



Clifton Cole – Chief Warrant Officer 1st Class

JAN 16, 1920 - FEB 25, 2013



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Biography of Clifton Cole Chief Warrant Officer 1st Class Clifton Cole fondly known as “Grand-Pa,” was born to Motely Lewis and Rosie Lee Chestang on January 16th, 1920. Clifton is a direct descendant of Kazoola, 'Cudjoe Lewis,' Clifton's paternal great-grand father. Kazoola is the African of Cudjoe Lewis. Cudjoe was among the last African tribesmen who brought to this country as slaves. Cudjoe and approximately 100 other people from the village of the Tarkbar tribe were capture during civil wars with other tribes of the Dahomeny area of West Ghana and taken to Whydah, now the People’s Republic of Benin. These captives were sold into slavery to traders and shipped to America on the schooner Clotilda. Slave trade was outlawed in America in 1808. Cudjoe was brought to Mobile Bay in 1858. Cudjoe and other members of the Tarkbar tribe established a life on a small parcel of land near Plateau and Mobile Alabama. Later this area was named Africa Town USA. A bust of was erected in recognition and dedication to Kazoola Cudjoe Lewis. There were a few kind soles that mentored and influenced the growth and maturation of Clifton, and none more important than his paternal grand-father, Reverend Simon Cole, who Clifton called 'Papa.' He taught Clifton what it was to be a man. Papa instilled a strong work ethic and insisted that Clifton obtain an education. Rev. Cole provided Clifton with the love and security that was needed when he was alone in this world. Clifton was then able to pursue his goals against seriously tough odds and poverty. Another powerful influence in Clifton’s life was Mr. Ernest Boykin, a close member of the family and a pillar in their community. As Clifton grew and Papa aged, he needed continued stability. Mr. Boykin was active in Clifton’s life during high school where he played baseball and football. He would have run track if he had the proper shoes. Following graduation from high school Clifton enrolled in Tuskegee Institute for two years. Academic life was expensive and Clifton enlisted into the United States Army. He achieved the highest rank of Chief Warrant Officer and was a sharp shooter and



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serviced in active duty in two wars, WWII and Korean Wars. He was a Master Baker and in charge of Officer Kitchen. During a USO gathering Clifton met his wife and life partner, Alma Mulky. They married in January 18th, 1943. As Clifton was stationed to various foreign countries, Alma and their three children in tow were not far behind. Their first son Ronald Clifton was born May 14th, 1945; the second son, Ricardo Victor was born September 25th, 1946 and Linda Alma was born January 21st, 1949. Clifton and Alma remained married until Alma's call home to be with the Lord in June 2006. Upon retiring from the Army with an Honorable discharge, Clifton began working for the US Postal Service. His career with the postal service spanned 20 years. During that time Clifton returned to pursuing the completion of his education and graduated from California State University San Francisco in May 1974 with a Bachelors Degree in English and History. Clifton obtained a California State Teaching Credential for both high school and junior high schools. Clifton did his student teaching at Aptos Junior High School before achieving tenure at Verdese R. Carter Middle School in Oakland California. Since his retirement from teaching Clifton retains a friendly connection to many of his middle school students who often contacted him for advice with their own education. Clifton was a Life Time member of the NAACP; he was a Mason of the 'Ujima Lodge' and he belonged to the Gideon Society. Clifton was also an Elder at Forest Hill Christian Church for more than twenty years. Other than the welfare of Clifton's family, his heart belonged to golfing. Some of his famous golf buddies were Willie Mays and Bobby Bonds. Clifton enjoyed 49er's season's tickets and watching a GIANTS baseball game. Clifton also loved to travel across country which provided him an excuse to buy luxury cars. Clifton leaves loving memories with his three children, one grand-daughter Frances Ramona (Hunt) Stewart, a son in-law, David Karl Stewart, two great grand-daughters, Cyndie Marie Stewart and Tereisa Nicole Stewart and a loving cousin Dr. Oluwa Davis. God knows he will be missed by nieces and nephews through his marriage to Alma, and many young friends he established and mentored by association with his children and grand-children.



Memories only last if you share them

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



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