



Robert Hairston

December 31, 1969 - June 18, 2010

Obituary of Robert Hairston
A JOURNEY OF 100 YEARS
It is often said that the history of the United States is a "quilt made of many patches." This is illustrative of the life of Robert Powell Hairston whose sunset was Friday, June 18, 2010, 24 days prior to his 101st birthday and, the same date on which his sister Elizabeth McDuffy Purnell died in 1987. Robert Hairston's sunrise was a Monday, July 12, 1909. Robert and Elizabeth were born to Dora Mae Poole Lewis of Brooklyn, New York and McDuffy Hairston of Port Chester, New York. From a previous marriage his mother had a daughter Mildred Lewis Gant. The new family lived with Robert's maternal grandfather, known as and "Pop" Poole. Poole was of African American and Shinnecock Indian Nation of Long Island, New York heritage. The family moved to Port Chester, New York where Robert's father was employed, until retirement, as building custodian and guard for the Port Chester National Bank. Coming to live with the family was Robert's paternal grandmother, Mary Jane Hairston. Mary Jane was born a slave on the Hairston plantation in Coolemeo Winston Salem, North Carolina. The Hairston's came from Scotland and were the wealthiest plantation owners in all of America. They owned up to 10,000.00 slaves and also traded in slaves. Mary Jane was given to the plantation owner's friend, a Dr. Withers, with whom she bore five children one of which was Robert Powell's father, McDuffy Hairston. After she was freed she worked in a tobacco factory. Robert attended the Port Chester public schools. During the "Great Depression" he worked clearing woods and forests with the Civilian Conservation Corps one

of the New Deal programs of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's. Later, he worked for the U.S. Postal Service in Port Chester. During the Depression he experienced unemployment and he and his bride hired on as sleep-in maid, butler and chauffeur. In February 1942, during World War II, Robert sought employment as a driller/welder at the United States Naval Shipyard in Brooklyn, New York, where he and thousands of others kept our Navy afloat, ultimately contributing to our victory over tyranny. After the war he returned to the U. S. Postal Service, rising to the level of Foreman until his retirement in 1968. In 1932 he met an attractive young woman from Harlem, New York by way of Trinidad, West, Indies, Hilda Ursula Stephen. They were wed July 22, 1933 for 65 years until her passing in 1998. Surviving him are their two children Robert Jr. of Jackson, Mississippi and Judith Ursula Rosenbauer of Germany/ England. To cherish the memories of Robert Powell Hairston, he is survived by are three nieces, seven grandchildren, two step-grandchildren, eleven great grandchildren and three step-great grandchildren. They reside in America, England and Germany. Arrangements by ROBERTS FUNERAL HOMES, Bruce Chapel East 2739 SE Maricamp Rd. Ocala 352-732-9944

Tribute Wall

RV

“ *Psalms 91:14-16 (KJV) 14 Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. 15 He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him. 16 With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.*

Rev. Valentine Vit - June 24, 2010 at 12:00 AM

MC

“ *The staff of Roberts Funeral Homes and I would like to offer our condolences to your entire family during this difficult time.*

Michael Csuka - June 23, 2010 at 12:00 AM