

G.W. "Willard" May

Grover Willard May was born on August 22, 1908 in Okolona, Arkansas. He was the eldest of three sons born to Grover Cleveland May and his wife Era Killingsworth May.

Willard started school at Okolona and in 1922 the family moved to Little Rock where he graduated from high school. After high school, he continued his academic career at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville and graduated in 1931 with a bachelor's degree in business administration. While at the U of A he was a member of the Marching Razorback Band and sang in a male quartet. As a member of the Kappa Sigma Fraternity, he was in the first group to move into the house, which the fraternity still inhabits today.

Willard returned to Little Rock after graduation and worked with his father at the Arkansas Lumber Company. In 1933 he founded the G.W. May Construction Company. Willard also co-founded the May Supply Company with his father and brother and served as vice president to that company. He was also the owner of the Community Tire Company, vice president of May Realty Company and was president of the Central Realty Company. A few of G.W. May Construction Company's projects include Blue Cross/Blue Shield, the Doctor's Building, First Christian Church, Parkhill Baptist Church, Sears on University and the Rivercliff Apartments. Willard May's company, now May Construction Company, is one of the oldest continuously operated construction companies in the state of Arkansas. The company has remained in family hands for almost 70 years.

Willard was a civic-minded man. He served as a trustee and director of the Arkansas Children's hospital and was a trustee of Little Rock University (now the University of Arkansas at Little Rock) He was a former board member of the Little Rock Chamber of commerce and a devoted Razorback fan. Willard was also devoted to his church, the First Christian Church in Little Rock, where he served as an elder and board member. He was also a member of the Royal Order of Jesters, a Scottish Rite Mason, a member of the Trinity Masonic Lodge and the Scimitar Shrine Temple.

Perhaps the greatest legacy of G.W. May was his integrity and the value of his word. His word was his bond, that thought is reflected in the fact that many of his projects were awarded to him without his having to submit a bid.

Willard May past away in Little Rock on November 29, 1968. His wife, the former Juanita Gordon, as well as daughter Marilyn May Craig, and two sons Gordon May and Bob survived him May. To date there are seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.