

Obituaries



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Amelia Boynton Robinson

Civil rights activist Amelia Boynton Robinson dies

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (AP) — Amelia Boynton Robinson, a civil rights activist who helped lead the 1965 “Bloody Sunday” voting rights march and was the first black woman to run for Congress in Alabama, died early Wednesday

at age 104, her son Bruce Boynton said.

Boynton Robinson was among those beaten during the march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, in March 1965 that became known as “Bloody Sunday.” State troopers tear-gassed and clubbed marchers as they tried crossing the bridge. A newspaper photo featuring an unconscious Boynton Robinson drew wide attention to the movement.

“The truth of it is that was her entire life. That's what she was completely taken with,” Bruce Boynton said of his mother's role in shaping the civil rights movement. “She was a loving person, very supportive — but civil rights was her life.”

Fifty years after “Bloody Sunday,” Barack Obama, the first black president of the United States, held her hand as she was pushed across the bridge in a wheelchair during a commemoration.

“She was as strong, as hopeful, and as indomitable of spirit — as quintessentially American — as I'm sure she was that day 50 years ago,” Obama said Wednesday in a written statement. “To honor the legacy of an American hero like Amelia Boynton requires only that we follow her example — that all of us fight to protect everyone's right to vote.”

Boynton Robinson, hospitalized in July after a stroke, turned 104 on Aug. 18. Her family said in a written statement that she was surrounded by loved ones when she died around 2:20 a.m. at a Montgomery, Alabama hospital.

In January, Boynton Robinson attended the State of the Union address as a special guest of Rep. Terri Sewell, D-Alabama, who said Boynton Robinson's 1964 run for Congress paved the way for her as Alabama's first elected black congresswoman. Boynton was the first black woman to run for Congress in the state and the first Alabama woman to run as a Democrat, according to the Encyclopedia of Alabama.

Sewell said in January that Boynton refused to be intimidated and ultimately saw the impact of her work when the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was signed into law. Boynton Robinson was invited as a guest of honor to attend the signing by President Lyndon B. Johnson.

Lewis, D-Georgia, called Boynton Robinson fearless and said in a written statement that she was one of the civil rights movement's most dependable and tireless leaders.

“I am so glad she lived to see Dr. King lead a march from Selma to Montgomery, that she lived to see the Voting Rights Act signed into law, that she lived to see the amazing transformation our work gave rise to in America,” Lewis said.

Boynton Robinson worked with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, helped organize the Selma to Montgomery march and asked Martin Luther King Jr. to come to Selma to galvanize the local community.

The Rev. C.T. Vivian worked closely with King and said he knew Boynton Robinson when she lived in Selma. Through fighting for voting rights, she and others were fighting for the right to be considered fully American at a time when black people were still being denied basic freedoms, Vivian said.

“You just don't know how cruel, how non-thinking, how devilish, how hateful people could be. Just to hear this brings it all out for me,” Vivian said. “It just hurts.”

SCLC President and CEO Charles Steele said in a written statement that Boynton Robinson was “the straw that stirred the drink,” and compared her legacy in Selma to that of Rosa Parks in Montgomery.

“Her leadership and her courage sparked and sustained a movement that has transformed not just the South, but the entire country,” Southern Poverty Law Center CEO Richard Cohen said in a written statement, adding that the nation owes her a debt of gratitude.

Boynton Robinson, born in Savannah, Georgia, worked as an educator there and with the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Selma. Tuskegee University officials have said she graduated from the school in 1927 and donated much of her personal memorabilia from the 1950s and 1960s to the university.

Boynton said his family is planning events in his mother's honor in Tuskegee and Selma, and is also arranging a ceremony at the Edmund Pettus Bridge on Sept. 8.

JAY FUNERAL HOME



NANNETTE CHRISTINE GARCIA, died August 29. Viewing will be held 5 pm Saturday, September 5 at Jay Chapel.



GEORGE THOMPSON, died August 29. Funeral will be held 10 am Saturday, September 5 at Covenant Missionary Baptist Church.


HALL FERGUSON-HEWITT MORTUARY



CARMEN ETIENNE, 93 Years Old, died August 21. Funeral will be held 11 am Saturday, September 5, at Bethel Evangelical Baptist Church.


ALTHEA MERRITT SAMPLE, 78, retired Music Teacher, died August 24. Funeral will be held 11 am Saturday, September 5 at Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration.

JAMES C. BOYD FUNERAL HOME




FELIX BRYANT III, 30. Funeral will be held 11 am Saturday, September 5 at Mount Bethel Ministries.

AVIANCE P. MILLER, 26. Funeral will be held 2 pm Saturday, September 5 at James C. Boyd Funeral Home.




ST FORT'S FUNERAL HOME




PENELOPE CICHOWLAS, 96, Executive Secretary, died August 23. Funeral services are private.

BHAGWANDAI PERSAD, 82, Homemaker, died August 21. Funeral will be held in Trinidad.



ROY MIZELL & KURTZ FUNERAL HOME



JANIE BELL WHITFIELD, 85, died August 23. Funeral will be held 11 am Saturday, September 5 at Roy Mizell & Kurtz Worship Center.

PAX VILLA ORLANDO



KIM BOLLING, 47, died August 22. Funeral arrangements are pending.

CHARLES MULLER, 67, died August 18. Funeral will be held 1:30 pm Saturday, September 5 at Philadelphia Haitian Baptist Church - Orlando.

WILNES VINCENT, 76, died August 23. Service will be held 10 am Saturday, September 6 at Beracah II French Seventh-day Adventist Church - Orlando.



WRIGHT & YOUNG FUNERAL HOME




ALVIN BLUNT, 61, Truck Driver, died August 27. Funeral will be held 2pm, Saturday, August 12 at Martin Memorial A.M.E. Church.

RONNIE HIGGS, 67, Patient Care Technician, died August 29. Funeral arrangements are incomplete.

GEORGE EDWARD KING, 73, Bus Operator, died August 30. Funeral will be held 11 am, Saturday, August 12 at St. Matthew Freewill Baptist Church.

HADLEY DAVIS FUNERAL HOME MLK




THEODORE EDWARD CARR, 82, Forklift Driver, died August 30. Funeral will be held 10 am Saturday, September 5 at MLK Chapel.

GLADSTON JOHNSON, 77, Landscaper, died August 30. Funeral arrangements are incomplete.

ANTHONY LEWITT LOVE, 59, Security, died August 30. Funeral will be held 2 pm Saturday, September 5 at MLK Chapel.

LUCY BANKS NELSON, 61, School Aide, died August 26. Funeral will be held 1 pm Saturday, September 5 At Mt. Calvary MBC.



ERIC S. GEORGE FUNERAL HOME



EVERAN L. FORBES, 42, Construction Worker, died August 3. Funeral will be held 3 pm Sunday, September 6 at West Park Seventh Day Adventist Church - West Park, FL.

LISH D. GOODEN, 50, died August 24. Funeral will be held in Weyanoke, Louisiana.

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RANGE FUNERAL HOME



PAULINE SHAW SMITH, 91, retired Custodian died August 28. Funeral will be held 1 pm Friday, September 4 at Antioch Baptist Church of Miami Gardens.

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