



## Mary Gregory

June 28, 1918 - January 22, 2018

MARY GREGORY died peacefully on the morning of January 22, 2018, in her 100th year of life. She was a resident at the Britton Woods Nursing Home in Pikesville, Maryland at the time of her death.

She was born Mary Henderson, around June 28, 1918 in Baltimore, Maryland to Mary Elizabeth Henderson, originally of King George, Virginia. Her mother was a victim of the Spanish flu pandemic and died on December 27, 1918. Little Mary, or "Tootsie", as she was known to her family and friends, was raised by her maternal grandmother, Josephine, along with her other orphaned siblings, Gladys, Charles, and Alice. Her grandmother Josephine, like her mother, was a housemaid. Josephine carried the infant Mary to work with her in a basket, so that she could continue to support the family. Mary never knew her father.

On her first day of school, when the teacher took attendance and called for Mary Henderson, she didn't answer because "Tootsie" was the only name she knew. Mary enjoyed school and excelled. An independent and hard-working girl, she always had a part-time job scrubbing the famous marble steps of East Baltimore or working odd jobs at Mrs. Teter's boarding house on Preston Street. She always told the story of how proud she was to earn enough money to buy a new book bag for school. On the first day she carried the book bag to school, she was bullied lost that day and never bothered Tootsie again. The

story illustrates that although she was friendly and caring, she was also proud and tough.

Mary later attended Dunbar High School before marrying Burnet "Bernie" Gregory on May 10, 1934. Her first child, Bernard Charles Gregory, was born in September 1934. Ronald Maurice Gregory was born in 1936, Norman Lee Gregory in 1937, and Donald Douglas Gregory in 1939. These were tough years for a young couple with children during the Depression and World War II years. They lived in several places in West Baltimore, while Bernie worked a number of different jobs to sustain the family. Around 1940, Mary heard about a new housing development being built in West Baltimore for "Colored" families. She wasn't sure what the qualifications were, but she was determined to get one of those new apartments for her family. She succeeded and later moved into McCulloh Homes. In the newspapers of the day, it was described as "...the First Negro housing project...planned to offer a splendid barrier against the encroachment of colored: into an adjacent "good white residential neighborhood (Bolton Hill) in 1942". The "projects" turned out to be a godsend for Mary and Bernie. They were able to raise their boys in a nice, clean and safe environment; with good schools nearby. Even though it was built with segregation in mind, it was pretty good deal for the Gregory family.

She and Bernie struggled, but always found a way to provide what their boys needed and sometimes what they wanted. After the war, Mary had three more children-Victor Donlevey Gregory in 1948, Paulette Gregory in 1950, and Rodney Gregory in 1952.

Mary was preceded in death by: her husband and three sons, Bernard, Donald, and Victor. She is survived by her remaining four children, Ronald, Norman, Paulette and Rodney; nine grandchildren, Angela, Norman, Todd, Linda, Eric, David, Kristin, Mary, and Joshua; and seven great-grandchildren, Parrissa, Erica, Cameron, Sophia, Daniel Michael and Audrey.



# Previous Events

## Wake

FEB 9. 11:00 AM - 11:30 AM (ET)

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

## Memorial Service

FEB 9. 11:30 AM (ET)

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

# Tribute Wall



“ *Mary Gregory*

---

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.*

---

**March Funeral Homes** - January 29, 2018 at 02:30 PM