



Otis Bernard Pinckney

September 4, 1951 - August 26, 2026

Greenville, South Carolina

Otis Bernard Pinckney died in Greenville on August 26, 2026. He was seventy-four. Born there on September 4, 1951, he grew up knowing the mill as a clock that did not sleep, and he learned a loom before he learned a highway. A coupling, he said, is a promise: it holds, or the whole story comes apart in the dark.

For twenty-seven years he was a mechanic on a textile floor, crawling under frames that other men only blamed. He arrived early. He did not advertise. Foremen called him because he would write up a cracked cam even when the shift was already called. He charged a fair hour and a smaller one when a church van needed a lift more than a sermon. He kept a notebook of machines, not clients. The notebook had lint on the edges.

He married Imogene Pinckney in 1973. They raised three children in a frame house that needed a new porch every twenty years. Imogene kept the garden and the choir. Otis grilled on Sundays and considered a plate of smoked chicken a seasonal obligation. After his knees quit the worst pits he still came out for a favorite string of frames, moving slower, doing the same honest work.

Friends remember a man who left a floor cleaner than he found it, who could stand in a noise without making it a personality, and who loved the river at evening. He died in Greenville, in the city whose mills had written his calendar. The frames still run somewhere. Someone else will hear the knock that means trouble.

Services

Visitation in Greenville, then a simple service. A gift to a mill-workers' assistance fund or a neighborhood pantry is welcome.

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