



Press



Release

Obituary Announcement

Henry Rayner

October 24, 1929 - November 23, 2014



Henry Rayner, beloved husband, father, grandfather, brother, and uncle went home to be with the lord Sunday morning, the 23rd day of November, 2014 after a lengthy illness.

He was born October 24th, 1929 in Selma, North Carolina. He was the third of twelve children born, (four girls and 8 boys). He was a member of Antioch Missionary Baptist Church in Goldsboro, North Carolina. He attended school in Wilson, N.C. but had to leave to work in the field to help support his family. He experienced and endured very hard times during that period. He wanted a better life for himself so at the tender age of 17, he joined the United States Marine Corps in 1946, once the Marines finally was forced to accept minorities.

He was one of the first African American Marines and was trained at Montford Point Camp, near Camp Lejeune, N.C. It was known to be some of the harshest and toughest training known to man during that time. He went on to serve in Honolulu, Hawaii in 1949 until his Honorable discharge. He was recalled to active duty during the Korean War and was stationed in California and at Camp Lejeune NC.

After his second Honorable Discharge in 1951 as a Corporal (Non Commissioned Officer), he went to work for the Army at Fort Eustis, from 1951-1954. He also worked for the Veterans Administration in Pennsylvania from 1954-1979. During that same time, he was employed at Lukin Steel Company in Coatesville, PA. Eventually he opened a successful bar and restaurant business which he owned and operated for almost ten years in Parkesburg, PA. Relocating to Goldsboro in 1985, he worked for the census bureau for a number of years. He was a graduate (certified mechanic) of Lincoln Institute for automatic transmissions.

A staunch advocate for education, he went on to receive his high school diploma as well as several college courses. His civic service included life membership in the Marine Corps League, and the Disabled American Veterans. He is a Past Master of C.S. Brown Lodge #782, in Goldsboro, N.C. In June of 2012, he received the Congressional Gold Medal in Washington, D.C. for recognition for his historic service and for being one of the pioneer Montford Point Marines, having served with honor and distinction. He was again honored by Mayor King and the city of Goldsboro, as well as the Grand Master of the North Carolina Prince Hall Masons with Proclamations honoring his service as a pioneer Marine.

He leaves to cherish his memory, his loving wife, Mrs. Estelle K. Rayner of the home; three sons, James Rayner (Kathi), Roger Rayner (Elaine) and Dale Maxwell (Beverly); three daughters, Diane McKay (Fran), Dorothy Wallace (Melvin) and Debra Rayner; also a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, and friends. Once a Marine, Always a Marine.

A visitation will be held Monday, December 1, 2014 from 10 until 10:45 a.m. at Antioch Missionary Baptist Church in Goldsboro followed by the funeral service beginning at 11 a.m. Interment with military honors will follow at Coastal Carolina State Veterans Cemetery in Jacksonville.

Services entrusted to Howell Funeral Home & Crematory in Goldsboro.

