



*Service of Thanksgiving
For The Life Of*



Walter Benjamin Ebanks (Benjie)

17th March 1936 - 1st September 2021

William Pouchie Memorial United Church
Saturday 11th September, 2021
10:00 a.m.

Officiating Ministers:

Rev. Rohan Forrester
Rev. Godfrey Meghoo

Pianist:

Mr. Garth Webster

Funeral Registry Attendants:

Mrs. Lillian Burgos
Mrs. Babry-Dale Conolly

Interment at The W.O. Chisholm Family Cemetery

Order of Service

Opening Remarks Rev. Rohan Forrester
"Yes, I Know" New Direction
Prayer Rev. Rohan Forrester
Hymn - "It Is Well With My Soul" Congregation
Scripture Reading - Psalms 116: 15-19 & Revelation 14: Vs. 13 Mr. Donnie Dixon

Tributes

"I Want To Stroll Over Heaven With You" Pre-recorded
Daughter & Son-in-Law - Pam & Leroy Mitchell
"Until Then" Lisa Malice, Jenny Allen,
Kristy Watler, Tammie Chisholm, Mary Lou Miller & Susan Watler
Wife - Adelaide Ebanks

Benjamin's Life Story Mrs. Kerry Nixon, JP
"Beulah Land" Pre-recorded
Sermon Rev. Rohan Forrester
Closing Song: "Palms of Victory" New Direction
Benediction Rev. Rohan Forrester

Pall Bearers

Mr. Craig Nixon
Mr. Ernie Sherieff
Mr. Nigel Smith
Mr. Michael Nixon
Mr. Jordan McLaughlin
Mr. Brendon Malice

Ushers

Mr. Bruce Moore
Mrs. Terri Ebanks-Forbes
Mrs. Ethel McLean
Mr. Virgil Ebanks

Husband. Daddy. Hero.



Life Story of Benjamin Ebanks

On 17th March, 1936, in the quiet neighborhood of Channel Cliff, North Side Melville and Amy Ebanks welcomed their last boy and 8th child into family. He was blessed with the name Walter Benjamin. He was fondly called Benjamin or Benjie. He assumed the role of baby brother to his sisters Olinell, Lola, Kathleen and Orma and his brothers Astor, Harold and Robert. Soon after he became big brother to his sister Emma Mae the 9th and final sibling of the family.

Benjie attended the one-room school in North Side under the tutelage of Teacher Fray from age 7 until age 14 – he always told how you could only stay on until age 16 if your parents had a little money.

Benjie grew up in a loving and Christian home. Life was not easy in those days, there wasn't any money but then again there wasn't much to buy he would always say. Although he was the youngest boy, he was not spared any duties and had his share of work to do. He fished, caught crabs and assisted with the plantation so that the family had food on the table. If there was paid work available, he would go or would join his father and assist him. He was always so proud that once he got work, he was able to put a zinc roof on the family home.

On 12th June 1963 he married the love of his life Adelaide Erena McCoy. This marriage was true to their vows of "until death do us part", which was 58 years, 2 months and 20 days later. Benjie had built his house bit by bit over the years, while he was at sea and when he got married, he moved in even though there was no electricity.

Together they welcomed two girls Jennifer Elaine and Janet Pamella into their lives and raised them in a loving household. He was blessed with two grandchildren Jordan and Jessica, whom he treasured, two great grandsons Javen and Alexios and his precious Sky, who he loved unconditionally. Despite his ailing health when they arrived, he was always ready and willing to play whatever game they wished, especially hide and seek. He constantly told Alexios he was going to teach him to crawl one day.

Benjie started his working career at age 15 with H.O. Merren and Company in their hardware store. He then left the store and joined the Mispah at age 19 and went across the Panama Canal to Ecuador, loaded up with bananas which were transported to Tampa, Florida. He worked for them for three months and then like all other Caymanian men he joined National Bulk Carriers. He sailed the high seas for 12 years. He always said he never really liked it and was always homesick, but it was the only way to make a living at the time. He then found employment at home, first at Rum Point Club and later at Cayman Kai Resort, where he remained until 1993. For many years he had also had his own Property Management business, which he expanded at this time with the assistance of his wife. The business grew over the years, and he was so happy to be able to provide that service to many homeowners in the Rum Point/ Cayman Kai area, many of whom became his close friends. Together with his wife they also became a "fixture" at the Craft Market, where they sold produce from his backyard farm and sweet delicacies from their kitchen. Benjie loved this weekly outing as he got to see and talk with many people. He continued working fulltime up to 2016. He had a special knack for telling stories about his travels, his days in the tourism business and his life growing up. No matter how many times he told his stories they seemed more and more interesting and never boring. Benjie received the 1991 Role Model Award for his contribution to the tourism industry of the Cayman Islands – he was a true Ambassador for Cayman and was always selling our beautiful Cayman Islands. Even when he travelled on vacation, he used a Cayman Islands \$1.00 to start a conversation about Cayman.

Benjie loved to travel even though flying was not his passion. Whenever plans for vacation were being made, he was always ready to go – just give him the date and time. He made many trips and had some of the most enjoyable times. No theme park was too intimidating for him – he remained a child at heart especially when his grandchildren came along. He got a real kick out of watching them on the rides.

Benjie was a quick thinker and when on road trips he would always make up quick witty titles from the initials on the license plates and billboards. No one was bored when Benjie was around. He just had the talent for making everybody happy.

Benjie might have been slim in stature but make no mistake that was not because he did not eat. All his meals including breakfast were 3 or 4 courses, and always included some form of dessert. He never went without his dessert. First thing in the morning was some sort of cake and last thing at night was ice cream. Whenever he went to the buffet restaurants, he never used the small dessert bowls provided, he always got his dessert in the soup bowls as he could never have enough dessert, especially his ice cream. He also trained his grand children to eat ice cream before going to bed each night.

Benjie was a quiet, humble and unassuming gentleman. He was a hard worker and always kept himself busy. He had a heart of gold, and one could not visit and leave without a little bag of something to take home. Benjie had a real 'green thumb' and grew most everything. His plantation was his pride and joy.

Life Story continued...

Benjie was diagnosed with Cardiac Amyloidosis in 2010 but he continued to fight the disease with all he had right up to 4th August 2021 when he was admitted to George Town Hospital. Over the next 28 days he fought valiantly but lost the battle at 3:05AM on Wednesday 1st September 2021.

Left with shattered hearts but many wonderful memories are his:-

Wife: Adelaide

Daughters: Jennifer Dixon and Pam Mitchell

Sons-in-law: Donnie Dixon and Leroy Mitchell

Grandchildren: Jordan McLaughlin and Jessica Smith

Grandson-in-law: Nigel Smith

Great Grandchildren: Javen McLaughlin, Alexios Smith and Sky Smith

Special Girls: Jenny Allen and Lisa Malice and their families, whom he loved as his own

Brother: Robert Ebanks

Sister: Emmie Mae Walton

Beloved Niece: Kerry Nixon

Caregivers: Janet Perry and Lesey Russell-Fritz

His large extended family and friends local and overseas.

What a legacy, what a life. We invite each of you to keep Benjie alive in your heart. Now it's our turn to go live life to the fullest and keep his legacy alive.

Tributes

It is with great sorrow in my heart that I must write this tribute for dear Mr. Benjie. Even thou I knew about him, it wasn't until July of 2017 that I got to know him in a more personal way, when I started caring for his wife in their home.

I am so glad I got the opportunity to meet such a noble man of high standards and great character. Mr. Benjie was a very devoted husband who went above and beyond to make sure his wife was taken care of, even to his own detriment at time. He was a loving father, grandfather, and great grandfather to his offspring. I can see his big old smile when he saw them, he was always delighted when they came around.

Mr. Benjie was a caring and fair employer and was always very appreciative of everything. We had many long talks of his sea life, his family and friends and just good overall conversations. During my

time of knowing Mr. Benjie, I have never heard anyone speak negative about him. Even thou he was in a lot of pain sometimes he was always jovial and so calm. I remember he would say "I feel like a dead fowl" and we would both burst out laughing. Mr. Benjie was a good Christian man and even just prior to his passing he was singing lovely old time Christian hymns.

Even though I knew he was very ill I still find it hard to process the fact that he is really gone. He held my hand in both of his hands and told me how much he appreciated me and thanked me for everything.

Rest in Peace Mr. Benjie, you will never be forgotten by me!!

Janet

In loving memory of a very special Uncle. Words cannot express the sadness of loosing such a phenomenal Uncle. You were like no other, just an amazing human being. Benjie to us older ones and Uncle Benjie to the younger nieces and nephews, none the less we all feel blessed to have had the same opportunity to have had an uncle so dear as you. Thanks for all the great memories, for all those encouraging words, that infectious laugh and beautiful smile. We can most certainly say they don't make them like they used to. We loved you in life and love you in death the same, but Jesus loved you best.

Sleep on and take thy rest. May your precious soul rest in eternal peace.

Love always, Lola's Crowd

(Alex, Cardinal, Millicent, Sheila, Bonnie and Terri)

When I come to the river at the ending of day, When the last winds of sorrow have blown, there'll be somebody waiting to show the way, I won't have to cross Jordan alone!

Mr. Benjie was kind, generous and humble and nothing troubled him. Coming in contact with him was a blessing. During the time spent with him I learned a lot about the island and his life at sea. We often talked about his journeys at sea, and we counted 22 different countries he had visited but he said there were more, but he could not remember the names.

He would always say Lesey I don't see no good old days and I would say only good old memories. He would smile and say that's right.

During his final days in the hospital, we would have devotions. I never knew he was singer, but I tell you he sang every hymn you could think of to me, but his favorites were "It is well with my soul and I won't have to cross Jordan alone."

It is so hard to say goodbye to someone you love. I will cherish the many talks we had.

Sleep on Mr. Benjie, sleep on.

Lesey

Tribute from Jennifer

There is a secret about the amazing relationship that Daddy and I shared. You see we did not start out on such good terms. Shortly after I was born Daddy did what most Caymanian men did back then, he went back to sea and as was customary the trips were long - 9 months to a year. Needless to say, when he returned home, I had no idea who he was and I was petrified of him. He always laughed about how I would run and hide from him under Mama's frock tail, but that did not last long and before he knew it, he could not move without me. When he returned to sea on his next trip that did not last long either and soon, he returned and found a job here at home which allowed him to be around all the time. That decision went down well with me, and I became his shadow from I was a toddler.

When he started his job at the original Rum Point Club 55 years ago, roads up to this side of the island were virtually non-existent, therefore all visitors for the resort were brought by taxi to the North Sound Bacadere and Daddy went across by boat to collect them and guess who went on every trip he made ME. Therefore, I have been in the tourism business from a very early age, and it still runs in my blood today, because I was trained by the best - my Daddy. During this time of "water taxi", word came from the Police that someone was planning on confiscating a boat to leave the island and he should be very careful of his movements. Daddy tried to leave me behind on his next trip, but I would have no part of that and when he told me why and asked me what I would do if something happened to him, my reply, even though I was only but a child was "I would lay down beside him and die too". That feeling remains the same today.

The owners of Rum Point Club travelled a lot and during their times away Daddy stayed at the Club and mama, and I went with him. The owners of Rum Point Club had a Land-rover and Daddy used that to pick-up the staff each day in North Side. Times had changed and he had another mode of transportation, but what had not change was his shadow - ME. It was during one these early morning trips that I experienced my first trauma. Much to Daddy's dismay after allowing me to visit my grandmother while he did his pick-ups I managed to fall out of the hammock and knock out my first front teeth. He was never sure who suffered the most that day me or him.

Daddy has always been and will always be my hero - he was a master at everything - the old saying of "no job too big or small" described him perfectly. The biggest job he probably ever had was trying to get me to understand that cats don't like water and even when I decided against his instructions not to take the cat in the sea, he was still there for me after I suffered the consequences of my actions. Needless to say, he never had to explain that to me again.

As most probably know I love to bake and he was always willing to be my tester, but I have yet to hear him say something was not good, he always ate it all right way. When Mama would ask what I brought his reply was "I don't know but I ate it".

When I got married in 1985, I moved to Seven Mile Beach for about two years which meant I did not see him every

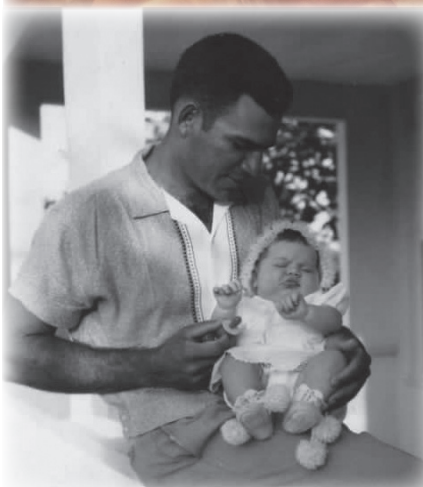
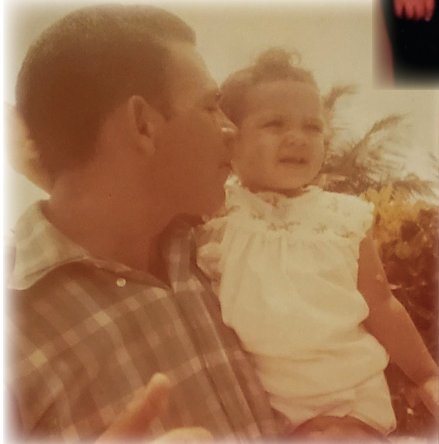
day and that was not good, but when he came to town on Thursdays, he always found me whether at work or home and brought me a little bag of something. Since moving back in 1987 when I built my home next door to him, we went right back to our usual routine. Since that day I have gone to his house every morning before I left for work, even when he was away, I would automatically turn into his gate. Being next door meant that I got treats all the time, he always had something for me and as soon as I got home, he would come over.

Since 2001, I had been on a hunt to sort out Daddy's health problems, we went up to Florida twice and each time he was deemed to be in good health, and we returned home. I was so relieved and thought I had got everything right, but he continued to experience the same symptoms. I had been to numerous doctors locally but to no avail until June 2010 when he was seen by a visiting Cardiologist at Heart Health. At that time Daddy was diagnosed with Amyloidosis for which there was no cure.

It was also discovered that he had a Thoracic Aortic Aneurysm. I was devastated - I had failed to make everything right this time. We travelled to Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, and I prayed that by some miracle something could be done to make him well again but that was not to be. I had failed again. Since that time, I spent countless hours researching the Internet trying to glean every possible piece of information I could get on these two conditions with a goal to making everything right. In November 2011 we again travelled to St. Luke's Mid-American Heart Institute in Kansas City, Kansas where he underwent further testing. Again, this only confirmed that his symptoms were all related to the Amyloidosis. Daddy was really struggling especially with his breathing and weakness in his legs. He was having great difficulty walking. Daddy was always a fast walker and most of the time when you walked with him you would be coming trailing behind as he was long gone. This changed, as his condition progressed, and it broke my heart that I could now walk as fast as him and I had a very hard time accepting this. In February 2014 Daddy had a set-back and was airlifted to Broward General in Ft. Lauderdale. Again, it was confirmed that all his issues were caused by the Amyloidosis. As we returned home, I realized that I had failed yet again. In April of 2015 during his check-up, it was confirmed that the amyloidosis had started to progress, this was not a good day for me. Over the past few years, the symptoms got progressively worse and with each check-up my greatest fear became more of a reality.

On 4th August, 2021 I took him for his check-up, and he was admitted to the George Town Hospital. On 8th August, I got the news that the medications were no longer working. He was then transferred to Health City for further assessment, but they also had the same findings. He was released and remained home until 23rd August when he was re-admitted to the George Town Hospital where he remained until his passing. My heart was shattered to see daddy suffering and not be able to help him. Despite his condition and with the little breath he had he constantly said thanks and remained grateful to the end.

Precious Memories



Precious Memories



Service at the Cemetery

Remarks..... Rev. Rohan Forrester
PrayerRev. Godfrey Meghoo
Committal Rev. Rohan Forrester
"I Won't Have To Cross Jordan Alone" Pre-Recorded
"When We All Get To Heaven" Pre-Recorded
"Jerusalem" Pre-Recorded
Benediction..... Rev. Rohan Forrester



Acknowledgement

We the family of Walter Benjamin Ebanks wish to convey our heartfelt gratitude and appreciation for your prayers and support during his illness and following the passing of our beloved one. It would have been a lot harder to navigate this period of loss without friends and family like you and for that, we say thank you.

The funeral was difficult, but we needed to say goodbye and celebrate his time with us. Thank you for coming and helping and supporting us in our grief. Your presence was appreciated and made this experience a little less difficult.

To Dr. Kreigel, Dr. Cummings and his team, Dr. Rohan, the nurses of ICU and the Medical Ward and the EMTs of the George Town Hospital and Dr. Ravi and the staff at Health City, thank you sincerely for your care and compassion during his illness.

There are no words to adequately express our appreciation to Janet and Lesey for all their unwavering support and compassionate care for him.

Thank you to Scott Ruby and the staff of Bodden Funeral Services for your kind assistance during this most difficult time.

Thanks a million to Kerry Nixon and Lillian Burgos for your constant presence and support.

A special thank you to Karen Ryan, of Platinum Impressions for her assistance, advice and patience in preparing the programme.

