



## Mr. Henry Gill Jr.

July 20, 1932 - May 7, 2020

Henry Gill, Jr. age 87, passed on May 7, 2020. Visitation will be held Friday, May 22, 2020 from 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM at our SOUTH DEKALB CHAPEL. Gregory B. Levett & Sons Funeral Home and Crematory 4347 Flat Shoals Pkwy Decatur, GA 30034 (404) 241-5656. Please express your condolences here on our website.

Henry Gill, Jr. was born on July 20th, 1932 in Waco, TX to the late Bernice Gray and Henry Gill. He was an only child to this union. His mother moved to Sand Springs, OK in the 30's, where Henry spent most of his early childhood and teen life.

Leadership and popularity were Henry's destiny. He excelled in all types of sports, especially basketball and football, where he honed his athletic crafts. Being selected captain of both teams was an honor he often spoke about to his friends. The school that molded him was Booker T. Washington High School in Sand Springs, OK. Henry was also the President of his high school class and proud graduate of the class of 1950. His close friend, Antoinette Milton shared that Henry became best friends with her cousin the legendary "World's Greatest Basketball Dribbler", Marcus Haynes. That friendship began when they were both young children and lasted a lifetime.

Henry was a student of Langston University and Grambling College. When he left college, Abe Saperstein who was the owner of the Harlem Globetrotters selected him to play for the team.

This was 1952 in Chicago, which was the home at that time of the Harlem Globetrotters. Henry played for one year and travelled around the country with the team. His salary was a whopping \$350 a month. Henry's name handle for the team was "Showboat Gill". He said they broke many racial barriers because if they could not stay in a hotel --Abe Saperstein told the hotel owners that they would not play in that town. Henry often said they were the predecessors for the NBA.

After playing for the Harlem Globetrotters, Henry partnered with his childhood friend, Marcus Haynes and joined his team, the Harlem Satellites and the Harlem Magicians. They travelled the country mesmerizing audiences with their unique basketball skills and showmanship. When he finished playing basketball, Henry lived in various parts of the country including St. Louis, Missouri. He joined the Air Force for a short time. He became involved in the Civil Rights Movement and worked with Operation Push and the Rainbow Coalition on the South Side of Chicago with Jessie Jackson. He said they worked tirelessly to help get Richard Gordon Hatcher elected the 1st Black mayor in Gary, IN. He also worked with Hosea Williams in Atlanta. He said that activism was a calling and the one organization that he worked with that was the most controversial and misunderstood was the Black Panthers. The program that was dear to him was the feeding of the children breakfast in school by the Black Panthers in Oakland and various parts of Los Angeles. Henry's 2nd marriage was with Ethel Gill-Love which produced one son-Henry Gill, III (Shamanda) of Las Vegas, NV—Henry III has five children: Henry Gill, IV (32), Justice Gill (24), Heaven Gill (15), Angel (14), Noah (6), and grandson Nolan Gill (2). Henry adopted Leslie "Tinka" Ramirez when he married Ethel. Leslie has three children: Rico, April, and Maria. Leslie also has four grandchildren: Decaprio Miles, Beau and Ezi Harris, and Kaio Ramirez. Henry has one child by Darcus "Dean" Jefferson who preceded him in death. His name is Marcus Deonte Jefferson (Candice Elizabeth) they have 2 sons: Cameron Dean and Caden Charles Jefferson. Marcus also has one daughter by Lavella Keshia Nalls, Amari Jefferson. It is sad that many of his great-

grandchildren, Henry did not get a chance to meet. His surrogate brother, Robert Mabra, Sr. (Barbara) and Robert's two sons: Robert, Jr. and Wayne mourn Henry's passing. Robert, Sr. and Henry had a paint business called Tri-City Paint Company in East Chicago, IN. Henry was married to Sherryl Jackson-Gill from June 18, 1985 to present. This union produced no children but a lifetime of love and cherished memories with friends and relatives. They lived in Gary, Hammond, East Chicago, Indiana, Decatur, and Stone Mountain, GA. Henry loved his in-laws: Johnnie J. Jackson who preceded him in death and his mother-in-law, Lee Anna Jackson. He also cherished his sisters-in-law: Diane Jackson Chapman (Clyde), Shante Sposato (Frankie), Dorothy Colbert (Charles), Darlene Jackson, and Renay Jackson. Brothers-in-law: Gregory Jackson (Arquidale), Glenn Jackson, Johnnie Ray Jackson, George Presswood (Brenda), Willie Albert (Barbara) and Rufus Earl Davis. He will also be missed by Sherryl's best friend, Helen Brooks (Clarence deceased). Helen's children: Brian Jenkins, Michelle Jenkins and Shelia Crumble (Marcus) and best friend, Dr. Lerlean Johnson who was at most of the Harlem Globetrotter Atlanta games with Sherryl and Henry when he was an honorary guest.

He leaves to mourn many nieces and nephews and family and friends from coast to coast and around the world.

# Tribute Wall



“ Gregory B. Levett & Sons Funeral Homes & Crematory created a Tribute Video in memory of Mr. Henry Gill Jr.



Gregory B. Levett & Sons Funeral Homes & Crematory, Inc. - May 19, 2020 at 05:08 PM

LC

*I'm justice gills mother and nolyns grandma I spoke with Mr Gill once on the phone nice convo that's all I'm gone say ...sleep in peace u will b missed..showboat!!*

lavina carter - May 22, 2020 at 04:29 PM

HG

“ Henry Gill lit a candle in memory of Mr. Henry Gill Jr.



Henry Gill - May 29, 2020 at 03:42 AM

HG

“ I am grateful that so many people had great things to say about my Father and for all the people who showed up during this time. This is very emotionally and hard for me to do or even say. My Father wasn't always present in my life, but the times we did shared, were timeless. He gave me a high bar to reach for in life. I often heard that I was nick named "Mann" by my Mother and Father.

My Father said " he named me Mann so that know one would ever call me boy, and my Mom stated , we named you "MANN" with two "N's", so that you be twice the man.

My Father always told me " don't be like me, be better than me." And, because of that, I am able to face some of life's most difficult challenges.

I am also Henry Gill the III, and my son Henry, who is now 32, is Henry Gill the IV. I am grateful for both names and for the DNA and for the blood that flows through my veins.

I am also grateful for my brother Marcus whom we both shared a Father.

Through this, he help to bring forth KINGS.

Thank you for life , thank you for the edge on life.

Henry Gill Jr. lives on and "Showboat" will never be forgotten.

Thank you Sheryl, you done excellent job!!! of celebrating the life of my Father. I am truly grateful for the love that you and my Father shared and I am truly sorry for you lost as well.

*Thank You, and God Bless*

*Henry Gill III  
(Mann)*

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**Henry Gill** - May 29, 2020 at 03:40 AM

EF

“ *There are no words to express the sorrow in our hearts. Please accept our deepest sympathy on the loss of a love father. May your memories console you and may God sustain you with his precious promise to someday soon reunite us with our love one. Thinking of you all.*

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**Evans family** - May 25, 2020 at 04:14 AM

MJ

“ Dear DAD,

*As I lay here uncontrollably hurt and in sorrow not only for you but for myself. I wish I could have the time and opportunity to be your son again. I have harbored so many thoughts and feelings that I have never had the chance to share with you as my Dad. I have always loved you and in passing I will devote the remainder of my life as a tribute to you as a man, father and a child of GOD. I'm lost right now with the thought of you no longer being present in the physical life. However, in the spiritual realm you are now a perfect being. I will have the constant reminder of you every opportunity I have to glance in the mirror; so as I see me I see you. I want to tell you that you have been my motivation as a husband and a father to my wife Candice and my three children; Amari, Cameron and Caden. Now, we can't make up for lost time and that's the most difficult thing for me. I want to let the world know that I love you. Dad, please forgive me for being just like you in my stubborn ways and please forgive me for not being there in your last days. May God comfort you with his warm embrace as you enter the kingdom of HEAVEN.*

*P.S.*

*Thank you Sherryl for your awesomeness and being such a loving, caring, patient and devoted wife. As we all know Henry Gill Jr. was one of a kind if you know what I mean LOL.*

*Love your son*

*Marcus D. Jefferson*

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**Marcus Jefferson** - May 22, 2020 at 06:09 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mr. Henry Gill Jr..*



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May 22, 2020 at 04:41 PM



“ *My Dad Henry was a great part of my life he was a great provider, loved to paint as he was a great painter :) and loved jazz music. Growing up we had fun summer days catching lighting bugs placing them in jars and he would find these tiny frogs that would be placed in jars as well :) . May he rest in peace now*

*Love his daughter  
Tinker*

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**Leslie Ramirez** - May 22, 2020 at 03:31 PM



“ *Hello Ms. Jackson-Gill ~*

*So sorry for your loss. Keeping you in my thoughts. Please know that your DeKalb Early College family loves you.*

*~~ Principal Conner*

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**Edward Conner** - May 22, 2020 at 03:22 PM