



Greta Irene Brown

August 20, 1931 - March 10, 2022

Greta was born on August 20, 1931 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She was the second child born to James Henry Gaines, Sr. and Mary Alice (Battle) Gaines. Their first born was James (Jimmy) Henry Gaines, Jr. who preceded her in death and their third child, Gerome, who passed away at birth.

Greta and Jimmy were very close siblings. He protected her throughout her life. Jimmy nicknamed Greta, "Doll Baby" which Greta answered to more than her given name for a long time. So much so, that when she was in Kindergarten, the teacher called her by her first name and Greta didn't answer. When she was the only child left in the class after dismissal, the teacher realized the pretty little girl sitting in the chair was Greta, but because she was known as "doll baby", she did not recognize "Greta" when she had been called.

Her family was always supportive of her goals and showering her with love and things mostly associated with more affluent people. She would always tell the story of how during the Great Depression, she wore a mink coat to school as a Kindergartener and by the end of the day, her mink coat was switched out and a ragged coat was left in its place. Greta was educated in the Philadelphia School System. She was highly intelligent and talented. Achieving many opportunities other girls in her neighborhood did not experience. By high school, she earned the right to attend the prestigious

Philadelphia High School for Girls. During her time there, Greta continued to be a scholar while also flourishing into the arts. Playing many musical instruments such as the trombone in the orchestra, and excelling in her art classes. She graduated with high honors from Philadelphia High School for Girls in 1950. Her talents were inspiring throughout her life. Her diction, enunciation, leadership, penmanship and grammatical skills were exemplary! These skills led to her ability to hold high ranking positions and offices throughout adulthood.

Greta was introduced to Albert Allen Brown, Jr., from Ridgely, Maryland, through friends at a social event. The high schoolers became sweethearts and later attended Greta's high school prom together in 1949. The two wrote beautiful letters to each other while Albert was serving our country in the United States Air Force. On December 29, 1954, Albert proposed to Greta and they got married before he had to leave for his active duty Air Force assignment. This union blessed them with three beautiful daughters: Greta Alicia, Gina Olivia, and Carla Alberta.

Greta and Albert lived on Delancey Street in Philly with her mother, Mary Alice, until Alicia was of school age. One day Albert went with his cousin, Billy Wayman, to see new developments being built in Deptford Twp., NJ which led Albert and Greta to buy a house in the Hammond Heights section. When the family moved there, Alicia was 5, Gina was 3, and Carla was just 6 weeks old. Both Greta and Albert became active in their community and in the school system. So much so, that the newly renovated Deptford High School gym was dedicated to Albert in the late 1990s.

While Albert was at work, Greta was a homemaker until Alicia was preparing for college. The home was welcoming and her girls were treated like little

princesses. Each night before their father returned home from work, Greta and her girls would change into pretty dresses and do their hair to prepare for their father's arrival. Greta looked after their girls lovingly and doted on them. As the girls grew up, there was never a hair out of place. They had all the material things imaginable within reason. At the same time, she taught them how to be a young lady, have self-respect, and the importance of reading. Which she had taught them each to do at a very early age.

Greta wanted to seek a dancing school for her girls near where they used to live in Philadelphia (West Philly). She had definite expectations to determine if the school qualifies as skilled, having a positive learning environment, and outstanding teachers. During that time, it was called Philadelphia School of Dance Arts, with the illustrious director and master teacher, Joan B. Myers. It was located on South 52nd St now known as Philadanco. Alicia started at age 3 and was in Miss Joanie's very first dance class. Gina followed soon after. Three may sound young, but Alicia was destined to be a ballerina. She was so poised, yet so young. Philadelphia School of Dance had recitals at the Academy of Music. Later, Carla participated for a season.

For over 14 years, Greta would pick the girls up from school, once they moved to New Jersey, every Friday, and drive to Philly to the dancing school, spending the night with Greta's mother. The girls had lessons Friday and Saturday: ballet, tap, interpretive dance, jazz, and acrobatics. Alicia and Gina began taking piano lessons when they were in 3rd/1st grade. The lessons continued for many years. Dance lessons, music lessons, Brownies, Girl Scouts, room parent, then her involvement in PTA and church were some of the reasons why Greta was named, "Mother of the Year" in 1962, presented by Joan B. Myers.

Albert had worked for RCA Victor, in Moorestown, after his Honorable Discharge from the U.S. Air Force. Greta was employed by RCA and together they were a powerhouse couple. They shared 45 wonderful years of marriage until Albert's death on March 13, 2000.

Greta's community service was vast ever since the girls were little. She volunteered as a Girl Scout Assistant Leader and was a PTA Active Member for 40+ years. She was the State PTA Board Secretary, HIV/AIDS Chairman of Gloucester County Affiliation, on the Health/Mental Health Committee, PTA Convention Planning, holding various PTA positions, and numerous chairmanships and committees at the state, county, and local offices. Greta held the titles of: PTA Honorary Life Member (State) in 1985, Honorary Life Member (National) in 1989, 25 Year Group (1986). Greta attended multiple conventions at the state and national level. She was a volunteer at the LVA- Literacy Volunteer Association, being a Gloucester County Board Member.

Greta's work career began when she was right out of high school. She became a Key-Puncher, and was dedicated and very good at it. When Alicia was in 11th grade (1974), Greta began working with Albert at RCA Victor/GE in Moorestown, New Jersey. She was an Associate Configuration System's Analyst, responsible for processing and distribution of Engineering Change Notices. She also obtained college credits towards a Business Degree from Gloucester County College, taking evening classes in Computer Programming Language. Greta retired from RCA/GE in 1988 after 14 years of employment.

Greta began her Christian journey as a youth in Philadelphia while attending

St. Thomas Church. After moving to NJ, Greta brought the girls to St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Woodbury Heights in the 1960s. This church later merged with another local church to become what is now known as Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Wenonah, NJ. Her dedication to the church continued until she became too ill, about 4 years ago, to participate. While servicing the church community, Greta was very much an active member. She brought the girls to church as they grew up, setting the foundation for their Christian journey. Greta was a member of the church Adult Choir, singing alto. She had served with the Episcopal Church Women (ECW), ECW District President, Altar Guild, Sunday School Coordinator and Teacher, United Thank Offering (UTO) Coordinator, and Lecturer. She always volunteered in the activities and events for the church.

Greta took pride in everything she did. She always had her hair neatly styled and presented herself with grace as she was fashionably attired. She was very aware of anything out of place and kept not only herself, but her three daughters up-to-date in the current modern styles. Greta's mother would make her clothes as a child and as the girls grew up. Her mother would look at the styles in New York, draft a pattern, and complete the outfit in the blink of an eye. Greta remained professional and dignified in all she was involved in. She rarely wore pants to work.

Greta loved seafood and a good steak dinner. She loved the color yellow. She and Albert loved family trips. They always wanted to travel as it brought great joy to them. They took trips to Canada and to visit relatives near and far. Greta and Albert also went to PTA and Board of Education Conventions together, which were conducted throughout the U.S. to support one another.

Greta was a compassionate lady. She was the caretaker of her mother and many other relatives. She lovingly took care of Albert, along with their children, until his passing in 2000 as well as her daughter, Greta Alicia before her passing in 2010.

Greta always loved seeing and spending time with family, especially her daughters, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. She was so very proud to be a grandmother. She would cook delicious food which would always have them asking for more. Greta and Albert were always the first visitors when the grandbabies were born. They babysat them and were there to encourage them to be their best. They attended sports games, school awards ceremonies and activities. They were the best grandparents anyone could pray for and the grands loved them infinitely!

Greta was affectionately known as Gramie to all of her dear grands and great-grands. She always loved expert level crossword puzzles, seek and find, Sudoku, and multiple newspapers were read and puzzles completed every day. The puzzles on the inner pages were rarely a challenge for her. She would read the articles, complete the puzzle section, and go on to the next newspaper. Greta loved sketching and drawing as well. She always loved gifts and being greeted with a big hug and kiss on her cheek. In the last three years of her life, while living at Premier Cadbury in Cherry Hill, NJ, her daughters and granddaughter Janine would bring her newspapers and puzzle books along with her favorite snacks weekly to keep her mind and spirits engaged. Her face would always light up upon the receipt of them. Although Greta had pre-existing Dementia, Greta's health at 90 years of age was stable. On the morning of February 16, 2022 the family received the disheartening news that she had suffered a stroke. Greta was transferred to Complete Care at Kresson View for rehabilitation. However, on the afternoon

of Thursday, March 10, 2022, while surrounded by her daughters, and granddaughters, Greta peacefully closed her eyes and gained her angel's wings.

Greta leaves to mourn her devoted daughters: Gina Olivia Brown-Barnes and Carla Alberta Henderson (Gary), 10 grandchildren, 12.5 great-grandchildren, 2 sons-in-law Gary Henderson, Sr. and Richard M. White (Alicia who predeceased her in 2010), 1 brother-in-law Julius A. Ryland, Jr., 1 sister-in-law Ann Gaines, and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, family and friends. Grandchildren: Siobhan A. Clark (Damon), Janine C. Haygood (Gregory), Gabrielle C. Barnes, Lanavia J. Saunders, Skyler E. Saunders, Mia C. Webb (Richard), Brianna C. Barnes, Gary Henderson Jr., Richard A. White, and Marisa A. Henderson. Great-Grandchildren: Aneesia, Catherine, Jerel Jr. (Amber); Jordan, Aiden, Justin, Gia (Janine); Seth, Madison, Grant (Mia); Jasiah, Samir (Brianna). Godchildren: James Henry Gaines, III and Tara Gaines-Hammond (Will).

Bonus Granddaughters: Ryan Stephens (Gina/Michael) and Mayla Henderson Jackson (Carla/Gary).

Bonus Grandson: Keyon Haygood (Janine/Greg)

Greta had a bright light. She would never use the term "goodbye" as a salutation. In the most recent years of her life, Greta would say this line to her daughters and grandchildren upon their departure from visits or at the end of a phone call...

"I'll see you soon! I love you so much, I love you so well. If I had a peanut, I'd give you the shell!"

Relatives and friends are invited to a viewing on Saturday, March 19, 2022 from 9:30am to 11:00am at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, 11 N. Monroe Ave., Wenonah, NJ 08090.

Funeral Service 11am at the Church.

Interment Eglinton Cemetery, Clarksboro, NJ 08020

Arrangements by BOUCHER FUNERAL HOME, Deptford.

For directions, to sign online guest book and to view Greta's Video Tribute visit www.boucherfuneralhome.com.

In lieu of flowers, Greta requested that Memorial Gifts be made in her name to Holy Trinity Episcopal Church @ 11 N. Monroe Ave., Wenonah, NJ 08090.

For directions, to sign online guest book and to view Greta's Video Tribute visit www.boucherfuneralhome.com.

Cemetery Details

Eglington Cemetery & Mausoleum

320 Kings Highway
Clarksboro, NJ 08020
(856) 423-0165

Previous Events

Viewing

MAR 19. 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church
11 N. Monroe Avenue
Wenonah, NJ 08090

Funeral Service

MAR 19. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church
11 N. Monroe Avenue
Wenonah, NJ 08090

Tribute Wall



“ *Boucher Funeral Home, LLC & Gloucester County Cremation Service created a Tribute Video in memory of Greta Irene Brown*



Boucher Funeral Home, LLC & County Cremation Service - March 17, 2022 at 06:22 PM



“ *Greta Irene Brown*

November 27, 2022 at 03:45 PM



“ *Remembering you beautiful Mom and wishing you and the family comfort.*
Bonnie Boucher



Bonnie Boucher - March 19, 2022 at 10:30 AM



“ 125 files added to the album *LifeTributes*



Boucher Funeral Home, LLC & County Cremation Service - March 17, 2022 at 06:20 PM