



William Houston Jr.

August 3, 2017

Mr. William Houston, Jr., outstanding New Orleans musician and retired music educator entered into eternal rest on Thursday, August 3, 2017 at Tranquility Hospice in Atlanta, GA at the age of 83. A native of New Orleans, William was born on November 14, 1933. He was the son of the late locally celebrated musician William Houston, Sr. and the late dedicated teacher Ruby Nicholas Houston. Educated in New Orleans, William attended Valena C. Jones Elementary School, Gilbert Academy, and McDonough #35 Senior High School. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Xavier University in 1956 and later received his Masters degree from Loyola University in New Orleans.

Williams' gift for music was displayed at an early age. He played piano for Sunday school and Special Programs at St. John Divine Baptist Church beginning at the age of four. He attended Valena C. Jones Elementary School where he played for every school program from Kindergarten to Sixth Grade. He began formal music training with his father and then continued his training with the late Thelma Fields Taylor and he also studied under the late Osceola Blanchet. While attending McDonough #35 Senior High School, he played on the Horace Heidt Show and also won numerous awards, trophies and plaques for outstanding performances on other occasions.

William Houston Jr. studied the Hammond Organ under the late Dr. Orin Clayton Southern III at Dillard University. He later entered Xavier University and studied under the guidance of the late Dr. Ishvan Nadas. He won first

place and a college scholarship in the national competition of National Association of Negro Musicians (NANM) that was held in Chicago. He worked as an organist, pianist, and Choir Director at several churches in New Orleans for many years. William Jr. utilized his musical talent directing many church choirs in the New Orleans area. He was baptized at St. John Divine Baptist Church on April 16, 1948. He directed choirs at St. John Divine Baptist Church, Gloryland Mount Gillion Baptist Church, Fifth African Baptist Church, Mount Zion United Methodist Church and others. He also taught music and directed Choirs and Bands in the New Orleans Public School System. His career began at Booker T. Washington High School, then he moved on to George Washington Carver Junior High School and Joseph S. Clark Senior High School.

With the passing of his father in 1972 he continued the legacy of Houston's for Music, founded by William Sr. in 1954 for eighteen years. The Houston School of Music trained many young musicians, including hundreds of veterans on the GI plan. With Houston's for Music as his foundation, William Jr. became the first African-American Hammond Organ dealer in the nation.

For his accomplishments in Music, he has received several awards including awards from New Orleans Mayors' Moon Landrieu, Ernest Morial, Sidney Barthelemy, and Marc Morial, the New Orleans Urban League Award in 1993, the Amistad Research Center Achievement Award in 2000 and the 2007 Preservation Resource Center Award.

The William Houston Orchestra was legendary in Southeastern Louisiana. The orchestra and its music were constantly requested for Mardi Gras Balls, conventions, and social events. His orchestra was featured at the The Original Illinois, Macados, the Kappa Black and White, the Zulu Brunch, the Bunch Ball, Urban League Gala, The Young Men Illinois, Bonanza Ball, The Jug Buddies, and the Delta Cotillion to mention a few. His whole life has been dedicated to teaching youth and adults and bringing Great Music to New Orleans for worship and entertainment.

William is survived by his loving wife of 18 years Elnora Green Houston

(Atlanta, GA); brother Michael C Houston and wife Gloria (Vallejo, CA); sister Denise Houston Rhea and husband Lawrence (Memphis, TN); son William Houston III and wife Katrina (New Orleans, LA); daughter, Roxayne Houston Strong and husband, Harold (Denton, TX); step-daughter, Donelle Humphrey Franklin and husband, Terrance (Atlanta, GA). His greatest joy was being "PawPaw" to Ashlei Yorgensen and husband, Jason (Culpepper, VA), William Houston IV (New Orleans, LA), Cameron Franklin (Atlanta, GA), Kandace Houston (New Orleans, LA), and Faith Strong (Denton, TX). William Jr. was also the great-grandfather of Noella and Genevieve Yorgensen (Culpepper, VA). He is also survived by a host of cousins, nieces, nephews, and other relatives and friends.

Visitation will be held Saturday, August 12, 2017, from 9:00 to 11:00 at Mount Zion United Methodist Church, 2722 Louisiana Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70115. Funeral services will be held immediately after at 11 a.m. at the church. Internment services will be held at Mount Olivet, 4000 Norman Mayer Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70122, following the funeral service. Reverend Ronald J. Southall will be officiating. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that contributions in memory of "William Houston, Jr." be sent to:

Xavier University of Louisiana

PO Box 650658

Dallas, TX 75265-9915

or online at <http://www.xula.edu/alumni/giving.html>.

Arrangements by DW Rhodes Funeral Home, 3933 Washington Ave.; Please visit www.rhodesfuneral.com to sign the guest book.

Cemetery Details

Mt. Olivet Cemetery

4000 Norman Mayer Ave.
New Orleans, LA 70122

Previous Events

Visitation

AUG 12. 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Mt. Zion United Methodist Church
2722 Louisiana Ave.
New Orleans, LA 70115

Service

AUG 12. 11:00 AM (CT)

Mt. Zion United Methodist Church
2722 Louisiana Ave.
New Orleans, LA 70115

Tribute Wall



“ *William Houston, was a man among men. His God gifted talents, were second to none. The world of New Orleans music, has lost a legend.*

Andrea Smith - August 25, 2017 at 04:10 PM



“ *Andrea Smith lit a candle in memory of William Houston Jr.*



Andrea Smith - August 25, 2017 at 04:06 PM