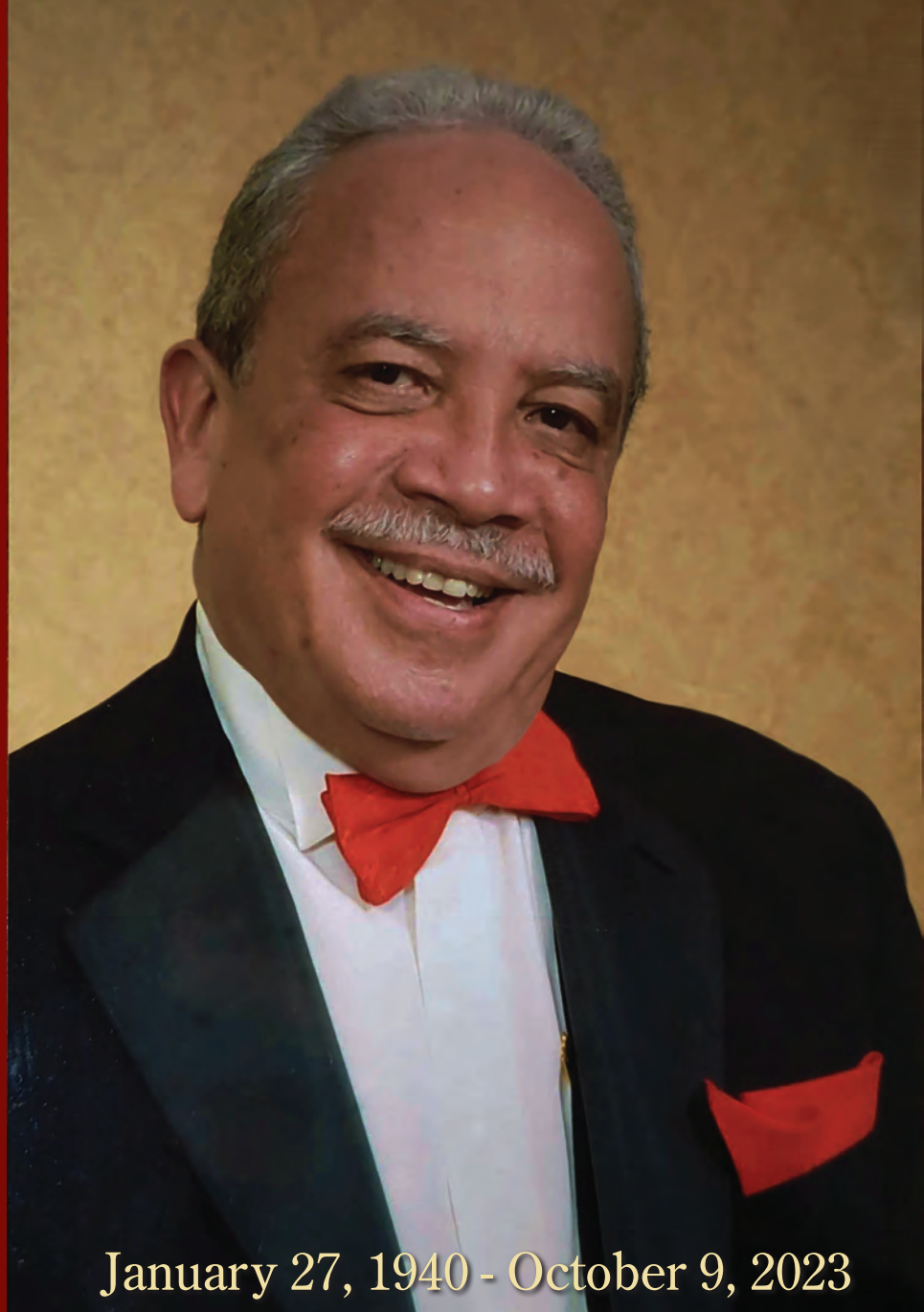


JOHN TAYLOR



January 27, 1940 - October 9, 2023

Celebration of Life

The Reverend Julian Armand Cook, Officiating
Pastor, Lincoln Heights Missionary Baptist Church, Cincinnati, Ohio

Friday, December 1, 2023
at 1:30pm

The Historic Charles Street AME Church
551 Warren Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02119

Reverend Dr. Gregory G. Groover, Sr., Pastor

Obituary

John Lenoir “Butch” Christian *A visionary in every sense*

“What a Man, What a Man, What a mighty good Man!” - En Vogue

John’s life story is one that encapsulates the very essence of this quote. Despite being diagnosed with macular degeneration from a young adult, which rendered him legally blind, John’s visionary spirit saw possibilities where most saw barriers.

Born on January 27, 1940, in Winton, North Carolina, to John and Addie Beatrice Christian, John’s educational roots ran deep. Guided by a lineage of educators – his grandmother and father – John’s brilliance shone early on. He was a beacon in the Liberty Park community, excelling both academically and as a star basketball player at Booker T. Washington High School in Norfolk, VA.

College took John to Hampton Institute in Hampton, Virginia. In 1958, John was inducted into the Olympic Social Club, Omega Sigma Chi. Members were known as “PICS” on Hampton’s campus and all embraced the true spirit of friendship and camaraderie. Living up to his pledge name of Zeus, he became a valued leader in the organization and gave his guidance and support throughout his life. John’s early years at Hampton started with a slight academic stumble, which turned into a defining moment. A candid conversation with his father ignited a spark in John. Returning with determination, he achieved honors and graduated in 1962 with a B.S. in Chemistry.

Although he seriously considered becoming a doctor, John’s true passion was teaching. However, recognizing the financial constraints of the profession, he pivoted and moved to Washington, DC. There, John began penning scientific abstracts for NASA, swiftly climbing to the position of Branch Chief at the NASA Scientific and Technical Information Facility, and then climbing to Division Manager. At every step, John broke barriers, being the pioneering Black individual in each role.

In 1969, Boston became the backdrop for two significant milestones in John's life. Professionally, he joined Polaroid, swiftly moving through the ranks and etching his name as the first Black Manager of Financial Administration and then Division Controller. His trailblazing streak continued when he was hired as the Vice President and General Manager of the Trustees of Health and Hospitals; a private City of Boston corporation that received and managed grants and contracts for medical and public health research for Boston City Hospital and the Neighborhood Health Centers. Under his leadership revenue grew from \$8.5 million a year to a staggering \$80 million.

On the personal front, 1969 held another treasure – Lesley Evans. Their paths crossed, leading to a heartwarming 51-year partnership, sealed in matrimony in 1972. Their love story is personified in their children: the accomplished Andrea Christian Parks, an Atlanta-based physician, and the distinguished John A. Christian II, a Captain with United Airlines.

John's vision extended beyond his immediate circle. He was a pillar in the Boston community. He served on numerous non-profit boards, but by far his major passion and love was for the Crispus Attucks Children's Center where he served as board chair for 45+ years. With Lesley helming the Center as President and CEO, together, they transformed it into a haven for Black families, ensuring generations of children received top-tier early education.

John was a true man's man and a leader in two key organizations. The Boston Chapter of the National Association of Guardsman, Incorporated, and Beta Beta Boule' of Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity - the oldest Black Greek Letter Fraternity in the United States. Both organizations are committed to fellowship and camaraderie among professional African American men, and are but two of the numerous organizations to which John belonged.

The Guardsmen with a social agenda of friendship, travel, and fun, and the Boule' with its commitment to public service through social action, played a meaningful and significant role in John's life.

Rooted in faith, John was a beacon for all – a devoted husband, doting father, grandfather, a true friend, and mentor to many. He cherished family traditions, always tipping his hat to his parents for imparting invaluable life lessons, and imparting those same lessons on his family, friends and the greater Boston community.

In remembering John L. Christian, we're not just recounting a series of achievements; we're celebrating a life well lived, driven by vision, resilience, and boundless love with a legacy that will continue to inspire. We are here today to honor a man who against every obstacle, clearly envisioned, aimed for, and achieved the outstanding.

John is survived by his wife, Lesley, his children, Andrea and John, his sister, Althea, six grandchildren, nieces, nephews, cousins, and extended family from all over the country.

WE LIFT UP AND HONOR THE LIFE OF JOHN LENOIR “BUTCH” CHRISTIAN

Volunteer Positions

- Board – City Mission Society
- Board – Lena Park CDC
- Board – Roxbury Multi-Service Center
- Board – Big Brother of Mass Bay
- Board – Crispus Attucks Children's Center
- Board – Brookline Community Foundation
- Board – Society of Research Administrators
- Board – NAACP Boston Branch

Elected Positions

- President – Men's Council, Hampton University
- President – Boston Guardsman
- Sire Archon – Beta Beta Boule
- Town Meeting – Brookline, MA
- President – International Society of Research Administrators
- National President – Guardsmen, Incorporated
- Chairman – Crispus Attucks Children's Center

First African American

- Branch Chief – Nasa Scientific & Technical Information Facility; Bethesda, MD
- Division Manager – Documentation, Incorporated; College Park, MD
- Manager – Financial Administrator, Polaroid Corporation; Waltham, MA
- Division Controller - Polaroid Corporation; Cambridge, MA
- Vice President & General Manager – Trustees of Health and Hospitals Incorporated; Boston, MA

Celebration of Life

John Lenoir “Butch” Christian

Pre Memorial Ritual and Tribute

Omega Ritual: Beta Beta Boule’ of Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity

Poem - *Guardsmen Farewell*: The Boston Chapter of the National Association of Guardsmen

MEMORIAL SERVICE

PRELUDE

Rollins Ross Trio

Welcome and Invocation

Reverend Gregory G. Groover

Scriptures on Friendship: Proverbs 17:17, 1 Peter 4:8-10

Aria Parks

Reflections

Harold Graves
Ronald Walker

Musical Selection

Sirgourney Cook

Pastoral Prayer and The Lord’s Prayer

Reverend Julian A. Cook

Scriptures on Community: Proverbs 31:8-9, 1 Timothy 6:18

Perry Parks V

Reflections

John Jenkins
David Spackman

Saxophone Solo

J O Wharton

Scriptures on Family: Ephesians 5:25, Proverbs 22:6, 17:6

Analiese Parks

Family Reflections

Andrea Christian Parks
John A. Christian II

Reading of Obituary

Perry Parks IV

Musical Selection

Sirgourney Cook

Eulogy

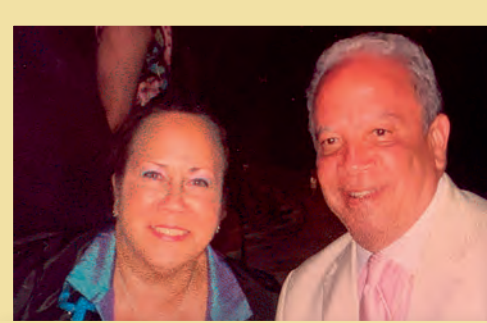
Reverend Julian A. Cook

BENEDICTION

Family Recessional

Rollins Ross Trio

*Reception Immediately following:
ABCD Thelma D. Burns Building (next door)*





JOHN LENOIR



John L. Christian
LEGEND

John L. Christian, II
LEGACY

Expressions of Gratitude

The family thanks all who have joined them to celebrate the life of John Lenoir Christian and for all the heartfelt expressions of love, prayers, and support extended to them during their time of bereavement.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made in his memory to:

Crispus Attucks Children's Center

105 Crawford Street, Dorchester, MA 02121

Online Donations: www.crispus-attucks.org

or

Joe Andruzzi Foundation (JAF)

49 Plain Street, Suite 500 North Attleboro MA 02760

Attn: Sandy Clinton

JAF Online Donations:



Ushers

Members of The Boston Chapter of Links Incorporated

Special Thanks To:

*Ms. Barbara Edelin, Ms. Harriette Smith,
Ms. Sasha Beason-Christian, and Mr. Shawn A. Hunt*

Final Arrangements Entrusted To:

Davis Funeral Home

89 Walnut Street

Roxbury, MA 02119