



Elaine M. Hairston

April 14, 1934 - April 8, 2019

Elaine Marie (Clay) Hairston was born April 14, 1934 in Baltimore, MD. She was called home by our Lord on Monday, April 8, 2019 at Johns Hopkins Hospital. Elaine was the third child, and first daughter of James H. and Marie Bratton Clay. She grew up with four brothers, Leon, Rodger, Donald and Larry and two sisters, Thelma and Barbara Joan. All of her siblings pre-deceased her. Just 4 days ago, Palm Sunday, would have been Elaine's 85th birthday.

Elaine was a happy child. She had a big and long braids. The family lived on East 23rd Street and she and her brothers walked to School #113. The public school around the corner from the family home was "all white" at that time. She enjoyed the summer family trips to the beach and to Atlantic City, NJ. Elaine loved to sing and dance. One of her favorite singes was Nat "King" Cole. Elaine decided when she was 12 years old that when she grew up, she would marry him.

She began her secretarial training at the Cortez Peters School. In 1953, Elaine was hired and began a long career working for the federal government at the Proving Ground in Aberdeen, MD. She would ride the train every morning from Baltimore to work, but later moved to Aberdeen. Hers was a strong work ethic, something she learned from both her hard working parents. She remembers singing at her desk and whenever she would walk through the office. She liked her job as finance clerk, and she liked being around people. She retired in 1988 and was able to enjoy traveling and living her life to the fullest.

Elaine met and married McCoy "Mac" Hairston in Edgewood, MD. Together, they raised her son, John. Elaine was a devoted wife and mother, traits she learned from her father and mother. She always encouraged John in his academic endeavors. She laughed about a turtle he once found in the grass and brought inside out of the rain. Mother Elaine had to explain to John why it was OK for "Mr Turtle" to live outside and not on his bed. Elaine enjoyed hearing about his fascination with riding on roller coasters all over the country. She was so proud to see him in a tuxedo, going to the prom. And she was so proud of his musical achievements.

Elaine and husband Mac enjoyed military and social events and traveling for many years. He later became ill and Elaine became his full-time caregiver until he passed away in 1979. She had several offers but she never remarried. Elaine was a nurturer and became

the primary caregiver for both of her parents and her older brother, RODger, and for her beloved son, John, who passed away in 1985. Elaine remained in close contact with her step-son, Arnold Hairston III, who lives in Killene, Texas.

Elaine joined bowling leagues and made many new friends. She bowled at Woodlawn or at the Post on Route 40 in Edgewood. She would frequently call her brother Donald to share exciting news of her team's wins and her own high scores. At that time, Elaine bowled on Tuesday and Wednesdays and her highest game was 244. She was aiming for that perfect 300. Donald kept her scores on a board next to his favorite sports teams' scores.

Elaine and Donald were always close as brother and sister as they were only 18 months apart. She always wrote to him when he joined the military and was stationed overseas in Europe, Northern Africa and Korea. In 1968, Elaine and sister, Barbara Joan, stood proudly with Donald at his wedding to Linda, in Washington, DC.

In 1998, Elaine and Donald traveled together to Minneapolis to celebrate a Bratton family reunion with members of their mother's family. In 2009, Elaine surprised Don by attending his big 75th birthday dinner party. Both were tearful at this reunion, as Don had recently survived acute leukemia and chemotherapy. God had truly blessed both of them with long lives. They spent many hours on the phone discussing current events, updating family news and sharing memories of growing up in Baltimore. Elaine always enjoyed hearing about her nieces' and great nieces' academic and athletic accomplishments and Don was always proud to share. She and Don would always recite the Lord's Prayer before hanging up the phone. When Don passed away in 2017, Elaine would survive all of her siblings.

Elaine's beloved dogs, Sadie and Jake died, and her constant companion became the "ex feral" cat she affectionately called "Stinky". They spent many hours sitting on the sofa, watching Judge Judy and listening to her favorite religious programs and big band music on the television.

Elaine had a kind word and generous heart for everyone she came in contact with. She made friends wherever she went. She lived by her Bratton Family Pledge: "to love one another; to encourage one another; to reach out to one another; to challenge one another; to console one another; to tell one another the truth; to forgive one another; to share a kind word; to share a smile; to pray for one another; to lift one another's spirits; to remember our roots and to love, respect and honor the Bratton Family and the Bratton Name". Elaine had a kind and generous heart and strong faith in God.

Elaine is survived by her step-son Arnold Hairston III and his family; sister-in-law, Linda Clay; nieces, Tanya Clay Burton (Leonard), and Tracey Clay; great nieces, Daphne, Lauren and Chloe. She will also be remembered by her long-time friend, Ms. Deborah Holton and many other dear friends and her special neighbors, so cherished. Thank you to Deborah all of the care that you provided to Elaine.

Cemetery

Trinity United Methodist Church Cemetery

1926 Connolly Road
Fallston, MD, 21047

Events

APR **Wake** 10:00AM - 10:30AM

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March Funeral Homes - East Baltimore
1101 East North Avenue, Baltimore, MD,
US, 21202

APR **Service** 10:30AM

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Comments



“ We the March Family and Staff wish to extend our deepest and heartfelt sympathy in the passing of your loved one. Our prayers go out to you and your family in your time of loss. We know and understand that you have received many expressions of love and we will continue to lift you up in prayer. May the memories you cherish of brighter and happier days help to ease your sorrow and comfort you always.

March Funeral Homes - April 12 at 11:04 AM