



John Clifford Brown

August 5, 1947 - December 21, 2024

John Clifford Brown died peacefully after suffering a stroke and having complications from a subsequent infection in Bloomington, IN on December 21, 2024. Clifford was a singularly bright star among us and never missed an opportunity to make even briefest exchanges upbeat, meaningful, and memorable. He was especially animated when encountering babies, even just passing in a grocery aisle, with “Hello, old soul” or “Greetings, fellow space traveler,” followed by a chuckle and friendly nod to the parent.

He was born August 5th, 1947 to Lillian Brown (Haberstroh) and Stanley Morton Brown Jr. in Southington, CT. He started out with a brother, Stanley Morton Brown III, 19 months his senior who in place of “Clifford” provided the long lasting nickname “Duffy”. The family lived in Cleveland Heights, OH until 1954 when Stan and Lil divorced.

Lillian and the boys joined her mother, Esther, in New York, NY where the brothers attended Mount St. Michael's Academy, Iona Grammar, and Iona Prep Schools. In his high school days he enjoyed live music in Greenwich Village and weekend afternoons on Jones Beach.

For his High School senior year, Clifford left New York to join his father, stepmother, Annie Brown (Forsythe) and his younger half brothers, Blair and Jim in Richmond, IN. Clifford completed high school, joined outings to the Indy

500, and shared grilled hamburgers and corn on the cob in the Brown backyard.

In 1965, Clifford began studies in psychology at Indiana University in Bloomington, IN. Here he encountered the growing cultural unrest that manifested in the Freaks and Hippies later in the decade, yet he was such an early subscriber to the movement they were simply called “green-baggers,” after the dark green book bags preferred by early activists and nonconformists. As the movement grew, so did the distance between the black and white nature of his father’s service in World War II and the much murkier motives of the Vietnam conflict. After being arrested for protesting against the use of agent orange in Vietnam and aligning with the values of the burgeoning back-to-the-land movement, he bucked the system and left Indiana University.

Clifford circuitously migrated to a cabin on Lower Owl Creek Road near Nashville, IN and was soon joined by Anna Jane Brown (Allen). Here he quickly realized that, despite leaving the mainstream world and the institution of higher education, he would still need to earn a living. He found work with a builder in Nashville and worked as a carpenter’s helper for two years learning the trade

During this time the children started arriving, which prompted a brisk engagement and marriage in 1971 to Anna that lasted 14 years. This union brought 3 sons who were Clifford’s great joys to raise and teach the trade. In 1979, Clifford substantially completed a passive solar home for his family on Dollsberry Lane along with a pond stocked with bass, bluegill and catfish. Anna made a wonderful home and pursued her craft as a fiber artist while the children played in the woods and fished in the pond. By 1984 Clifford had become a general contractor building many custom homes and commercial buildings in Brown and surrounding counties over 3 decades. Clifford was very

grateful to his crew, subcontractors and clients. Often, someone started out in one of these roles and ultimately became a surrogate family member. Each son took Clifford's skills into careers in their own ways, with Jonah becoming owner of Jonah Brown Custom Properties as well as Montanabis; Lucas a licensed architect, Principal of Brownsmith Studios, and a professor of architecture at Indiana University; and Jeremy learning that he would prefer to work indoors as much as possible as an elementary teacher.

In the mid 2000s Clifford exited the Progress House recovery program in Indianapolis, IN and spent the remainder of his life sober, retired and traveling the world. In winter he enjoyed Thai beaches, in spring the Rocky Mountains of Bozeman, MT, in summer the lobster boat harbors of Maine and in fall the changing leaves in southern Indiana. Clifford vigorously embraced sobriety and made his experience and insight available to anyone on the same path in each of these locations.

During this time, Clifford enjoyed visiting his grandchildren, Josie, Liam, Cedric, Simon, and Gordon. Depending on which son he was visiting he was either Papaw or Cliffy. He was also the favorite visitor of a corgi named Tuffie in Bozeman, MT.

Clifford's family appreciates the staff and residents at Brickyard Health who kindly cared for his every need over 18 months with him near loved ones yet receiving skilled care.

He is survived by 3 sons and their families, John Jeremy (Adrianna) Brown, Lucas Allen (Heidi) Brown, and Jonah Joseph Brown. Clifford's grandchildren are Gordon Brown, Simon Brown, Cedric Brown, Liam Brown, and Josie Brown.

He is also survived by three brothers Stanley Morton Brown III, James Winsor (Robbie) Brown, and Bruce Blair Brown. He was preceded in death by his parents.

Donations to Progress House-<https://www.progresshouse.org/give>

A celebration of Clifford's life will be held at Allen Funeral Home (4155 S. Old State Road 37, Bloomington, IN 47401) on Saturday, January 11, 2025 at 3pm. Family and friends may visit earlier in the day from 1-3pm.

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 11. 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

Allen Funeral Home and Crematory
4155 S. Old State Road 37
Bloomington, IN 47401
(812) 824-5905
<http://www.allencares.com>

Celebration of Life

JAN 11. 3:00 PM (ET)

Allen Funeral Home and Crematory
4155 S. Old State Road 37
Bloomington, IN 47401
(812) 824-5905
<http://www.allencares.com>

Tribute Wall

TA

“ *Tiffany Jackson/Pam Atwood purchased the Blue Caribbean Bouquet for the family of John Clifford Brown.*



Tiffany Jackson/Pam Atwood - January 11, 2025 at 08:06 AM

M"

“ *My affections, Arkinda "Brooke" purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of John Clifford Brown.*



My affections, Arkinda "Brooke" - January 09, 2025 at 11:47 AM

DG

“ *One of a kind that Cliffy, he always had a story to tell, some words of Cliffy wisdom and a hell of a laugh! We shall treasure the times we had at the general store, down at our lake house and the big house on Ferncliff. You shall be missed indeed. Gerard and I send our deepest condolences to you and the family Lucas, Heidi Liam and Josie. - Deena and Gerard Guillet*

deena Guillet - January 03, 2025 at 06:32 PM

SW

“ We crossed paths in Panachel in the early '70s and after a few beers and sparring banter, I told him that holding him to a position was like trying to nail a drop of water to the wall. His response "why would you even try to do that?" Clifford nailed it. Adios, amigo.

sydney wynne - January 02, 2025 at 09:04 AM



“ Clifford was well-versed in Brown County philosophy, but he could've hung with Timothy Larry, Ken Keasey or Boba ram Das any day.
My most distinctive memory of him I was 13 and he was helping to finish the drywall in the addition at my parents house ; so that my dad would have a finished space for the end of his life passing. He would come over in the evenings and trowl on mud , and then he would come over the next day and sand. I'm sure he did this out of love and respect , and it was pro bono. His words helped get me through it somehow.....
It only took six weeks for my dad to pass, but Clifford his crew and his friends managed to get the space finished and painted.

Forest Gras - December 31, 2024 at 06:26 PM

BU

“ Good ol' Cliff was my next door neighbor for about two years. He used to love to talk about mysticism and philosophy and he had some handy quotable-quotes for me when I left for work in the mornings and when I came home from work in the evenings. He was a great storyteller. We played checkers a few times (I'd be lying if I said I won) and I put a new battery in his smoke detector. After two years of knowing him, he moved to Montana and I never saw him again after that. I'll miss the guy and I hope his mind and his soul are at peace.

Burl - December 28, 2024 at 07:23 AM

C&

“ Colette &. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of John Clifford Brown.

Colette &. - December 26, 2024 at 07:05 PM

OG

“ Ogen purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of John Clifford Brown.



Ogen - December 26, 2024 at 06:43 PM