



Owen Eugene Francis, I

March 25, 1934 - July 14, 2024

Owen Eugene Francis was born in Cherry Hill, New Jersey on March 25, 1934, Owen heard the Master's trumpet as he quietly entered eternal rest on Sunday, July 14, 2024. He is the youngest of the late Harold and Evelyn Francis two sons. He was blessed with a long life and is preceded in death by his parents; brother Harold, Jr.; sister-in-law Bertha; former wives, Andrea Michele Lewis Francis and Faye Anna Burden Francis; two daughters, Deborah Jean Francis and Georgianna Lewis Johnson and a great grandchild.

Owen matriculated through the New Jersey public school system and graduated from Southside High School which is now known as Shabazz High School in Newark, New Jersey. As a teenager, Owen discovered his love of music and was a gifted trumpet player and singer. While still a very young man, at the age of eighteen he married his first wife Mildred Adams Francis and out of that union was born two daughters, Patricia Lyn and Deborah Jean Francis (deceased). Pursuing his love for the entertainment world, Owen spent a lot of time away from home, working in clubs, traveling with bands and performing all over the world. Throughout the 1950s and sixties he played the trumpet in numerous jazz bands, including playing for famous jazz singer Nat King Cole. He also did some acting, performing in plays off

Broadway, such as “Driving Miss Daisy” and “Othello”, even playing each Christmas in the “The Messiah”.

Known as a charming ladies’ man, Owen was a smooth talker and as time passed his first marriage ended.

He later met and married Andrea Michele Lewis (deceased) who brought into this relationship her

daughter, Georgianna Lewis (deceased) and from this union they had a son, Owen Lamont Francis. As

an adult, he worked for a paint company called Reliant and maintained two jobs to take care of his family.

Determined to be a better father and role model for his son, Owen took his son everywhere with him,

teaching him about life. He’d point out the different people on the streets in the neighborhood, sharing life

lessons on what to do and not to do in order not to end up like the prostitutes and drug dealers. Every

Sunday, he’d take Lamont to church with him to hear him sing in the choir where he'd sing the Episcopal

hymns in Latin and English. Their father and son bond remained close through his lifetime and is a staple

in Owen’s family legacy.

In 2005, Owen married his last wife, Faye Anna Burden (deceased) and they were together until her death

in November 2020. During his later years he enjoyed working for a company that gave out free samples

in Costco Wholesale. His favorite breakfast was cheerios and fruit cups, that he ate daily. He lived his life

on his own terms and he’d greet everyone with a “What’s up Doc” and if he’d have to step away, he’d say

“gonna be right back”. He also would say “Hey, hold on a minute, gotta go see a man about a horse” when he needed to be excused. Owen continued living independently in his New Jersey home, driving himself around and remained in good condition until he became ill a couple of months prior to his death. Those closest to him will treasure the many moments shared over the years, moments like in March on his 90th birthday, dining out in his special restaurant on the river overlooking New York City.

Owen is survived by his daughter, Patricia Lyn Francis; son, Owen Lamont (Chante`) Francis; Grandchildren: Laroy, Lamont and Lonnel Melton; Al-tariq Suggs; Jaimon Lewis; Alexis, Mikayla and Madisen Francis; nine living great grandchildren, and one great-great grandchild, and a host of nieces, nephews and other relatives

Previous Events

Visitation Prior to Service

JUL 25. 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

March Funeral Home-Laburnum Ave.
2110 E. Laburnum Ave.
Richmond, VA 23222

Celebration of life with live streaming

JUL 25. 11:00 AM (ET)

March Funeral Home -Laburnum Chapel
2110 E. Laburnum Ave.
Richmond, VA 23222

Tribute Wall



“ *March Funeral Homes created a Webcast in memory of Owen Eugene Francis, I*



March Funeral Homes - July 17, 2024 at 12:21 PM

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“ *I'm going to miss my friend Owen. I'm gonna miss his humor, his witty words, his stories that would either make me laugh or make me think. Lamont, he was so very proud that you were able to take him to such a nice 90th birthday dinner. He did enjoy it. I worked with Owen at Costco. He helped to make our shift fun. Big O you will be truly missed my condolences to the family.*

Lorraine - September 15, 2024 at 10:10 AM



“ *Ocean Breeze Spray was purchased for the family of Owen Eugene Francis, I.*



July 24, 2024 at 02:03 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Owen Eugene Francis, I.*



July 19, 2024 at 12:18 PM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Owen Eugene Francis, I.*



July 19, 2024 at 11:50 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 - July 17, 2024 at 12:17 PM