



Gordon Collins

February 13, 1935 - January 23, 2017

"Death Shatters The Present and Crystallizes The Past." Our present was shattered on January 23, 2017, when Gordon Morton Collins passed away peacefully, in his home, with Carolyn at his side.

"Lefty/Pops," as he was affectionately known by his family and friends, was born on February 13, 1935, at University Hospital, in Baltimore, Maryland. He was the youngest of nine children of Helen Queen Victoria Sye and was educated in the Baltimore City School System.

Living in the background of a segregated Baltimore, Lefty was always industrious; first, working in Lexington Market, at Santoni Brothers produce stand, setting up fruit. If there was a mark on the fruit, he was told to throw it away but he would hide it and carry it home to his family. He built a wagon so he could transport his "clients/neighbors" groceries to their homes in the market area. He also took pride in his Afro route, inherited from his brother, Jerome. His brother Thomas(Mope), taught him how to manually set pins at a white bowling alley, while quickly jumping out of the way of bowlers who purposely tried to injure them. Later in Life, he became a duckpin champion. While he may not have known it, Lefty was nurturing his work ethic; he did, however, recognize how much he enjoyed being able to buy the latest styles. His favorite style was his "Cowboy Persona," boots, hats, shirts, buckles and all! AND THAT SMILE!!!

In 1953, at his mother's request, his friend, Dukey's father, Herman Gray, "dragged" him down to Bethlehem Steel's Shipyard, to a journey that would end forty-four years later, when he retired in 1997. Lefty spoke often and angrily, about how Blacks had to start in the labor department, making the least amount of money, doing the dirtiest jobs and not being allowed to learn any higher paying trade jobs. He never forgot the segregated locker rooms, eating areas, and the Black and white bathrooms. In 1968, after Martin Luther King's assassination, Federal laws changed and the shipyard was ordered to open all jobs to everyone. He immediately applied to the welding department and was accepted. If any of his white co-workers tried to see how he welded so precisely, he would light an "arc," to blind them. He liked to say, "This left hand made me one the Class A-1 welders in the shipyard." He was very proud of this!

In 1956, he married Elsie McNeil and that union produced his daughters, Laurie Kimberly and Stephanie. In 1957, Lefty was drafted into the U.S. Army. He forgot to inform the draft board that he was married and had a child. He told many stories of how he went AWOL, many times, and was disciplined, because he missed his family.

Lefty and his brother, Jerome, were the patriarchs of a six generation family. He truly loved his family and enjoyed attending all family functions. He was especially proud to be "Father of the Brides" for Laurie and Kimberly and proud "Pops" at all of his grands and great-grands school affairs and graduations, as well as those of his huge extended family. At many of these gatherings, he would make his famous statement, "Get to know your relatives before you find yourselves dating them!"

Lefty joined the Arch Social Club, one of the oldest Black private clubs in the United States, in 1965, when the club was on Arch and Saratoga Streets and

was a life member.

Lefty always said, "When I retire, I'm going to drink every day instead of just on weekends." Luckily, in 1989, circumstances mad him seek out the Mustard Seed A.A. Group. He always credited the Mustard Seed with saving his life. He faithfully attended meetings, many times with Carolyn, where they made many friends. Thank You.

Lefty and Carolyn knew each other in the 1950's, when he lived on Lexington Street and she lived in the Edgar Allen Poe Homes, across the street. Carolyn's chance meeting his niece Catherine, in 1974, brought them together...forever. Her children, Renay and Nathaniel accepted him and he accepted them. Though they didn't marry until 1989 (her procrastination), they enjoyed spending time with both families, at all types of functions. She loved to dance, he didn't, but tried for her; he loved to drink, she didn't, but handled it for him. Both loved to travel, just as long as he was back in Baltimore within two weeks! Differences, of course, but they made it work, for almost forty-three years.

He leaves to cherish fond memories, his devoted wife and caretaker, Carolyn, loving daughters, Laurie Williams (Kevin), Kimberly Williams (Norman) and Stephanie Collins; six grandchildren, Shelton Simonson, Deron Proctor (Chaunda), Colbee Johnson, Tristin Dorsey, Sharon Collins, Courtney Brown and "special" grand, Jordan Myers; twwo great-granddaughters, Jayla Saunders and Kamara Dorsey; brother, Jerome Collins (Jesse), sixteen nieces and nephews, many 2nd, 3rd, and 4th great generations of nieces and nephews, step-children, Renay Alexander and Nathaniel Alexander, three brothers-in-law, four other sisters-in-law and their families and a host of other relatives and friends, some lifelong.

Cemetery Details

Garrison Forest Veterans

11501 Garrison Forest Road
Owings Mills, MD

Previous Events

Public Viewing

FEB 7. 8:30 AM - 8:00 PM (ET)

March Funeral Homes - West Baltimore
4300 Wabash Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21215
(410) 542-2400
info@marchfh.com

Family Hour

FEB 7. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

March Funeral Homes - West Baltimore
4300 Wabash Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21215
(410) 542-2400
info@marchfh.com

Wake

FEB 8. 11:00 AM - 11:30 AM (ET)

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Service

FEB 8. 11:30 AM (ET)

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Tribute Wall



“ *Gordon Collins*

October 13, 2022 at 08:33 AM



“ *Carolyn & Family,*

My deepest sympathy for your loss. If I may be of service to you feel free to call on me. RIP Lefty Collins. My late father was also employed at Bethlehem Steel. Professors at UMBC made a documentary about Sparrows Point, I'm going to share Mr. Collins obit with them.

Karen E. Sutton, BAAHGS Member

Karen E. Sutton - February 11, 2017 at 05:44 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Gordon Collins.*

February 07, 2017 at 02:32 PM





“ So sorry for your loss.



Serena Mosteller - February 03, 2017 at 09:01 AM



“ 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 - February 01, 2017 at 02:40 PM