



Clemson Legacy Connection

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Bobby and Gail Newton - A Season of New Beginnings — and Lasting Impact

Greetings, Tigers!

As spring arrives on campus — bringing fresh blooms, longer days and a renewed sense of possibility — this season is about more than change. It’s about beginnings. It’s about growth. And it’s about the enduring impact of seeds planted long ago.

At Clemson, the spirit of new beginnings and enduring impact is alive and well through *Fiercely Forward*, our fourth and most ambitious capital campaign. Centered on securing investments to help us launch lives of significance, unlock human potential and ignite change through ingenuity, this campaign reflects the very vision that **Thomas Green Clemson** and **Anna Calhoun Clemson** held when they founded our “high seminary of learning” more than 136 years ago.

Today, we are proud to share the story of two individuals who embody that same spirit of renewal and purpose: Bobby and Gail Newton.

Rooted in Tradition: A Clemson Love Story Begins

For Gail LaGrone Newton, Clemson wasn’t just a university — it was part of her childhood. From an early age, she was running down the grassy slopes of the Hill with her brother on football Saturdays, surrounded by family and tradition. “We didn’t know anything about football then,” she recalls with a smile, “but we knew the Hill was a lot of fun.”

Those early memories were shaped by her father, William Edward LaGrone, whose time at Clemson in the 1940s was cut short by military service, but whose love for the University never wavered. That loyalty became a family legacy, later carried on by Gail’s brother, William David LaGrone ’77.

While Gail chose her own academic path — earning degrees from Winthrop College and The Citadel — her Clemson connection remained a constant thread, woven through family, memories and meaning.

Building a Life Together in the Lowcountry

Gail’s life as an elementary school teacher took a new turn in Charleston in the early 1980s, where she met Bobby Newton. He was a natural entrepreneur with a passion for building and problem-solving, and he had returned to the Lowcountry after working in Charlotte. He later co-founded a

successful industrial manufacturing and blending business with his longtime friend and Clemson alumnus, Ted King '69. After 35 years of success, the partners sold the company and stepped into a well-earned retirement.

Together, Bobby and Gail built a life grounded in hard work, shared values and a deep appreciation for the coastal lifestyle they enjoyed.

From Tigers to Tides: A Life of Exploration and Renewal

Retirement brought new adventures — and a few surprises. The Newtons relocated to the Florida Keys, embracing the beauty of saltwater fishing and the rhythms of the natural world. However, after experiencing the direct impact of Hurricane Irma (“The eye went right over our roof,” Bobby recalls), they felt the pull of home. They moved back to the Lowcountry — to Beaufort, South Carolina — where their lives continue to evolve in meaningful ways.



Gail has discovered a new creative passion as a painter, with her work featured in the Beaufort Art Association Gallery. Her art often serves a greater purpose, as she donates pieces to support charitable causes. She also remains deeply engaged in service through her leadership with the

Daughters of the American Revolution.

Bobby, never one to sit still, has taken on the challenge of boatbuilding — crafting not one, but two custom skiffs by hand. His projects reflect both skill and curiosity, a testament to an active, curious life.



The Transformative Power of Opportunity

Throughout her 32-year career in Charleston County Schools, Gail witnessed firsthand how opportunity can change a life's trajectory. As a guidance counselor, she worked closely with students who had the drive to succeed, but not always the means.

“Education is the key that opens doors,” Gail says. One student in particular left a lasting impression: a young woman experiencing homelessness who ultimately earned a scholarship to Clemson. While her story was inspiring, Gail never forgot the many others who didn't have the same opportunity. That stayed with her.

A Legacy of Compassion: Education Meets Purpose

When Bobby and Gail began planning their estate, they knew they wanted their legacy to reflect both their values and their passions. Their love for students, their belief in education and their

shared affection for animals, including their miniature schnauzer, Missy, coalesced into a fascination with the new **Harvey S. Peeler Jr. College of Veterinary Medicine**.



Here they envisioned something powerful: a way to bring it all together. Through an outright gift and a planned gift through their estate, the Newtons are establishing scholarships for future veterinary students — opening doors for those who dream of caring for animals, advancing science and serving communities.

As the College prepares to welcome its inaugural class this August, their gift will help ensure that talented, deserving students will have the opportunity to begin their graduate-level experience as we prepare a new generation of veterinarians. We are launching new beginnings — all made possible by thoughtful generosity.

What Will You Grow?

Spring invites each of us to reflect on what we're planting today — and what will flourish tomorrow.

Like the Newtons, you have the opportunity to align your passions with your purpose. By including Clemson in your current giving goals or your estate plans, you can ensure that future generations of students can learn, grow and launch lives of significance.

Your legacy can be one of opportunity. Of hope. And of transformation.

Let's Start the Conversation

To learn more about creating your Clemson legacy, we invite you to explore our resources or connect with the Office of Trusts, Estates and Gift Planning at giving@clemson.edu. You can also download our complimentary Estate Planning Guide to begin thoughtful conversations with your advisors.

Or I encourage you to simply reach out to me directly at jovanna@clemson.edu or 864-656-0663. It would be a privilege to listen, and to learn what matters most to you, and help you shape a legacy that reflects your values — just as the Newtons have done.

🌻 A Moment of Balance. A Season of Possibility.

The arrival of the Spring Equinox marks a rare and perfect balance — day and night standing equal, if only for a moment. From that point forward, the light grows stronger, the days grow longer, and the world quietly begins again.

It is a powerful reminder that even the smallest turning points can lead to extraordinary growth.

In many ways, a gift to Clemson is just that — a moment of intention that sets something far greater in motion. A decision made today becomes an opportunity tomorrow. A seed planted now becomes a life changed forever.

As this new season unfolds, we invite you to consider what light you might bring into the world... and what enduring impact you wish to grow.