



## Elbert J. Henry Jr

September 19, 1942 - November 28, 2020

Elbert James Henry, 78, of Birmingham, Alabama, passed away in Conyers, Georgia, on November 28, 2020. He grew up on Honeysuckle Hill, was a product of the Birmingham Public School System, and received salvation through his Lord, Jesus Christ, at an early age. Elbert had a decades-long federal career that began with the Social Security Administration in Birmingham and continued with his becoming an air traffic controller with the Federal Aviation Administration in Atlanta, Georgia. This led to a position at the Washington DC headquarters office where he traveled the world as the U.S. Government's representative on planning the future of satellite communication systems. Elbert was also an attorney and, after federal retirement, maintained an active law license as a member of the Georgia State Bar. Elbert was known for his generosity of spirit, often extending a hand with a willingness to give "his last" if it would help someone out of a difficult situation. Though he was quite passionate about his professional pursuits, his deep love for his family, friends, Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity brothers, and church family was evident in the way he lived. Elbert was a devoted member of Sixth Avenue Baptist Church and especially looked forward to meeting with his Sunday School class each week.

Elbert was preceded in death by his father Elbert J. Henry, Sr., mother Gladys Bonner, stepfather David Bonner Sr., and son, Imara Henry. He is survived by his daughter, Liana Henry; brothers David Bonner and Alfred Bonner; sisters

Anne Louise Hanna, Davetta White, Alfreda Bonner, and Nikki B. Lawrence, along with many nieces, nephews, great nieces, great nephews, cousins and friends.

A memorial celebration will be held via Zoom on Tuesday, December 8, 2020, at noon EST.

Please register in advance at:

[https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEkd-2orzwpEteRepWietj\\_XYfBbwwRKqAi](https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEkd-2orzwpEteRepWietj_XYfBbwwRKqAi)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Elbert was a huge supporter of education and cherished his years as an air traffic controller. In lieu of flowers, a contribution to the National Black Coalition for Federal Aviation Employees (NBCFAE) National Scholarship Fund can be made online at: [https://www.paypal.com/donate?hosted\\_button\\_id=PND5S3DKDJ798](https://www.paypal.com/donate?hosted_button_id=PND5S3DKDJ798)

Checks payable to NBCFAE can also be sent to:

NBCFAE National Treasurer

PO Box 155602

Fort Worth, TX 76155

All contributions will go to NBCFAE's National Scholarship which helps students interested in pursuing careers in aviation.

# Previous Events

## Memorial Celebration of Life

DEC 8. 12:00 PM.

Via Zoom

# Tribute Wall

SA

“ Sending my condolences to to Henry & Bonner family. May God bless you all with peace & comfort during your dark dark hours! I'm so sorry for ur loss.

Sincerely

Mrs. Sharon Patton Alexander of Birmingham, Alabama



---

**Sharon P. Alexander** - December 16, 2020 at 11:30 PM

HJ

“ My condolences to the Henry and Bonner families. 🙏🙏🙏

Harry and Angela James

---

**Harry James** - December 08, 2020 at 01:23 PM



“ My deepest sympathies Liana, I tried several times to get on via Zoom, then was over 100 people on. I have great memories of our families. Dinner with you all, musical encounters with the 3 amigos. and commuting back and forth between ATL and IAD. memories will never be forgotten. Love you! Johnetta

---

**Johnetta Green** - December 08, 2020 at 12:42 PM

SM

“ It is with sincere care and love that I sent condolences and prayers to the family of Mr. Elbert J, Henry,Jr. Your quiet demeanor and wise wisdom displayed at our Ullman Alumni meetings will be always remembered. Shirley C. Miller

---

**Shirley C Miller** - December 08, 2020 at 11:07 AM

DW

“ *Our deepest condolences to the family. May God give peace and comfort to all in the family. All our love to you from your Chicago family.*

---

**Diane Walker** - December 07, 2020 at 08:36 PM

FL

“ My deepest sympathy to Elbert's family. We've never met but I knew Elbert well when we worked together, many years ago.

*I first met Elbert in the late 1980's, when we were both working on the Automatic Dependent Surveillance System for FAA.*

*The first thing that struck me about him was, of course, the quiet person he was. The second thing I noticed was that he was always paying attention. He spoke when needed, but was always thinking. Although he didn't talk a lot, when he spoke, it was worth listening to. He liked a good laugh too, and we had plenty of those. But he was always focused precisely on his purpose, representing FAA and the United States. They couldn't have asked for a better person to do it.*

*We spent a lot of time at meetings in different places, including lots of time in Montreal, and of course the DC area. I don't remember any of the meetings, but I have great memories of some of the places. I remember the Montreal Jazz Festival, and walking on the beaches of New Caledonia - and Sydney, Australia, where we walked with him through half the town with only one mission: to buy a Hard Rock Café t-shirt!*

*I learned how to pick out ties from him. Not that he would know it, but he inspired me to that, just by me seeing the professional way in which he presented himself every day. He always wore a jacket with a nice tie, and now I do, too. Thank you, Elbert.*

*Later on, we shared a bond of sadness that no father wants ever to experience. He was devastated, and I wish I could have found some better words to help. But sometimes, there are none. All that helps is to have friends who stand by you. What followed were very difficult times, and I was very afraid for him. But he did find a way to recover, for which I was very thankful. He moved back home, and I didn't get to see him anymore. Still, at Christmas time, he would send me a little message, and we always had that bond. The words*

*weren't so important, but it was more his way of simply saying, "I remember."*

*I will miss him. I will always remember him as a person who wanted to do good for others. I never heard him speak harshly, say anything mean, or speak without thinking first. He was a true gentleman. A gentle man. Quiet, considerate and thoughtful.*

*A good man, and a good friend. I remember.*

*Frank Lorge*

---

**Frank Lorge** - December 07, 2020 at 03:30 PM

BH

*Rest in peace ELBERT you are missed by all the HANNA family including grands and great grands. We all love you.*

---

**Bobby Hanna** - December 08, 2020 at 09:15 AM

DI

“ *To my frat brother and friend I will miss the enlightened conversation we had at various holiday functions. Rest In Peace my brother for your light will shine forever through the live you touched. Douglas Jones III. APA*

---

**Douglas Jones III** - December 07, 2020 at 11:21 AM

F(

“ *Family of Rev. Earl & Mrs. Roberta Murray (Sam) purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Elbert J. Henry Jr.*



---

**Family of Rev. Earl & Mrs. Roberta Murray (Sam)** - December 07, 2020 at 10:29 AM

BK

“ Dear Liana & Family,

*It was my fortune to have known Elbert for the past 30 years. We met in November 1990 after I was invited to join the Federal Aviation Administration’s Satellite Communication & Navigation Program. Elbert was more involved in the operational side of this program while I was in research. After my retirement in 1997, we kept in close contact while we both lived in the Reston, VA area. I was aware of many sad times that Elbert lived through. I tried to help when & where I could, and now in good conscience I can say to Elbert: “Rest good servant of Christ where there is neither sickness, nor sorrow, nor sighing, but life everlasting. See you soon.”*

*Your friend,  
Bob Kaminsky & Family*

---

**Bob Kaminsky** - December 06, 2020 at 09:48 PM



“ Dearest Elbert. You found CAVU - Fly high good buddy!

*I extend my deepest sympathy and condolences to Elbert's family. He dearly loved his daughter Liana and always shared how very much she was doing for him when we spoke during this last 18-month journey. He was so proud of all she has accomplished and dearly appreciated all that she was doing for him. And he often spoke of his siblings, his brothers, and his loving sisters. He loved you all so very much.*

*I met Elbert over 30 years ago where he was working as the D.C. Air Traffic Controller representative on a major research and development project, entitled Automatic Dependent Surveillance (ADS). It was a program to develop a surveillance technique for aircraft to automatically provide, via a data link, data derived from on-board navigation and position-fixing systems, including aircraft identification, four-dimensional position, and additional data as appropriate. We worked together for more than a decade to develop the standards and recommended practices for this critical capability. Elbert represented the US FAA at International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) – a specialized agency of the United Nations. It changes the principles and techniques of international air navigation and fosters the planning and development of international air transport to ensure safe and orderly growth. We spent many years in Montreal developing the ADS SARP – Standards and Recommended Practices. That is where I learned that when Elbert spoke, I needed to listen. He did not say much but when he did, it was because it was important!*

*This program led to many others and a great deal of work supporting modernizing oceanic air traffic control. This took us to many exotic locations around the globe, including Alaska among other international destinations. The tragedy of one fateful trip to Alaska remains one of the saddest times of Elbert's life. The entire aviation community mourned with Elbert and watched and wondered what we could do to reduce his suffering. It was a dark*

*time for the family and Elbert lost his way for a while. Frank Lorge, Bob Kaminsky, and other colleagues worked hard to support him during those difficult years. Thank God, he found his way through that dark time.*

*I had my dark hours as well and lost my job. Elbert to the rescue! He hired me to support him at the FAA Headquarters. We continued to travel the globe to coordinate with many other countries and agencies around the world managing oceanic aviation air traffic control. We also worked on the data link message structure for the air traffic controllers, a program entitled Controller Pilot Data Link Communications (CPDLC). CPDLC is a two-way data-link system by which controllers can transmit non urgent 'strategic messages to an aircraft as an alternative to voice communications. This was critical to develop the automated systems on the ground to support more efficient and effective air traffic control. One of my fondest memories from that program was being in Japan with Elbert and Bruce Eckstein – two very tall gentlemen. Bruce wore a tall cowboy hat and cowboy boots, and Elbert was always impeccably dressed. We, three, were walking down a street in Kobe, Japan, when two Japanese came up to us and asked to take our picture – apparently the only English they knew was “Mod Squad”! They both towered over my small 5-foot, 3-inch structure, but I had the best laugh when we had to take off our shoes and sit for eating Kobe steak– they really struggled with that!*

*There are so many more stories and wonderful memories of this incredibly cool cat, gentle giant, and fine gentleman. Elbert I am playing your favorite Sam Cooke among your other favorite heartfelt jazz musicians, thinking of you...*

*With love and sympathy,  
Faye Francy*

---

**Faye Francy** - December 05, 2020 at 09:29 AM

TF

“ *Ted Bagley and Family purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Elbert J. Henry Jr.*



---

**Ted Bagley and Family** - December 04, 2020 at 09:22 PM

DD

“ *Oh God, HOW GRACIOUS it is of you to create heaven to encourage us. Because we know we have an eternal home with you, we don't have to worry about our earthly home falling down around us. Because we know we will have new bodies, free of disease and suffering, we can rejoice even in our afflictions. And because we know we will be reunited with our loved ones who go before us, we have a heavenly hope. Sometimes we feel like strangers on this earth, Lord, for we know that heaven is our real home. Thank you for encouraging us by showing us glimpses of heaven here on earth, in a sunset or a smile on your child's face so we can fully anticipate the glory to come. Amen  
May the peace of the lord be with you always*



---

**Dianne Dew** - December 04, 2020 at 05:51 PM

 Larry Foster

“ *To my Fellow Alpha and Original Honeysuckle Hill Boy, may you now receive your reward for your work on earth and rest in heavenly peace.  
Larry and Arnita Foster*

---

**Larry Foster** - December 03, 2020 at 05:41 PM

AW

*Al we are sorry about your loss!  
Arnold and Sunsiray*

-----  
**Arnold Whitmore** - December 03, 2020 at 06:27 PM

YH

*Hey Alfred,  
I am sorry to hear about Elbert. There is comfort in knowing that being  
absent from the body is being present with the Lord.  
Yvette*

-----  
**Yvette Hawkins** - December 04, 2020 at 08:45 AM

RJ

*My condolences and prayers to the family 🙏🙏  
Rosalyn Joyce*

-----  
**Rosalyn Joyce** - December 05, 2020 at 03:25 PM

RW

*Sorry to hear of Elbert's passing. A very fine gentleman in every  
respect, our thoughts and prayers to his family.*

-----  
**Robert Warren** - December 05, 2020 at 07:26 PM

DB

*My Sympathy and prayers pours out to the Henry family. I could not  
ask for better friend or co-worker when he came to work at the H&R  
Block tax office. He often shared his memories of his past places of  
employment, the lost of his son and the love for his daughter and how  
proud she had made him. May he rest in peace. Dora Barnes*

-----  
**Dora Barnes** - December 05, 2020 at 11:23 PM

RM

*To Each Family Member and Friend of Mr. Elbert "Elb" James Henry Jr.--may God comfort and strengthen you during this special moment set aside to mourn the passing of a soul that truly made a positive difference in our world. To know "Elb" was to love "Elb!". Even as a boy, growing-up on Honeysuckle Hill, he commanded the highest respect from both young and old--but his voice was never louder than a gentle echo. "Elb" possessed a depth of wisdom that stretched far beyond his years and peers. While Elb was a man whom everyone recognized as an intellectual giant; still, God blessed him with a unique sense of kindness and compassion that caused even the youngest infant to feel totally safe and protected in his presence. I was only about 5 or 6 years old when his twin siblings Alfreda and Alfred were born. During those hot summers when Elb's boyhood peers (which included my older brothers James, Earl Jr., and Lester) would often stop at his house and beg him to come join us to play baseball--Elb (who was a great pitcher) had to refuse their invitation because he was responsible for taking caring of his younger sisters and brothers. While I would hang around the house with Sonny, it gave me the opportunity to observe how carefully Elb would tend to the needs of his little sisters and brothers--ranging from changing diapers, giving baths, preparing meals, to warming and feeding the babies their bottles. This helped me better embrace the same responsibility of caring for my own three daughters (ages 3-7) after their mother became and ill with cancer and passed away after only 10 years of marriage. Now, after all the years that have passed, I look back and say "Thanks Elb" for this essential lesson in "Fatherhood" taught to me (with such a high degree of decency, dignity, and discipline) even though we were both just children. Now, may God continue to bless and keep you in his tender loving care. In the name of Jesus the Christ. Amen. "See you in the morning my Big Brother."*

---

**Rev. Dr. Samuel J. Murray** - December 07, 2020 at 09:21 AM

CJ

*I am Catherine Powell JoshuaAdonai. Elbert and I go back to the crib together. And were educated together all the way through Knoxville College. We both retired and returned to Birmingham after exciting careers that took us around the world and back and then some. When he first returned to Birmingham, my sister, Ruth, was confined to a nursing home and he faithfully visited her each week such diligence earned him along with several others the title Agape Friend Forever (AFF) conferred by the Powell family because of such love shown Ruth who passed in 2017. Elbert was loved and is already missed.*

*Dr. Catherine JoshuaAdonai, CA  
The Bible Counseling Ministries, Inc.*

---

**Catherine JoshuaAdonai** - December 24, 2020 at 09:57 PM