



Mr. Harold T. Roots

August 6, 1926 - November 24, 2023

Harold T. Roots, 97 years old, passed away peacefully on Friday, November 24, 2023, at the home of his son in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Harold was born on August 6, 1926, to the late Robert and Ethly Roots. He grew up in Manhattan, New York, at 45 East 134th Street, affectionately called "Sugar Hill." He was the youngest of seven children who all preceded him in death.

The Roots family moved to Corona, Queens, New York, and was one of the largest families in the area. Harold attained his education in East Elmhurst, Queens, New York. He attended Public School (PS) 127 and Newtown High School, where he learned to read music. He attended the New York College of Music and studied music arrangement. He also took a course in Head Start in Farmingdale, New York, and attended New York University for early childhood development.

Harold worked at Kennedy International Airport for American Airlines on the 747 airplanes in the fleet service department. He would often play the piano on the plane in between flights.

Harold was not one to mess with and did not care who you were. Harold was always proud to talk about an incident when he worked on the shipping docks

in New York City. He was the only African-American man at the time, and on occasion, men would assess his strength. One day, he punched one of the leaders in the face. After that, they never bothered Harold again. He also worked on Wall Street for 16 years and at the Robert Hall clothing store in the men's department. He was a sharp dresser!

Harold married his first wife, Jacqueline M. Roots, and they had their first son, Ronald H. Roots. Darlene Roots was born five years later. Harold later married Frances G. Roots, and their union lasted 57 years until her passing in 2015. They fostered two children, Gladys and Nina. Harold purchased his first two-family home with his older sister, Delores, and later purchased another home in Huntington, Long Island, New York, with his wife, Frances.

After retirement from American Airlines, Harold spent his days serenading anyone who came to their home on his prized piano. Harold and Frances eventually moved to Johnson City, TN, where Frances' brothers, sisters, nieces, nephews, brother-in-law, and sisters-in-law welcomed them until their untimely departure. He was always impressed with their loving relationships with the families of Tennessee and North Carolina.

Harold was a jokester. He had an excellent memory and quick wit that made everyone laugh. If you weren't sharp, he would point to his head and say, "Think, think." The nurses often told him he was handsome, to which he replied, "Well, what can I tell you."

After Frances' passing, he fondly enjoyed talking to Darlene's best girlfriends, whom he affectionately called the "Girls." One person he was quite smitten with was Tina Mitchell. They would attempt to outdo one another with their quick comments and jokes. All in fun, of course.

The family would like to personally thank Stanley Parks and Rayetta Bachman

for their faithful assistance after Frances' passing. Harold was incredibly grateful for their care as he lived alone until his passing.

It was always our holiday tradition to visit Dad in Johnson City, TN, and sing along as he played our favorite songs on the piano.

As always, Harold had a quick response. For instance, when his daughter-in-law teased him about dinner, he politely said, as he pointed towards the door, "Would you like to step outside."

Harold T. Roots leaves behind his son, Ronald H. (Joanne) Roots; daughters, Darlene (Federico) Roots-Douglas and Gladys Blecher; grandsons, Selassie A. Douglas and Army, 1st Lt. Isaiah A. Douglas, a legacy of 13 grandchildren; 5 great-great-grandchildren; a host of nieces and nephews; and his childhood best friend, Charlie Morton.

Harold will be remembered for his handsome appearance, witty comments, infectious laugh, and giving spirit.

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC 18. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Birchette Mortuary & Cremation Service, Inc.
219 E Millard St
Johnson City, TN 37601
(423) 926-6013
mitchell@birchettemortuary.com
<https://birchettemortuary.com/>

Celebration of Life

DEC 18. 12:00 PM (ET)

Birchette Mortuary & Cremation Service, Inc.
219 E Millard St
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Tribute Wall

GM

“ (Forgive me if I am making mistakes with this texting, but I am going to try this again. GKM)

My profound condolences to all family, friends, associates and others:

Dating back to when I was 7 years old, I recall Uncle Harold religiously getting up in his bathrobe & pajamas in the morning to play the piano. Uncle Harold organized a family trio band consisting of Uncle Bud (Uncle Cliff's brother); my older brother Bobby and himself. During Christmas and New Years at "THE FAMILY" house of my grandparents; ("Meme" and "Pop") under the orchestration of Uncle Harold, the Trio would jam while Uncle Harold's Mother (my grandmother) would sing. This family ritual would continue for some time.

This was my first exposure to a live band. Uncle Harold was the predominant influence in my life regarding music.

In retrospect, the "good times" we shared together were during our "FAMILY" outings.

Uncle Harold was always concerned about me and always protective of me.

When I was staying with Uncle Harold & Aunt Frances in Huntington, Long Island for recovery; they made certain that my diet was always Kosher and Halal, and I never asked them to do that. I give Kudos to Uncle Harold, because that was his wife and because of him that respect was rendered to me.

One of the most unexpected and cherished moments that I wish to share is when Uncle Harold and his son: Ronald Roots (my first cousin) called me on my Birth Anniversary last year (May 17, 2022, Tuesday) and Uncle Harold began playing the theme from the "Godfather" movie. And mimicking Don Corleone; we had a joyous laugh. It really touched me because it let me know that my Beloved Uncle (my Mother's brother) was paying attention to me.

Uncle Harold's daughter: Darlene is my first cousin as well.

Whenever I spoke to My Uncle Harold, he always said that he loved me and that he loved all his FAMILY! I believed him.

RIP UNC.

You will be missed by me.

I love you and all Our FAMILY!

Your Nephew:

Genghis Khalid Muhammad (A/K/A GKM)

(Third Generation)

Genghis Khalid Muhammad - December 18, 2023 at 01:38 PM

DA

Thank you cuz for the beautiful memories you share about dad. Yes, he spoke of you with love. Darlene

Darlene - December 26, 2023 at 09:41 PM

MR

“ *Mary Rollins lit a candle in memory of Mr. Harold T. Roots*



Mary Rollins - December 18, 2023 at 12:04 PM

VN

“ *Veral Neal lit a candle in memory of Mr. Harold T. Roots*



Veral Neal - December 15, 2023 at 09:27 PM

PA

“ *Phyllis Askrw lit a candle in memory of Mr. Harold T. Roots*



Phyllis Askrw - December 15, 2023 at 08:49 AM

YF

“ *Your MSD Parks Family purchased the Rainbow Of Remembrance Spray for the family of Mr. Harold T. Roots.*



Your MSD Parks Family - December 14, 2023 at 09:53 AM

VR

“ *Vangeline Rollins sent a virtual gift in memory of Mr. Harold T. Roots*



Vangeline Rollins - December 13, 2023 at 08:48 PM

JJ

“ *Jaymon Johnson lit a candle in memory of Mr. Harold T. Roots*



Jaymon Johnson - December 13, 2023 at 09:57 AM



“ *Charles Bufford sent a virtual gift in memory of Mr. Harold T. Roots*



Charles Bufford - December 10, 2023 at 08:03 AM

LD

“ *Laura Dechter purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Mr. Harold T. Roots.*



Laura Dechter - December 08, 2023 at 08:57 AM

MM

“ *Myra Jan Malone lit a candle in memory of Mr. Harold T. Roots*



Myra Jan Malone - December 07, 2023 at 04:21 PM

MP

“ *Marvalene Parks lit a candle in memory of Mr. Harold T. Roots*



Marvalene Parks - December 07, 2023 at 11:38 AM

EF

“ Elliott & Mona Johnson And Family lit a candle in memory of Mr. Harold T. Roots



Elliott & Mona Johnson and Family - December 07, 2023 at 11:37 AM

RH

“ Renea Hall sent a virtual gift in memory of Mr. Harold T. Roots



Renea Hall - December 05, 2023 at 08:34 PM

FL

“ Frazier Lyons lit a candle in memory of Mr. Harold T. Roots



Frazier Lyons - December 05, 2023 at 07:45 PM

SB

“ Sylvia Bachman lit a candle in memory of Mr. Harold T. Roots



Sylvia Bachman - December 05, 2023 at 04:24 PM

LB

“ *Lynn & Rayetta Bachman lit a candle in memory of Mr. Harold T. Roots*



Lynn & Rayetta Bachman - December 05, 2023 at 09:13 AM

MR

“ *Mary (Cissy) Rollins lit a candle in memory of Mr. Harold T. Roots*



Mary (Cissy) Rollins - December 04, 2023 at 10:56 AM