



Emma Louise Hamilton

December 26, 1947 - January 26, 2026

Emma Hamilton was born in Lakeland, Florida, on December 26, 1947, to Clarence Davis and Irene Carr. They raised her in the small town of Belle Glade, locally known as Muck City. Being the youngest of two, she was a curious and mischievous child. Her early years were filled with the adventure and hijinks that come hand in hand with growing up in the rural South of that time. She would spend summers alongside her nephew Robert, who was more like a brother to her due to them being so close in age, getting into all sorts of playful trouble.

After getting into trouble in school one day, she was punished with the task of working in the school library, organizing the books. Here, she began to read through the encyclopedia each day, learning all about the amazing things the world had to offer. This inspired her to travel and see more of that world. She would go on to attend Howard University, where she would further broaden her horizons during the time of the Black Power Movement and student-organized protests of the ills of the time. Her love for community and pride for her people was enriched and solidified by her experiences at Howard and in the city of Washington, D.C

She worked in the office of the ROTC professor who saw potential in Emma to do well in the military. Colonel Hood would advocate for Emma to take part in the Junior woman's program. In a time where the military was still unsure about the role and place for women in its ranks, Colonel Hood advocated for her with recruiters and encouraged Emma to consider serving.

Emma's mission to see the world was just beginning, and one of the first boxes she wanted to check on her list was to travel to Paris. With this goal in mind, she joined the U.S. Army. Off to basic training she went with dreams of the Eiffel Tower, gourmet chefs, and the Mona Lisa, only to receive her first assignment in the exotic state of Alabama. But this did not deter Emma, and she eventually made it to Paris and beyond, building a stellar military career along the way. She served in Military intelligence for 2 years before moving into the medical service corp. Throughout her career she would reach many milestones and receive several accolades. She was the first female commander of a Co-ed company and one of the very few black female officers at that time. After 23 years of service Emma would retire with the rank of Lt. Colonel.

She joined Delta Sigma Theta in (?) and has been an active member ever since. Leaning into her love for community and her penchant for legacy and sisterhood, she mentored many young new Deltas that crossed the sands behind her.

During her travels, Emma would develop a love for fine art that would ripen into a taste for African American artists specifically. Everything from rare and unique paintings to finely crafted dolls and figurines became a part of Emma's eclectic collecting avocation.

A love for history was always at the core of who she was. "Never forget your roots" was a mantra she kept to the very end. From a very young age, she had always had an interest in genealogy. During her retirement years, she became one of the most prominent members of the genealogical community. She sat on the board of the Georgia Genealogical society and was also the President of Atlanta chapter of Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society.

She delighted in discovering not only her own family tree and history but also that of her many friends and loved ones who expressed an interest in this knowledge. One of the many accolades of her genealogy career was having the Suzie King Taylor women's institute and Gullah Geechee museum

dedicate a collection of research books to her under the title “ Lt. Colonel Emma D Hamilton Retired US Army Library of the United States colored troupe”. Genealogy was Emma’s true calling and passion. She was happiest researching and sharing this knowledge with any who would listen and often stressed its importance for Black people in particular.

Emma’s life was one of love, strength, laughter, and legacy. She’d never met a stranger and always left those that she touched better off than when she met them. Her heart was huge, her spirit was warm, and her aura was nothing short of royal. We all have stars in our crown waiting for us when we get to heaven thanks to her. She gave us so many lessons on honoring those who came before us. We thank you, Empress. You will never be forgotten, and you can never be replaced. We celebrate your life today, and we continue to honor you with the way we live ours. Thank you for everything.

Emma was preceded in death by her parents, Irene Carr and Clarence Davis, and her beloved sister, Catherine Frazier. She leaves to cherish her memory her son, Brian Hamilton (wife Jainell C. Hamilton), and her grandchildren, Nadiyah Lewis and Navina Lewis. She is also lovingly remembered by Robert Frazier II, Robert Frazier III, Eric Frazier, Kayla Frazier, Chanelle Frazier, Zenobia Frazier, Jordan Frazier, Lacrechia Floyd, and Sydney Floyd. Emma’s heart extended far beyond family by blood—she was blessed with many adopted daughters, sons, and godchildren, all of whom she loved deeply.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Frazine K. Taylor Scholarship Fund in memory of Ms. Emma Davis Hamilton. Ms. Emma was deeply passionate about African American genealogy education and frequently served as a presenter for numerous local institutions and organizations. She was a devoted supporter of the Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research (IGHR) and served as an instructor for the African American genealogy course coordinated by the late Frazine K. Taylor. When the Taylor Scholarship

was established, Ms. Emma worked tirelessly to help secure funding for its success. The scholarship covers tuition for the IGHR African American genealogy course, and continued support ensures ongoing educational opportunities for researchers seeking to expand their knowledge of African American genealogy.

Here are the steps to donate:

1. Visit the Frazine Taylor Scholarship webpage found at this link - <https://ighr.gagensociety.org/scholarships/frazine-k-taylor/>.
2. Scroll down to the Tax-deductible Donations to the Scholarship section and click the PayPal for the Frazine K. Taylor Scholarship.
3. Enter your preferred amount. If you have an existing PayPal account, click the Donate with PayPal button. If you do not have an existing PayPal account, click Donate with Debit or Credit Card.
4. Complete the steps to make the payment.
5. Remember to include a note that the donation is "In Memory of Emma Hamilton".
6. If you are making a donation by check, please follow these steps:
Donations by check should be made payable to the Georgia Genealogical Society, with a memo noting IGHR Frazine K. Taylor Scholarship / Emma Hamilton. Checks are to be mailed to the IGHR Scholarship Fund, c/o Georgia Genealogical Society, PO Box 550247, Atlanta, GA 30355-2747.

Services entrusted to Gregory B. Levett & Sons Funeral Home, 4347 Flat Shoals Parkway, Decatur, GA 30034.

Previous Events

Delta Sigma Theta Inc Ceremony

FEB 19. 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM (ET)

Gregory B Levett and Son Funeral Home - Flat Shoals Location
4347 Flat Shoals Pkwy
Decatur, GA 30034

Delta Alumni Chapter- Stone Mountain-Lithonia Alumnae Chapter

Visitation

FEB 19. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Gregory B Levett and Son Funeral Home - Flat Shoals Location
4347 Flat Shoals Pkwy
Decatur, GA 30034

Family Hour

FEB 19. 6:30 PM - 7:30 PM (ET)

Gregory B Levett and Son Funeral Home - Flat Shoals Location
4347 Flat Shoals Pkwy
Decatur, GA 30034

Celebration of Life Service - Attend Live or via Livestream

FEB 20. 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM (ET)

Columbia Drive United Methodist Church
2067 Columbia Dr,
Decatur, GA 30032

<http://www.youtube.com/@columbiadriveunitedmethodi2921>

Burial

FEB **20**. 2:30 PM - 2:45 PM (ET)

Georgia National Cemetery
1080 Scott Hudgens Dr
Canton, GA 30114

Full Military Honors will be rendered

Tribute Wall

LO

“ I was honored to have worked with Emma on project sharing a relative Civil War Pension file. She was very passionate about her work. We exchanged e-mails after our first meeting and only saw each other a few other times at genealogy conference. She will be missed.

Linda Owens - February 20 at 08:22 PM

CD

“ It has been an honor and a joy to have gotten to know Emma some over the last decade plus. I was always glad to see her at the Georgia Archives because she made my day better when she was there. Her presence had a way of brightening the day, and she brought a warmth and kindness that made everyone feel welcome.

I am especially grateful for the support she gave to our programs. Her enthusiasm and genuine interest in the work helped bring people together, and I know many attended because of her. She had a remarkable ability to connect with others and make them feel included.

Emma had a wonderful smile and an infectious energy that left a lasting impression. She will be deeply missed by all who had the privilege of knowing her, even briefly. I feel fortunate to have known her, and I will remember her with gratitude and fondness.

My sincere condolences to her family and loved ones. Please know that her kindness and spirit touched many, and she will be remembered with great respect and appreciation.

Christopher M Davidson - February 19 at 12:59 PM

SC

“ I knew Ms.Emma Louise Hamilton through the Columbiia Drive United Methodist Church.She was a beautiful lady inside and out.I offer my deepest condolences to the family and all friends.

SAMUEL CHILES - February 19 at 11:41 AM

ST

I'm saddened to hear about the passing of Emma. She was a very smart, wity, sharp and fun spirit. We met over 10 years ago through AAHGS and shared our love for geneogical research. She called me this past December 2025 and reminded me "Homeboy" that it was sweet potato pie time. I've made them for her for the past several years and my schedule unfortunately didn't allow me to do so in December. However, I made 3 delicious sweet potato pies for her two weeks ago and I entered why I hadn't heard back from her, so I was truly unsettled when I found out tonight that she had passed. I'll always cherish her memory. Rest in Peace Home Girl. 🙏

Stan Thomas - February 25 at 12:01 AM

HH

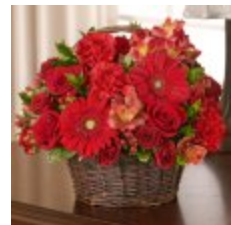
“ Henry Harris purchased the Peace, Prayers & Blessings - Blue and White for the family of Emma Louise Hamilton.



Henry Harris - February 18 at 01:45 PM

WM

“ With love, Leslie and Miles purchased the Peace, Prayers, & Blessings- All Red for the family of Emma Louise Hamilton.



With love, Leslie and Miles - February 18 at 10:46 AM

WM

“ With love, Leslie and Miles planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Emma Louise Hamilton.

With love, Leslie and Miles - February 18 at 10:46 AM

JR

“ I met Empress Emma about 70 yrs ago when my mom went to work in Belle Glade and Mrs Davis who had a daycare became caregiver for my sister and myself. Emma inspired me to want to join the Army listening to the adventures she had on R & R. Took the test but failed the physical duentoba heart murmur. Emma sparked an interest in genealogy and I spent countless hours at the Archives in East Point doing research thanks to her. I enjoyed our get togethers when visiting my sister in GA. She, Laurita, Barbara and I always found time to catch up. It has been a privilege to have known and called her friend. May God grant peace/comfort to the family as they navigate this journey of loss.
Deepest sympathy
Jacqueline Radcliffe

Jacqueline Radcliffe - February 16 at 01:31 PM

JS

Rest High ma! Such a good soul and spirit love you and keep watching over us.

Joseph A Smith - February 18 at 11:51 AM

TJ

“ The Jacksons-Rita,Robert,Jabari,Jami,Tam planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Emma Louise Hamilton.

The Jacksons-Rita,Robert,Jabari,Jami,Tam - February 13 at 10:31 AM

TJ

“ *The Jacksons-Rita,Robert,Jabari,Jami,Tam purchased the Red Rose And Lily Standing Spray for the family of Emma Louise Hamilton.*



The Jacksons-Rita,Robert,Jabari,Jami,Tam - February 13 at 10:31 AM

KH

“ *Kenny and Theresa Hamilton purchased the Classic Sympathy Dish Garden for the family of Emma Louise Hamilton.*



Kenny and Theresa Hamilton - February 12 at 01:41 AM

DW

“ *Emma and I grew up together and never parted. We are born into families but Emma was my sister of choice. I loved her and will always miss her. Rest in peace my dear sister.*

Dorothea Walker - February 10 at 01:59 PM

DF

“ *Dorothea and family. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Emma Louise Hamilton.*

Dorothea and family. - February 10 at 01:44 PM

DF

“ *Dorothea and family. purchased the Floor Plant f or Sympathy for the family of Emma Louise Hamilton.*



Dorothea and family. - February 10 at 01:44 PM

LP

“ *Ms Emma was one of the most outspoken, rowdy, and passionate women I had the privilege to know and respect. As the front desk clerk at the Georgia Archives, I was her first contact and she never held back whether she was pleased to be there or attending under duress, :-)* She loved my Lemon Pound Cakes and I had to remember to bring her a small one whenever I baked. I send my condolences to her family and say she will be sorely missed.

Linda P. - Georgia Archives retired

Linda Pickering - February 10 at 12:17 PM

AM

“ *Emma you were such a wonderful friend and neighbor hope you enjoyed all the fresh eggs from my chickens you will be missed by so many you definitely left an impact on this world until we meet again RIP*

Amber - February 03 at 10:01 PM

RC

“EMMA had become my friend over the past 3 years. I took care of her lawncare needs and we had many talks about life, politics, military service, which we both shared, I as a wounded Vietnam veterans and her as a medical officer. I knew I would like Emma before I met her because when I first went to her door and knocked on it to ask about her lawncare, I looked down and her door mat read GO AWAY.. to your memory Emma, I say; God gave you a fingerprint that no one else ever had and you left an imprint no one else can. Rest in Heavenly Peace my friend.

Randy Chatham - February 03 at 05:31 PM

CR

“In admiration... Auntie Em (from my children) Ms. Davis (me) aka Empress Emma was magnanimous. What a blessing in my lifetime and ours in adolescence having a dynamic women as a mentor. She adored my brother Brian you and she lived her life full. She taught how me to find my past, I spent many days with her, lived with her, visited the Archives in Geneology (her passion and now mine). She lives on from what she taught others, her love for Delta, her passion bringing African Americans their roots, and her many lives she touched. She would always tell me if I helped others it would be “A Star in my Crown”. Believe it! Her foundation through our rocky roads will be her legacy. ❤️ Crystal Samara Reeves

Crystal Reeves - February 01 at 10:24 AM

AH

“Miss Emma I will miss you forever! I will miss out talks, our fun arguments, those late night phones, making you funny shirts, helping you change your voicemail, and the list goes on. Our relationship was more than me helping you clean your house. You were family to me. I will continue to think of you and I am sending continuous prayers to the family. Rest easy Queen. ~Andrea~

Andrea Henley - January 31 at 10:00 PM

HG

“ My condolences to my Brother, Big B/Sho & the entire family. Ma will be missed immensely. I will continue praying for strength & love for the family.

Ha

Hasani George - January 31 at 07:47 PM

MH

“ Emma was a knowledgeable genealogist. Fun loving. Put together great presentations. Many memorable programs at Archives. RIP Queen Emma

Maureen Bolden Hill - January 31 at 10:14 AM

LC

Emma, my friend, my genealogy partner. My research buddy. I'm going to really miss our short chats and long conversations, which often wound up in loud laughter and trying to out talk each other. Deafening silence would be haunting, except I discovered some of your voice mails. In life we meet people who give us minutes a short a very short span of time, and there are times we meet friends who give us MOMENTS, a friendship that stands the test of time. Farewell my dear friend, I'll miss you 🙏

Louis Childers - February 02 at 04:46 PM

DB

We will miss our dear friend "Emmy Lou" as I called her; she called me "Lisa Lee." She was a travel partner, go-to genealogy advisor, troublemaker (good trouble mostly), dining companion, and an excellent friend. We both will miss the long conversations and endless laughs. Lisa Bratton and Jay Nelson

Dr. Lisa Bratton - February 02 at 10:06 PM

ER

Emma AKA Empress

Wow ,words can't describe the person and the beautiful soul you were. Truly a beautiful unique woman in God's image.

So grateful for the 30 plus years of friendship . You gave wisdom to my children during their childhood,always Ms Emma to them. You taught and poured so much knowledge and wisdom in them.

I am so grateful Chase and I was able to spend time with you at the hospital. The laughter,memories ,politics,etc.on that day.

I didn't realize at the time when you said you were ready to go home, I thought you meant your physical home. But you really meant your Heavenly home and really was telling us goodbye.

Rest well my friend,until we meet again on the other side.

Love you Erma,Chase and Bria Rich ❤️ 🙏🙏🙏

Erma D Rich - February 02 at 10:09 PM

DH

Em was one of the kind and she will be sorely missed.

I know she is on the next plane looking down at all of us. RIP dear friend.

Devra Harney

D. A. Harney - February 14 at 03:48 PM

CT

Emma called me her slow-driving friend. She wanted me to go over the speed limit. I did not, and I would not let her drive. She could be dangerous behind the wheel. I will miss you, Emma. To Brian and family, your mom was the best. She loved you to the end. Charlie Toliver

Charlie Toliver - February 18 at 06:42 PM

HW

Empress Emma, today is the day! I know your crown of jewels is heavy and you put so many jewels in mine and I always wondered how you had so much interaction with people, you never met a stranger😂😂😂 I was blessed to have met you. You showed me so much by forcing me out my comfort zone by having me ride with you everywhere😂😂 Helping out with your genealogy programs and putmy grands in programs, help with school supplies when I was going through a dry spell and I was overwhelmed with gratitude. I started out as your helper you called me, and I graduated to be your lil sister😂😂😂 you always pull the best out of someone and one day I may write my story as you suggested. I will also miss helping you with your Technology needs, you always made me laugh at the lil things of human error when I knew you could do it because you did big thing❤️ well we didnt get to where you wanted to show me your childhood stomping grounds but one day I'm going to take the time to go see because any place you came from and been I know it will be educational and fun. You are truly missed daily much love. Flyy highQUEEN❤️❤️❤️

Hazel Williams - February 20 at 05:52 AM