

WE REMEMBER MAC

*W*illie James McDonald, lovingly known to family and friends as “Mac,” was born on March 13, 1927 in Lynchburg, South Carolina to Susie Wright Jones. He had one sibling, Ruth; the family moved to Raleigh, North Carolina where he spent his formative years.

Mac’s life was colorful and vibrant. He was the star halfback on the “Lil Blues” Washington High School football team in Raleigh, the perennial state champions for several years. While at Washington High, Mac met his high school sweetheart and the love of his life, Lillie Rose Thorpe (Lil). When he turned 18 in 1945, Mac entered the Marine Corps, where he was stationed at Montford Point in Jacksonville, North Carolina. World War II came to an end and Mac completed his tour in 1946. He returned to high school to resume his education and attended Shaw University in Raleigh. Mac and Lil married and had their first child, Yuletta, followed by Faye, Vernon, and Kenneth.

From 1950 to 1967 Mac worked for the Railway Mail Service, considered by some to be the jewel of the US Postal Service. His route was from Washington, DC to New York. He served as president of the local postal union and retired in 1983.

Mac was raised Methodist, but he and Lil converted to Catholicism in 1948. He was a faithful and active member of St. Gabriel’s Catholic Church. Mac served as an usher for more than 30 years, was a member of the Holy Name Society, and a lifetime honorary member of the Knights of Columbus (4th degree), Keene Council in Washington, DC.

An avid golfer, Mac was a member of the Monday Morning Golf Club for many years; several trophies adorn the mantel on Tuckerman Street –and bragging rights were uncontested by two holes in one. He also enjoyed fishing, playing cards, and traveling. He and Lil’s globetrotting ventures included Hawaii, Spain, Aruba, the West Coast, and many road trips along the East Coast.

In 2012, the unit of the Montford Point Marines in which Mac served, was honored with the Congressional Gold Medal at the US Capitol.

Mac was a sincere family man and an earnest servant. He was known for his philosophizing, lively conversations about politics, sharing lessons of life, and unique expressions such as “Gee MO’ Christmas!”, “Jive Turkey” and an emphatic . . . “I just don’t understand it!” To his children he was known as “Dad,” to his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, “Granddad” and “Daddy Mac,” and to many – an abiding friend.

Left to cherish his memory include his loving and devoted wife of 69 years, Lil; his daughter Faye McDonald Smith of Atlanta (George); sons, Vernon and Kenneth McDonald of the District of Columbia, grandchildren Anthony Mitchell (Brenda), Kenyon Hobbs, Mekka and Midion Smith, Matthew and Maya McDonald; great-grandchildren Krista and Kara Mitchell, and Aaliyah Hobbs; sister, Vanessa Terrell; sisters-in-law, Mildred Heyward (John), Ruby Thorpe, and Gloria Lockett (John); nephew-in-law, Earl Thorpe (Michelle); and numerous other relatives and friends. Yuletta McDonald Mitchell, Mac and Lil’s firstborn child, preceded Mac in death in October 2010.

Extended family and friends are too numerous to name, but join the family in grieving the loss, yet celebrating the life of the one and only, Mac.