a Treasure,
You are loved beyond words
Missed Beyond Measure"

Mr. Graham, I don't even know where to begin, there are no words to express the deep loss I feel.

When I started dating Ken it was a bit of a challenge for you and I to talk, you couldn't understand my Southern drawl and I certainly could not understand your Caymanian accent. We would both constantly ask Ken, what did he/she say? Thank goodness we had him.

I remember my first trip to your place in Honduras, not what it is today of course, I believe Ken said it was a 16x16 2 bd 1 ba with a kitchen. Ken and I came for a weekend and brought your 3 grandchildren to visit, Tyler-7, Kayla-5 and Amanda-2, boy was I nervous. I wasn't sure how you were going to cope with 3 small children excited beyond excited to be going to see their Papa. And boy oh boy when they got to your place – the questions started - Papa can we go fishing? Papa can we go swimming? Papa...Papa and Ken and I kept trying to keep them from bugging you but you put us in our place real quick. "Let them do what they want, they are at Papa's" and so the bonding started. They fished, swam, fed the turtles, Consuelo cooked them "Papas Fritas" every day ..... I think all day. I have never had so much sand and fish scales to wash off children in my life, but what a time they had. We came back another weekend with the kids and stayed downstairs in a small room and OMG the sand!!!

You decided that you were going to build a bigger place for us to stay when we came to visit and that is how the "Pink House" came about. You and Ken got together and decided to build 2 1 bedroom units upstairs that had a connecting door so that we would have a place to stay. Good thing too, because Ken and I came with our three children and of course they had to bring friends every summer for the next 20 years. You always made them feel so special. They loved their papa. Their friends lovingly call you Papa Graham as you became like a Papa to them as well.

Moving forward a few years and your first granddaughter Kayla asked if she could get married on your Cay..."of course she can" I would love her to get married here and so February 2018 Kayla and Christopher got married there and what a celebration we had. We also got to tell you that you had a great grandchild on the way. Boy that was exciting....

September 8, 2018 your first great grandchild was born Hayden Echenique. She spent her first Christmas at Graham's Place with you. What a time you had singing your childhood songs to her, and somehow you both seemed to always be dressed in the same colors in all the pictures we took. As your bond with her grew you would always sing songs to her and the one that stuck and she sings all the time something about "Willy Wika". If you ask her what Papa says, that's what she will tell you.

We got to tell you that you had a great grandson on the way. Unfortunately, it was not to be in the cards for you to meet him, but we will tell him all the stories about his Great GrandPa.

So many memories, how do I put it all on paper. You were amazing and I will miss you terribly. Your Loving Daughter-in-law, Wanda

"God saw him getting tired,
And a cure was not to be
So, He put His arms around him and whispered
"Come to Me"
With tearful eyes
We watched him suffer, and
Saw him slowly fade away.
Although we loved him dearly,
We could not make him stay
A golden heart stopped beating
Hard working hands put to rest
God broke our hearts
To prove to us
He only takes the best."

### Our Dear Brother,

There was certainly lots of excitement in the Thompson household on the 16th January, 1938. We finally got the baby brother that we wanted, it was love at first sight and we couldn't wait to hold him and play with him. EILEEN being the eldest got to hold him first, but as she recalls it was in disobedience to her Mother who had given her strict warning not to do so. But she did, and she dropped him.

That fall did not seem to have had much effect, because as MAXINE remembers he was quite good at skipping school, stole away several times and got into a lot of mischief. As a young boy, he had problems with one of his knees and was given crutches. He went everywhere on those crutches - fishing, boating and all over the iron shore. In later years we owned homes at Sand Pointe where we spent our weekends. On one weekend in particular, the men promised us a roast pig, but after waiting for hours the only thing we were presented with was a small portion of burnt pork which Graham tied to a tree and invited us to have jerk pork.

Although ELLEN was not around in his early days, she fondly reminisces on the weekends at Sand Pointe playing dominoes and the Friday night Fish Fry sessions in the middle of the road, under the street light at Buena Vista. Graham cooked the best fish ever!

Over 40 years ago ALBERT, Graham, Spencer, Alfred and Oswald went to Jamaica to a Byron Lee Party. Everyone got tuned up and went to bed - Graham was found all curled up in a baby crib and Oswald sleeping in the bar amidst many broken bottles of alcohol. Albert recalls spending many weeks with Graham on his Key - never a dull moment and I will miss him terribly.

His youngest brother OLLIN has expressed that there is not enough ink and paper to hold all he could say about him, everything was enjoyable. Two things he will always remember - once visiting the Key, I told him that I was going to take a walk to the reef and he warned me not to bring back any dirty pampers. On another occasion we went to visit a friend on a hill on the Main Island. It was very high up so we walked for a long time making several stops to allow Graham to catch his breath. As we approached we heard dogs barking and realized they were right in our path. Graham said "I feel like going to lie by them and make them #%\$\*\*@% eat me"!

Dear brother, we will remember all the special times we had, we shared good times, we shared the bad and you will always be in our hearts.

Eileen, Maxine, Ellen, Albert, Ollin

Dear Mr. Graham,

You can remember him and only that he is gone Or you can cherish his memory and let it live on David Harkins (1959 - )

Without Mr. Graham, there never would have been a "Hard Rock";

Without Mr. Graham, a young man never would have come to The Cayman Islands;

Without Mr. Graham, there never would have been a "Randy & Paul";

Without Mr. Graham, there never would have been a "Davenport Development".

You greeted us always with "Welcome brother"

And open arms every time;

You welcomed our families to your piece of paradise—

You got little boys out of bed to fish and to feed pelicans—

Now, as young men, they love showing off those photos.

It is now with heavy hearts,

Tears in our eyes,

Yet smiles on our faces

That we wait to hear the words:

"Welcome brother!"

All our love Paul & Randy.

## Uncle Graham,

What a loss this is, not only for our family but for our community. Uncle Graham was truly a self made man. He was clever and creative and he worked hard. He was always working on some project or the other - even built an island! But the thing I will remember and miss the most is his quick wit and sense of humor. He was the funniest person. I will always remember the afternoon in my mom's living room, with all of us gathered around and he and my Mom telling stories from when they were growing up. They had us in stitches for hours and I truly didn't want it to end. Such a precious memory. Rest In Peace Uncle Graham.

Love,

your niece, Wendy

### Mr. Graham/Papa

Thank you for being a great grandpa and an awesome father-in-law.

You always welcomed us with open arms and were always sharing your knowledge, your time, your ideas and infectious energy. My two months with you were the most healing and peaceful time I've ever known. Thank you for sacred conversations and a sacred connection.

With much love and gratitude, Christina & Miles.

Tribute to Uncle Graham from niece Kim Marshall

Uncle Graham better known as "Bro. Jonesy" to me because like the song by the Tradewinds say, Bro. Jonesy come to Town and you had better do it right or else.

He was fun to be around; there was never a dull moment. I visited his Cay on several occasions and one with my sister Judy and her family. It is an absolutely beautiful place and I can see why he never wanted to leave. RIP Uncle Graham until we meet again.

Tribute to Uncle Graham from niece, Judy McTaggart

My memory of Uncle Graham goes back to the airport days of white sand instead of asphalt and the "Airport Lounge" as the place to hang out.

My first taste of marinated conch was with Uncle Graham and the gang up on the beach at Breakers. The adults would dive for the conch and we would all help to clean them and then devour them. Bird shooting up at Spotts was a fun time of year. Dad, Uncle Alfred, Uncle Graham & others would go bird shooting all the nieces and nephews would be called on to be the bird boys/girls to search and retrieve the birds for a bird "cookup" weeks later. Christmas time was a fun time also. Uncle Graham was the clown in the Santa Clause landing and we would gather on his back porch and fill all the sacks with candy to be thrown out to the kids on the day of the parade. He took part in the first Pirates Week and the first Batabano Parade. We as a family and a bunch of close friends were all part of the group called the "Happy Sailors", he played Popeye and sat in a boat on a trailer and the gang of us followed behind.

No matter the season or wherever the action was, you would find Uncle Graham.

A few years ago (2016) we visited Graham's Place with my family and we had a great time with him. He was so proud of his island and we had fun exploring and seeing his entire home- made handiwork sprinkled all over the island, he was creative and humorous. We loved to just sit with him and chat about anything. He always made you laugh. We were planning a trip back in June of 2020 but then COVID ruined that and we never did make it back.

We will miss him coming back to Cayman and meeting up with him and enjoying his company. Love you Uncle Graham RIP until we meet again.

For my Uncle I have so many memories Of the times we spent together, And even though you're no longer here, I'll cherish them forever. I miss your laughter so much And the mischief in your smile. When I feel the sadness welling up I'll remember it a while. For though you are no longer here, You'll never be truly gone. So long as I have these memories, Your spirit will carry on. So until I see your smile again, I'll hold you in my heart and mind. A shining example, my uncle Of the best of humankind.

> Love and Miss you, Rhonda

## For my Grandfather

There is too much to say about what a great man my grandfather was. I will cherish all the memories I've shared with him over the years. As long as I can remember we have been flying to Honduras to stay with him on his Cay Waiting on the dock arms open ready to accept everyone and anyone. He was always happy to accept any of my friends to his place and we went there many times and shared tons of laughter with only a few drinks here and there lol. The stories never got old and new ones were always right behind.

My grandfather was the kind of man to leave an impression on you. Anyone I have crossed paths with that finds out "you famileh to Graham?" have nothing but the highest praise and are always ready to share their unique experiences with him with me. Never a dull moment with this guy.

Over the years learning who he was from my visits to him or vicariously through the loving memories of others, I am proud to have been the Grandson of such a special person.

I love you Papa and you will be missed so much.

Your loving Grandson,
Tyler

### For you Papa,

I can't imagine a grandfather gets any better than you. You welcomed our friends with open arms at every summer visit, you accepted Christopher as part of the family without question and gave us the most incredible venue for our big day and you have been the greatest Great Grandfather to Hayden. I can't thank you enough for all of the love and memories we've shared throughout our lives. Your love will forever be part of us and I will be forever grateful.

I love you so much Papa and will cherish the memories forever! Your loving Grand Daughter, Kayla













