



Luther Anthony Randolph

May 7, 1935 - January 27, 2020

LUTHER ANTHONY RANDOLPH, 84, musician, artist, producer, educator, husband, father, grandfather, activist and philanthropist

Luther Randolph died on Monday, January 27, 2020. He was 84 years old. Luther was born May 7, 1935 to the late Rev. Fredrick Randolph and his wife Emma in Media, PA. He was one of four children.

He spent his youth in Media, PA, where he attended elementary, junior and high schools; and where he medaled in track and field. A firm believer in education, Luther earned his bachelor of arts degree from the Philadelphia Institute of Arts and a masters of education from Howard University in Washington, D.C. Post-college Luther joined the Army, where he served as a musical ambassador and helped to improve German-American relations during the cold war.

Luther's interest in the arts and music began at an early age, where he explored the trumpet and piano. At the age of 12, he began playing the piano in earnest and spent most of his waking hours perfecting his craft. He spent so much time playing the piano that his mother often had to chase him off it so he would finish his chores.

Luther began his semi-professional career playing piano for the First Baptist

Church of Morton. At 16, he began playing R&B and jazz professionally with jazz trumpeter Marcus Belgrave. Fascinated by the artistry of Jimmy Smith, Luther began playing jazz-organ in 1960 and immediately became proficient at it – eventually moving away from the piano in favor of the multi-tonal, musical complexities of the organ.

Transitioning from piano to the organ proved to be a wise decision. In 1962, teaming up with Johnny Stiles and Norman Connors, the trio released the hit record, “Cross Roads”. It quickly soared to number one on Philadelphia R&B stations and enjoyed a strong showing nationally as well. In fact, although it was created well before the internet, some 58 years later, this record still enjoys a popular following online.

As co-founder of Harthorn Records, Luther produced records for Barbara Mason, Herb Ward and many others. Luther produced Barbara Mason’s “Yes, I’m Ready”, which peaked at #2 on the Billboard R&B Charts in 1965. They also produced Eddie Holman’s hit single, “Hey There Lonely Girl”, which also earned national acclaim landing at #2 on the US Billboard Hot 100 Pop Chart, #1 on the Canadian RPM Chart and #4 on the UK Singles Chart. Through his tireless efforts, Luther became an icon on the Philadelphia music scene, where he helped create the Sound of Philadelphia, a musical genre well regarded throughout the world.

Over the course of multiple decades, Luther headlined at many popular Philadelphia-area venues including but not limited to The Round Table, Bob’s and Barbara’s, Zanzibar Blue, and La Collina. He also toured up and down the east coast and was often featured at resort hotspots in Atlantic City, NJ in the pre-Casino era.

While music was his primary passion, Luther did not overlook the many racial injustices affecting African Americans during his lifetime. Despite growing up

in a relatively integrated environment, he joined the civil rights movement in the late 1950's. Having personally met Martin Luther King, Jr., he followed in his footsteps organizing sit-ins at the segregated lunch counter at F. W. Woolworth in Chester, Pa in an effort to end this discriminatory practice. Often adorned with his signature dashikis, Luther's activist spirit, could be heard in much of his music and was passed down to his only daughter. Luther remained a civil rights activist throughout his entire life.

Luther began his teaching career in 1966, where he taught elementary school in Philadelphia. He later went on to teach art and music at Sayer Middle school in West Philadelphia, where he met his wife, Sylvia, who he later married in 2001. He retired from the Philadelphia School District in the early 1990's.

During retirement, Luther continued his education by taking Series 7 classes in stock and security trading. He focused much of his attention on investment strategies, sharing his knowledge with family and friends. He also enjoyed visiting friends and spending time with family in Delaware for summer cookouts and holidays. He most enjoyed introducing his granddaughter to the world of music, art and finance.

In more recent years, Luther was honored at a multi-generational gathering of British and European fans in Orlando, Florida for his talent and contributions to music abroad. During this time, he also created two albums, "New Jack Jazz" and "Aries".

Luther was a wonderful husband, brother and father and "Pop Pop". Leaving to cherish loving memories are his wife of close to 20 years, Sylvia Hayre Randolph Philadelphia, PA; daughter Coree Cuff Lonergan and son-in-law Richard Lonergan Jacksonville, FL; step daughter, Lee Harrison Philadelphia,

PA; granddaughter, Chloe Cuff Ann Arbor, Michigan; sisters, Elise Hunt Wilmington, Delaware and Naomi Randolph Media, PA; and a host of nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Cemetery Details

Rolling Green Memorial Park

1008 West Chester Pike
West Chester, PA 19382

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 7. 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

First United Methodist Church
350 W. State Street
Media, PA 19063

Service

FEB 7. 11:00 AM (ET)

First United Methodist Church
350 W. State Street
Media, PA 19063

Tribute Wall



“ *Luther Anthony Randolph*

October 07, 2023 at 11:34 AM



“ *Luther Anthony Randolph*

October 04, 2023 at 12:55 PM



“ *The Hunt - McAllister Family purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Luther Anthony Randolph.*



The Hunt - McAllister Family - February 05, 2020 at 03:05 PM