

Freeman Earl Robbins

DEC 15, 1932 - JUL 5, 2023



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Freeman Earl Robbins, Sr., 90, departed us for his eternal reward from his San Diego, California home on July 5, AD 2023, after struggling with a few health problems. He was a brilliant man and whatever he set his mind to do, he did with excellence. It is hard to describe it all and here are some highlights of this extraordinary person's life.

Freeman, the first of five children, was born on December 15, 1932, to +Dorothy Bohne and +Alec Robbins (of Green Island – Troy area) in the Village of Green Island, Albany County, New York where he attended his elementary school years.

He grew up living in Troy and later Stephentown, NY in his early teens where his family now included his mom, his beloved stepfather (+Alwyn E. Strait) (Dad), two brothers (+Alec Raymond and +Lawrence Dale), and sister (Gwendolyn Leone). Freeman graduated from there at New Lebanon Central High School, Lebanon Springs, NY on June 27, 1950, with honors in Music. Freeman had a love of classical music and hoped to go to The Juilliard School to become a pianist.

Dad had other plans and persuaded Freeman to go to laundry management school hoping that he would one day take over the business. Dutifully Freeman followed this plan but paused work at Snow White Laundry in Troy to serve in the U.S. Army.

He enlisted and honorably served in the Army (Quartermaster Corps) from March 5, 1951, to March 4, 1954, during the Korean War. Corporal Robbins served in both Japan and Korea (1816 Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 1264 ASU, amongst his units), and was invited to go to Officer Candidate School. He declined and received the "Occupation Medal (Japan)," "Korean Service Medal" with three "Bronze Service Stars," "United Nations Service Medal," and a "Merit Unit Commendation." Upon discharge Freeman returned to his family and worked at the family laundry. Interestingly, he and his two brothers each served in different branches of the military during the Korean War and all were proud American Patriots.



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During his military service he discovered that his calling/dream was in electronics and communications and while back at the family laundry he enrolled at DeVry Institute. His first job in comms was with Bell Telephone located in a tiny brick building in Stephentown, NY and later he also worked in the Newark, New Jersey area.

The years of 1956 and 1957 were joyful years as he and his first wife, the late, Margaret Elizabeth LaFleur (Betty) had their first son, Freeman Earl, Jr., and daughter, Gwendolyn Leone, who is named after her Aunt Gwendolyn. In between his two children, Freeman's fifth sibling, Brendalee Strait was also born.

About 1960, he moved to southern California with his young family and eventually began working at Vandenberg Air Force Base on the Minuteman project. At the same time, he continued his college education through a joint program with a Santa Maria college and Vandenberg AFB resulting in an associate degree. This launched Freeman further into the NASA Space Program as a Field Engineer and Communications and Electronics Technician contractor for first Chrysler Corporation in New Orleans, Louisiana and then Bendix Corporation in Ascot, England, Quito, Ecuador, and then Goldstone Tracking Station near Barstow, CA tracking and commanding satellites. While with Bendix he trained and worked in many positions including Shift Supervisor, Telemetry Technician, DHE Technician, Receive Antenna Technician, and Command Technician.

In Yermo, CA on September 15, 1972, Freeman married his fiancée, "Cecy" (Clara) Cecilia Vicenta (Ibarra) Robbins. After marrying Cecy, Freeman left Bendix and spent a couple of years as an Electrician for the Santa Fe Railroad in Barstow and then in 1976, the couple drove to Ecuador to run their store on their property in the town of Esperanza.

Freeman and Cecy moved back to the United States to San Diego around 1984 and have lived there ever since. Freeman attended nursing and computers classes doing outstanding in all but decided to pursue an alternate trail. In 1986 Freeman began working for the San Diego County Sheriff's Department in Records and Booking, retiring with distinction after serving for ten years on January 31, 1996. Freeman also supported his wife in her beauty shop, Cecilia's Hair Fashions in San Diego doing logistical and bookkeeping activities until June this year.

Of interest, Freeman traveled a lot and has lived on or visited most continents. He was a church attending Christian, participated in Cub Scouts, Elks, and the San Diego Ecuadorian Club. His



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hobbies included piano (played brilliantly), reading, puttering at home, maintaining their gardens, and spoiling the Pomeranians he and Cecy adopted.

Freeman is remembered as a man of strong convictions, who held great admiration for his wife, Cecy of 51 years. He was a caring Dad, loving Grandpa, Brother, and Friend. He is also spoken of as a provider, positive, optimistic, encouraging, grateful, content, kind, studious, and Pro-Life and American. Additionally, he regarded with great affection Maria Angelica Case (Angie), Bertha Ibarra, and Maria Victoria Pinargote (Vicky) (sisters-in-law), and +Juan Hugo Gonzalez (like a son).

Freeman is survived by his wife, Cecilia; his children - Freeman, Jr. and Gwendolyn Leone Mahlum; his grandchildren - Freeman III (Silke), +Elliott, Nicholas, Hillary (Colton Stanger), Jonathan, Monica, Beatrix, Zachary (Jessica) Mahlum, Joshua Mahlum, and Casandra Alcantara; his great grandchildren - Mary, Ramona, Jon, Easton, Elizabeth, Dominick, Julian, and Issac; and his sisters - Gwendolyn Leone (Robbins) Brown (Jim), and Brendalee (Strait) Reid (Dan).

He was predeceased by his two younger brothers: Alec Raymond Robbins, and Lawrence Dale Robbins; and his dearly loved grandson, Elliott Jerome Robbins (SFC, U.S. Army) who left us in Afghanistan on June 29/30, 2019.

There will be a service (date TBD) at Miramar National Cemetery, 5795 Nobel Dr, San Diego, CA 92122 where he will be interred.

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Come to Freeman's assistance, all ye saints of God. Meet him, all ye angels of the Lord, receiving his soul, presenting it in the sight of God Almighty. Amen.




Events


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Committal Service

 **Monday**, January 15, 2024

 12:00 PM - 12:30 PM PT

 **Miramar National Cemetery**
5795 Nobel Drive, San Diego CA 92121





Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Freeman by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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