



Graham Frederick Kilsby

September 15, 1945 - December 21, 2025

Born in England to the late William Kenneth Kilsby & Maud Ethel Robinson Tapper on September 15, 1944, Graham Frederick Kilsby later moved to the United States, spending time in Texas during its renowned live-music scene before settling in Lewis County. He was known locally for his writing and creative pursuits, often speaking of a life centered around music.

Graham had been involved in music for many years, with his broadcasting experience beginning when he sang as a boy soprano soloist for Children's Hour in 1956/7. As an adult with a lower voice (sometimes), he sang ballads and humorous songs, earning acclaim both at home and abroad. As a talented pianist with ten years of study, he was equally comfortable performing Beethoven Sonatas or Trini Lopez songs. His instrumental skills also included guitar and banjo, and his voice was often heard accompanying these at local British folk clubs.

His first solo record, "Graham Kilsby: In a Folk Mood," features four songs. "Chastity Belt," a neo-Elizabethan song, was recorded live at the Bristol Troubadour Club. "She's Like the Swallow" is a gentle American ballad, and "Man of Constant Sorrow," well known for its appearance in the movie "O Brother, Where Art Thou," showcases his range. "Keep the Willow" is a poignant song written especially for Graham by Berry McDonald to Graham's own tune.

Graham was active in many aspects of the music world. He was a resident photographer for Village Things Records, a notable British independent folk label from Bristol in the early 1970s. He also worked at Gilley's Club in Texas during its peak years when he first arrived in the U.S. He fondly recalled one of his favorite memories there: "When Tiny Tim was in Pasadena, Texas, I had the task of taking him around Pasadena. The people went crazy when they saw him, and it took us about four hours to go even one mile!"

During a time when musicians often contributed to major projects without recognition or liner notes, Graham claimed to have worked on several significant projects in the UK before the 1970s' standardization of credits. He was a co-writer on several songs, including an unreleased piece written by Buddy Holly, Scott Turner, and Graham Kilsby called "Am I Ever Gonna Find It."

Graham Kilsby's creative life spanned generations, borders, and decades. His father, W.K. Kilsby, was a Bristol-based professional photographer and aviation enthusiast who photographed aircraft from around the end of World War I. Graham inherited his father's passion for aviation, co-founding the Bristol Aero Collection and donating a Bolingbroke project in his father's memory to Aerospace Bristol (Museum).

Graham worked around town, attending various community events for the Lewis County Herald in past years. He was known to "embellish" at times, and always had the interests of "my best story" at the forefront. He was a regular at local spots such as The Skillet, Memories, and Kilpatrick's, making his rounds and spending time with many friends each week. He was a faithful member of both Hohenwald First United Methodist Church & Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

Mr. Kilsby passed quietly in his home on December 21, 2025.

He is survived by his sister, Eleanor, and her husband, Lyall Drewett.
He was preceded in death by his parents, William Kenneth Kilsby and Maud Ethel Robinson.

A gathering of friends to share stories and memories will be held on Monday, January 5, from 12:00 to 2:00, with funeral services starting at 2:00 PM, with Bill Webb officiating.

A private burial will take place at a later date.

Previous Events

Gathering of Friends

JAN 5. 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

McDonald Funeral Home, Inc. - Lewis County
20 West 2nd Avenue
Hohenwald, TN 38462
(931) 796-2207

Funeral Service

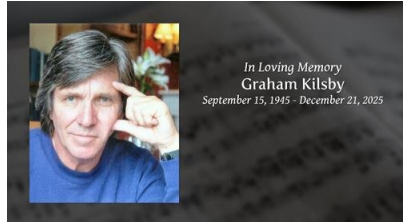
JAN 5. 2:00 PM (CT)

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Hohenwald, TN 38462
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Tribute Wall



“ *McDonald Funeral Home, Inc created a Tribute Video in memory of Graham Frederick Kilsby*



McDonald Funeral Home, Inc - January 21 at 10:55 AM

GH

I was fortunate enough to know the Kilsby Family from 1966 for a year or two when I was in the Royal Air Force at Filton. I was in 'digs' paid for by RAF. Joined Graham a few times at the Cellar Bar in Horts Restaurant in Broad Street Bristol. Much fun! Ironically I am having Dinner with a school friend of Grahams, John Tiddy. They both attended Westbury Park Junior School with John living in Cranbrook Road. We both joined the RAF in January 1963. Grahams Father joined me a few times to photograph Vulcan Bombers on QRA during 1967 Six Day War based in Filton. Great days and in fact I met my Wife of 54 years at one of Graham's Gigs in Cellar Bar. It was a pleasure to know Graham and the Kilsby Family.

Gerry Holland - May 18 at 10:43 AM

GW

“ *I did not know this amazing man unfortunately, but I believe he was the one who attended the ceremony to dedicate Vine Street to my brother, R.C.Curry, and wrote a wonderful article in the HERALD about my family during the time my brother served and died in WWII. I appreciated his interest in my brother and his service to our country as we gathered together and put up the sign on Vine Street. Kenneth Kistler was there and told us things we did not know of that time, too. God bless those who knew and loved this man.*

Gail Williams - January 01 at 10:10 AM

RM

“ *You Live on in our hearts, may your music continue to bless us all*



Rebecca & Mike McClain - December 31, 2025 at 11:21 AM

MB

“ *Michael Bates sent a virtual gift in memory of Graham Frederick Kilsby*



Michael Bates - December 30, 2025 at 03:11 PM