



# Aaron O. Barnes

MAR 30, 1930 - FEB 6, 2015



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## **Aaron O. Barnes**

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**A** ARON OLIVER BARNES, SR (SFPD – Retired) Sunrise: March 30, 1930 Sunset: February 6, 2015 Aaron Oliver Barnes, Sr. was born on March 30, 1930 in Hungerford, Wharton County, Texas. He passed away peacefully after a short illness in San Francisco on February 6, 2015. He is preceded in death by: his parents, Aaron Oliver Barnes and Bessie Owens Barnes, his sister Barbara, his brother Oswald, his sister Eddy, and his beloved, loyal wife of 62 years, Willie Jean (Smith) Barnes, who passed away July 14, 2014. Those left to mourn his passing include his six children: Cynthia Barnes-Slater (Nick), Waffiyah Ansari-Luqman (Wajjid), Aaron Oliver Barnes, Jr., Carl Barnes (Marnitha), Allen Barnes, and Bessie Barnes. He also leaves behind his grandchildren: Bahiyyudin Ansari (Marcie), Sean Slater, Ayinde Luqman (Rasheedah), Zachary Slater, Nathan Barnes, Isoke Luqman, Lumumba and Kibwe Diop; great-grandchildren: Adisa Luqman and Aaron Ansari; step-granddaughters, LaQuita and LaRena Gibson. Daddy also leaves his nieces and nephews: Donna Moore, Paris Crawford, Al Crawford; Nancy Danner Johnson; Sister-in-law, Harriet Smith and Noel, Leon, Anna, Victoria (deceased) and Raquel (Paul) Cummins; and their children and grandchildren; also, numerous cousins in Wharton Co., TX. The Pilgrim Congregational Church community and the Meridianites, Inc. will also miss Daddy, with whom he participated in many gatherings and events alongside his wife Willie Jean. Daddy was a US Army veteran who served as a Military Police officer in Japan just before the Korean War. This service led him to join the SF Police Academy in 1964. Our father supported his family by serving 23 years as a San Francisco Police officer (retired SFPD): his beat was Central Station in SF's Chinatown. He was one of the first African-Americans hired by SFPD: he suffered considerable racial harassment and discrimination on the job. He was a member of "Officers for Justice", a SFPD advocacy group for African American police officers. Our father was a lead plaintiff in a lawsuit filed by OFJ against the SFPD for racial discrimination in hiring



and promotion. Along with our mother, Daddy was involved in the turbulent fight for civil rights in San Francisco, including marching with the NAACP – SF Chapter. Prior to joining the SFPD, Daddy studied at SF State University, worked as a SF parking attendant, and as an orderly at Letterman Hospital, often working two or more jobs at once to save enough money for a down payment for the family home purchased in 1959. At the time, he agreed with our mother’s idea to move our family (Cynthia, Waffiyah, and Aaron, Jr.) temporarily into the Sunnydale public housing to save extra money for the down payment, which mysteriously increased just before the mortgage was to be signed. Our father was always very proud of the fact that he and our mother were determined to raise their six children in a home of their own in San Francisco. Our father worked hard to ensure that his family had the necessities of life. He always gave his entire check to our mother for the household – Mama gave him a weekly allowance! Daddy also took us camping; he supported his children’s academic and extracurricular efforts, he accompanied our mother on school visits and outings to Golden Gate Park, Steinhart Aquarium, the SF Zoo, Yosemite, and Disneyland, among other places in California. During retirement, Daddy and Mama traveled extensively throughout the US, to West Africa, to Asia, Europe, the Caribbean, Alaska and the Panama Canal. Daddy enjoyed walking around Lake Merced, and at social events with our mother, he always dressed well and he loved to dance. Daddy was also an active member of Pilgrim Congregation Church, serving as a deacon, usher, and Sunday school and Bible Study group member. He could be relied upon to help out around the church: cleaning up, doing gardening, and making coffee before Sunday Services. Daddy was a firm and devoted believer in Jesus Christ and was well read in the Bible. He always led the family in prayer before every meal, at home or at a family gathering. He loved to read the SF Chronicle daily, the Bible and the Daily Word. He was an avid sports fan of the SF Giants and the SF 49ers. He also loved to garden and grew delicious cabbage, collards, Swiss chard and broccoli in the backyard of the family home. Daddy was also a longtime fan and aficionado of “straight ahead” jazz: our home was always filled with the sounds of Miles Davis, the Modern Jazz Quartet, Cannonball Adderley, John Coltrane, Charlie Parker, to name but a few. With my mother, he frequented



the 1950's and 1960's jazz clubs in SF's Fillmore District, and they often attended concerts by Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Ella Fitzgerald and Sarah Vaughn when they performed in town. Jazz music was always on in our home and Daddy provided his children, and grandchildren, a deep love of this unique American art form that exists to this day. As each of his children will attest, the Barnes children are graduates of what our brother Aaron calls, "The Officer Barnes School of Discipline": our father could be difficult to understand and sometimes hard to live with, yet we knew deep down he was doing the best he could as the father of six children: three boys and three girls. Daddy always used to thank God that as adults, we were each leading successful lives. He was also proud of his grandchildren and great grandchildren. Daddy deeply loved our mother: he always worked hard and provided for her and his family, and he loved Almighty God. Words fail to convey our family's deep sorrow and pain in losing Daddy only seven months after the passing of our precious Mama in July 2014. Our parents were married over 62 years and they represented a strong and loving center in our world: their strength, devotion to African-American culture and causes, their great sense of humor and fun, their legacy of hard work, perseverance and prudence has left an unforgettable legacy for each of us. We will carry the memories of our beloved father and our beloved mother in our hearts forever. Our hearts are broken and our lives are dimmed by the loss of their physical presence, yet we know that our parents are now united in Heaven forever and one day, we will all be together again.



## Tribute Wall

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PC

**Paul Chignell** posted:

I worked with Aaron at the Taraval Police Station when I was a young patrolman aged 21 in 1970. Through the years of his service as a police officer I admired Aaron greatly and only regret that I did not stay in touch with this fine man. —Captain Paul Chignell (retired) Legal Defense Administrator San Francisco Police Officers' Assn.

February 22 at 1:17 PM

JS

**Jim Strange** posted:

To the Aaron Barnes family. I am retired officer Jim Strange. I had the honor of working any shifts at Central Station with your father. I lost contact with him after retirement but from reading his obit it appears he was enjoying himself! My condolences to all the Barnes family. I have all good memories of Aaron!

February 17 at 11:57 AM

TJ

**Tanya Underconstruction Patton-Joseph** posted:

They were made for each other. They were put together by God and will live forever in God's kingdom.

February 13 at 10:11 AM



# **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Aaron by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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