



## John Wesley Henson Sr.

May 4, 1919 - August 10, 2010

John Wesley Henson, Sr. son of the late Solomon and Lelia Henson, born May 4, 1919, was called home to eternal rest on August 10, 2010 after a long illness. He was predeceased by his wife, the late Mildred Odessa Burton Henson (November 8, 2004). Big John, as he was know affectionately, was reared in Lincoln, Delaware by his Uncle John (for whom he was named) and his Aunt Ella. As a child he accepted Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior. His Uncle John and Aunt Ella were devoted Methodists who made sure that their nephew was baptized at an early age. John was a devout Christian who expressed his love for the Lord in his kindness to others and through his gift for singing. At the time of his passing, he was a member of Trinity Presbyterian Church in Baltimore, where he served as a deacon.

After graduating from high school in 1937, John matriculated to the learn Delaware State College (now University) where he would later, not only earn his Bachelor Degree in Biology, but would be inducted into the Delaware State University Hall of Fame. While in college John became active in college life as a charter member of the Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity and continued his high school passion for football as the team's star fullback and running back. His college career was interrupted by military service and he was drafted into the United States Armed Forces during World War II. John was first stationed in Trenton, New Jersey; but later would be assigned to a tour of duty in the South Pacific where he admirably earned the rank of First Sergeant.

Following an honorable discharge from military service, John completed his bachelor's degree as one of the first servicemen to benefit from the G.I. Bill Liberty of Congress in Washington, D.C. After several years of distinguished service, John began his career with the United States Postal Service where he was honored after thirty-three of outstanding service. John retired from the Postal Service in 1984.

While in Baltimore, John met and married Mildred Burton (the result of an introduction by her dear friend, the late Theola Brooks Hall). They would remain married for fifty-six years. The union between John and Mildred was ordained by God who blessed them with four beautiful children to whom they were devoted. Big John was an active "hands-on father" who would change diapers, feed, nurture and discipline all four children on a par equal with his wife Mildred- a parenting practice uncommon among American fathers during this period in history. John and Mildred provided their children with a comprehensive upbringing which included a strong Christian foundation, encouragement and nurturing during their formative elementary, middle and high school years and opportunities for self-exploration through sports and arts education.

John loved his family and considered them to be his greatest accomplishment in life. They are John Wesley, Jr. and Muriel Lisa (both Deceased), Arnold Matthew and Terri Jean. John enjoyed visiting his children whether they were in the Ivory Coast, Virginia or California. In 1996, Marie drove her grandparents, John Sr. and Mildred to the fiftieth anniversary reunion of the Delaware State class of 1946 of which John was a member. This was an exciting weekend celebration for all whom were present.

There were only ten surviving members of his class and John an opportunity to process with them for one last time. This was an exhilarating experience for

John who participated and a memorable one for Mildred and Marie who observed the event.

Big John loved music and sang with the choirs at Trinity Presbyterian Church, the Heritage United Church of Christ and the Olton Singers. He was a vocal scholarship recipient at the Peabody Preparatory where he learned to sing in Italian and German. In recent years John could be heard singing at his friends and family would gather around the piano. John's full baritone voice would soar powerfully above the others. Trinity Church parishioners will remember how his voice captivated everyone when he was honored at a surprise celebration given in recognition of his eighty-ninth birthday. John was an avid sports fan who viewed sports regularly on television- especially football. Recently, Big John celebrated his ninety-first birthday with close family and friends.

John Wesley Henson, Sr., Christian husband and father, veteran, sports enthusiast and gifted singer is survived by and leaves to forever mourn their loss: his devoted children, son, Arnold Matthew, M.D. (Teresa) of Laguna Beach, California; and daughter, Terri Jean of Owings Mills, Maryland; a brother, Solomon Henson (Shirley) of Randallstown, Maryland; sister, Antoinette Green (Russell) of Camden, New Jersey; daughter-in-law, Dorothy Henson of Springfield, Virginia; grandchildren, Monique Sylla of Silver Spring, Maryland, Marie Sylla-Dixon (Hank) of Alexandria, Virginia, Andrew Henson of Charlottesville, Virginia, Ashley Henson of Springfield, Virginia, and Dana Henson Knighton (Patrick) of Arizona; a host of other relatives and friends.

# Cemetery Details

## Garrison Forest Veterans

11501 Garrison Forest Road  
Owings Mills, MD

# Previous Events

## Visitation

AUG 17. 8:30 AM - 8:00 PM (ET)

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

## Wake

AUG 18. 11:00 AM - 11:30 AM (ET)

Trinity Presbyterian Church  
3200 Walbrook Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21217

## Service

AUG 18. 11:30 AM (ET)

Trinity Presbyterian Church  
3200 Walbrook Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21217



# Tribute Wall



“ *John Wesley Henson Sr.*

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October 13, 2022 at 08:33 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.*

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**March Funeral Homes** - August 13, 2010 at 03:12 PM