



CELEBRATING
THE LIFE

of

*D*ONALD
FERNANDES
BECKFORD

JUNE 19, 1937–JULY 7, 2025

Memorial Service | July 21, 2025 | Floyd A. Williams Funeral Home | 490 Columbia Rd. | Boston, MA



OBITUARY

DONALD FERNANDES BECKFORD, affectionately known as Bug, Buggy, or Buggy, passed away on Monday, July 7, 2025, at Neville Center at Fresh Pond in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He was 88 years old. Donald earned his lifelong nickname from his mother's friends, who thought he was the cutest little "Love Bug."

Born on Saturday, June 19, 1937, in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada, to Alice E. Beckford (Jackson) and Harold S. Beckford. He was the fifth of six children: Millicent, Phyllis, Harold H., William, (Donald), and Alice. He moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts, with his mother and older siblings in 1937 when Donald was 2 months old, while his father remained on the water as a merchant marine. Donald attended Cambridge Public Schools and built a life rooted in hard work and unmistakable character. He served in the Army National Guard and carried himself with strength, pride, and a wicked sense of humor. He also worked as a meat lugger in the bustling meat markets of Boston and later at Polaroid in Cambridge.

Known for his pride and style, Donald had a love of Cadillac cars with "gangsta" whitewall tires and made sure everyone knew it. His favorite patch in all of his Cadillacs read, "Cash, Grass, or Ass, Nobody Rides for Free." Donald had a flair for the creative. He was known for painting and bedazzling walking sticks that Harold Sr., Harold Jr., and Cynthia would bring back as gifts from various countries — each one reflecting his colorful and original personality. Donald had a deep love for jazz music, which filled the home every Sunday morning while he cooked breakfast for his family — a tradition that became a part of his legacy. He was a passionate cook who loved to impress family and guests with dishes like chicken croquettes, perfectly prepared steak served with the thinnest cut French fries you could imagine, and his favorite — making his infamous lobster rolls for his grandkids. He surely had a special skill with kitchen knives. He also loved to bake lemon meringue pies and make his famous graham cracker pie crust from scratch. If he was in the kitchen, you knew something scrumptious was coming out to melt your taste buds.

He was the originator of many classic one-liners: "Nuttin' Honey," a favorite he often used, and other unfiltered favorites like "shut the f*** up," "kiss my hind parts," "you big Ninny," and "you can't bullsh** a bullshi**er." He said what he meant, and he meant what he said, and most people loved him for it — especially his sister Alice, who many thought was his wife.

Donald was a devoted father. From his first wife, Roberta, he had three daughters: Nancy, Phyllis, and Darlene. From his second wife, Rosetta, he had a son and a daughter: Harold Sr. and Cynthia. Cynthia will tell you that she was his FAVORITE because she is the baby of the bunch, whom he nicknamed "Cinny Baby." Each of his children had a special place in his heart. Although not always displayed in the best way, he did the best he thought he could.

His love for his firstborn daughter Nancy was undeniable. He had all of the young boys in Cambridge afraid to date her. He would often visit her job and on occasion would unintentionally embarrass the hell out of her. One embarrassing visit resulted in him sitting at her desk and attempting to put a catheter together. He loved to go fishing with Phyllis, and he loved to bring Harold Sr., Cynthia, and Shelley to Darlene's track meets. He even shined Darlene's boots while she was in the police academy and refused to help Cynthia shine her shoes when she was in the police academy, because as he put it, "Uncle Sam taught you how to shine shoes, so you can shine your own shoes!"

He enjoyed taking Harold and Cynthia to various carnivals and arcades throughout Massachusetts. And he taught his children and grandchildren how to drive just as recklessly as he did. His love for his family was as big and bold as he was. He had no problem saying, “I wish someone would try to fu** with my family!”

He was the best grandfather any grandkid could ask for. His grandkids would go to his house just to hang out or dig out of the candy bucket, purchased just for them. And he made sure to keep the bucket filled with each of their favorite candies. He was a man of unwavering presence and boundless love.

To his grandchildren, he was more than just a grandfather — he was a constant source of joy, wisdom, and comfort. If his grandchildren asked for something, he found a way to give it. If his grandkids needed advice, his words were steady and true. If his grandchildren were down, he could lift them up with a joke, a story, or just the sound of his laugh. His legacy lives on in every smile he gave them and every lesson he taught with patience and heart — including every slur word in the book.

He is preceded in death by his parents, siblings Millicent, Phyllis, Harold H., and William, and daughter Nancy. Buggy leaves to celebrate his life and mourn his passing his children: Phyllis Beckford, Darlene (Beckford) Pearson (James), Harold Beckford Sr. (Tania), and Cynthia Beckford-Brewington; his 7 grandchildren: Shelley (Beckford) Flaherty (Ehren), Carolyn Butler, Kyla Beckford, Harold Beckford Jr., Jayda Pearson, Zaria Brewington, and Kamyia Beckford; seven great-grandchildren: Deavoni Beckford, Demetri Flaherty, Chance Flaherty, Amari Flaherty, Khaleil Butler, SurKhari Cotrell, Xyla Colebrooke; and one great-great-grandchild: Kayden Gordon.

His former wife Rosetta (Smith) Beckford, sister Alice (Beckford) Burke, nephew Nelson Woodfork, niece Nancy Woodfork, sisters-in-law Ayako “Ike” Beckford and Cynthia Johnson-Smith, and a host of other family and friends.



Order of Service

REMARKS

Family and Friends

FAMILY TRIBUTE

Led by Zaria Brewington
& Kamyia Beckford

OBITUARY

FINAL VIEWING

RECESSIONAL



IN LOVING MEMORY OF DADDY BUGG

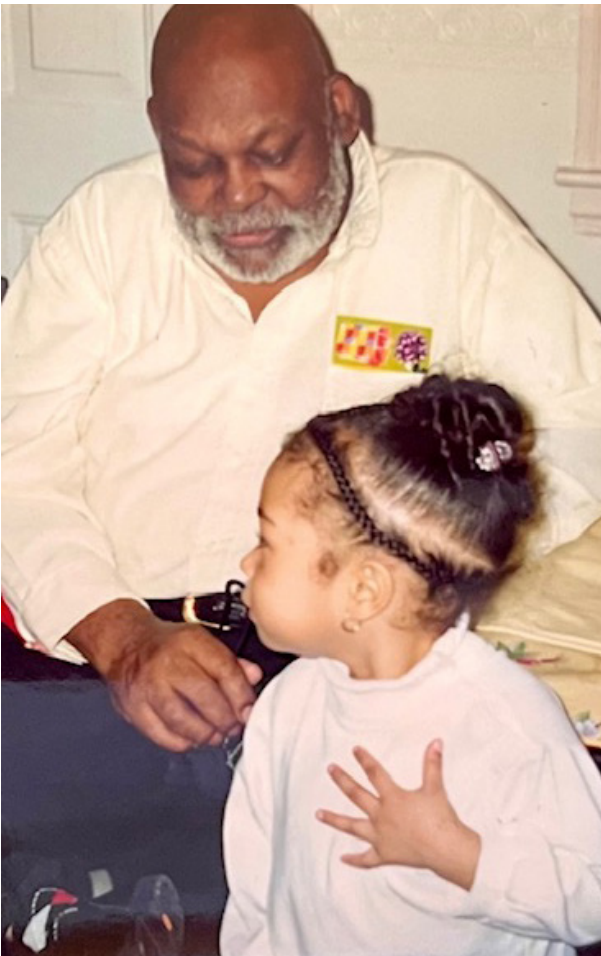
He told it like it was, no sugar, no gloss,
A quick-witted laugh, always the boss.
He'd drop a joke (or a curse) out of the blue,
Leave us all laughing — that's just what he'd do.

A heart so big, a spirit so wild,
A tough old man with the heart of a child.
Stories so bold, sometimes not fit for the kids,
But oh, how we loved every wild thing he did.

Unpredictable, sharp, and stubborn as hell,
But also the softest — we all could tell.
Grandfather, legend, our family's bright spark,
His love and his jokes lit up every dark.

We'll miss his wisecracks and all that he taught,
The memories, the laughter, the joy that he brought.
Rest easy, Daddy Bugg — raise some hell up above,
We'll keep laughing and living in the warmth of your love.

Love, your granddaughter Carolyn
and great-grandson Khaleil



BEST GRANDFATHER

Poem by Kamya Beckford

He didn't sit quiet — oh no, not him,
His laugh could fill a room to the brim.
First to speak, first to cheer,
If you looked out, he'd be right near.

He wasn't a saint — and never claimed to be,
But he gave his all to his family.
Through flaws and fire, grit and grace,
His love lived loud in every space.

The grandkids knew — he was our guy,
The one who'd lift us when we'd cry.
The one who'd brag, the one who'd tease,
The one who cooked just what we'd please.

He cheered the hardest, bragged with pride,
Our names like medals at his side.
He'd never let one go unseen —
Each grandchild part of his great dream.

So here's to the man, proud and loud,
Who stood up tall, who stood out proud.
Our grandfather, with voice and flame,
Who made this family, and gave it name.

We carry him now—in stories, in song,
In sweet little candies when days feel long.
And in the way we show up and love with might,
We keep his spirit burning bright.



DADDY

You were the first man to hold my heart, a heart that pumped with pride and joy to be your Babygirl. You taught me how to stick up for myself and defend myself. You would always say, "If anyone touches you, you better pick up a brick or the biggest thing you can find and bust them in the head with it." I must say, that surely didn't go over well when I picked up my chair and threw it at my 2nd grade teacher. I guess child abuse wasn't a thing back then because I can remember the spanking I received from you in front of the whole class and the apology you made me give the next day.

Although I was a Daddy's girl, you were hard on me about receiving my education and reminded me on Sunday nights with the spanking I would get before going to bed, simply to remind me not to act up in school come Monday morning.

Whatever I wanted, I knew I could count on my Daddy to get it for me, even if it wasn't practical — like the year (I was 7 or 8) I asked for 2 dogs because Harold had 2 cats.

Polaroid camera in hand, you were there at every dance recital in the audience as my biggest fan. You volunteered to be a chaperone on class field trips, always driving behind the school bus with the convertible top down. My friends thought you were the coolest dad at the bus stop every morning. You would allow Harold and me to take turns picking friends to pile into the car to watch cartoons on the black-and-white TV you had in the car while we waited for the school bus to come. No one could touch Harold's nor my coolness.

Amusement parks, local carnivals, wrestling matches at the Boston Garden on Wednesday nights, movies, Nantasket Beach, Salem Willows, Niagara Falls, and anywhere else we wanted to go — you made it happen.

My middle school friends enjoyed coming to our house after school and on the weekends because of your presence. Whether it was the food you cooked or the entertainment of you and Aunt Lady going back and forth with each other, they always left with a smile on their face and laughter in their soul.

You loved cooking, baking pies, card games, Cribbage, deep-sea fishing, talking a bunch of crap, and bedazzling your walking sticks. Although I never learned how to play Cribbage, the cooking, baking, card games, fishing, talking a bunch of crap, and bedazzlement are all things I enjoy today and will continue to do, knowing that I learned them from you.

When I became a mother, I witnessed you being the BEST grandfather I could ever want for Zaria. She never wanted for anything. You were there for her anytime she called, especially on the nights when I worked the midnight shift and it would be thundering and lightning. Even though she had Carolyn and Jihad there to protect her, she would wake you out of your bed to drive from Cambridge to Boston just so she would feel comforted.

Daddy, I could go on and on telling everyone who you were to me...

Your name lives on in every dusk and dawn. The laughs we shared and the life you gave will echo strong beyond the grave. Now, as I walk this world apart, you walk beside me, in my heart.

I love you, Daddy!

Love, your Poor Poor Cinnie Baby



A LETTER TO DADDY BUG

Dear Daddy Bug,

You have a beautiful, great-granddaughter by the name of Xyla Marie Colebrooke. She entered the world on 11/11 @ 9:17 p.m. as my sweet little miracle. She is cute, smart, brave, and knows what she wants. She also gets what she wants, just like I would if I were with you. I know if you'd seen her, you would've probably tried to fight longer. I could not have that for you. You fought so long and made a beautiful family. Somehow you made it so everyone was raised together — Ma's kids and Nana's kids — you literally created a village. And here we all are to celebrate you.

I remember seeing you cry for the first time because you thought you lost Harold, Zaria, and me at Six Flags. You were a hard man, so I thought you never cried — your crying left us confused. We can laugh about it now, but back then we were in for it! Our names being shouted out on the loudspeaker, the silent ride home, the yelling of our parents when we got back.

I will never forget the unlimited tokens that we got at Good Times. We would finish the first cup of tokens and come back sad because we knew it was time to go — only to see the cups refilled. It was like the fun with you never ended.

I remember wondering where in the front row you were sitting during dance recitals because I knew if I could see anyone, it would be you. You would have your camcorder ready to record every performance, zooming in on your kids.

I remember refusing school lunch and having everyone in the school worried that I wasn't eating, so you would show up three times a week to bring me Riverside, Chinese, ham and cheese sandwiches that were so loaded with ham you could make two sandwiches out of the amount of meat — and whatever else I asked for. It did not matter what school I was at. You were there with my food, hot and ready to eat. And when you brought me food, it wasn't a normal portion — it was enough to feed half the class.

I remember always having money when going on field trips. No matter where I was going, you were outside with \$20–\$200 depending on the trip. You made me feel like money was endless, because all I had to do was ask. It's like the word “no” didn't exist to you when I was young.

You showed me what it was like to just be a girl. I remember getting in trouble and running across town to your house just to be understood. You made your open doors my safe space to be me. It didn't matter if I did it or not — you were always on my side.

I remember you seeing me off to senior prom and getting into a car accident because you were from the era where there was no GPS — and I was a bad direction giver. When the girl was done doing my makeup and I had gotten all dressed up and ready, I got back in your car and you just gazed at me. You told me how beautiful I looked.

Later that night after prom, my friends and I all came there and got ready for the after party. You told me to have fun — but not too much fun. And I did indeed have fun that night — me and all my girls.

You were so proud of me for sticking it out and getting my diploma from them €*%#+%#€ — because we both know they were a pain in my tuchus!

I always tell people you are the man that helped raise me, as we spent so much time together. I am so happy to see you finally made it to the other side, because you talked about it so much towards the end — hell, I even thought about putting you there a couple of times!

No matter how much wrongdoing we did to each other, your door, your heart, and your wise words were always there to comfort me.

—Your Favorite Grandchild, Kyla



Pall Bearers

HAROLD BECKFORD JR.

RENIEL “JUNIOR” CARTY

ERIK SMITH

DEREK GOODMAN

ROYZIE HARDING

DEAN SCOTT

ALEXIS “LEX” MASON

Repast immediately following burial:

*American Legion, Marsh Post
4423 Greenough Blvd.
Cambridge, MA 02138*



A heartfelt thanks to Royzie Harding who visited our dad very frequently and always took the time to hang out with him whenever he could for hours at a time.

Thank you to Tony Brooks who continuously came to our dad's rescue and helped keep his belly full from the "Coast Cafe."