



# Virneda F. Thomas

JAN 20, 1927 - MAY 31, 2016



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## **Virneda F. Thomas**

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**V**irneda F. Thomas was born in Memphis, Tennessee on January 20, 1927 to Samuel A. Bradley and Violet F. Bradley. The first born of 5 children, Virneda learned responsibility at a young age after her mother fell ill with her first stroke in her later years of elementary. She helped care for her 2 sisters Mary (Bradley)Johnson (deceased), Delores (Bradley) Lewis (deceased), and 2 brothers, Andrew Bradley (deceased) and Henry Bradley (present). Virneda showed her strength and perseverance by graduating from Cooperative Elementary and Booker T. Washington H.S. with honors through all her trials and tribulations. Virneda knew the importance of a good education and attended LeMoyne Owens College in 1944. In 1948 she graduated with a BA in her majors of Art and English. Throughout her 4 years in college Virneda held multiple jobs which gave her the opportunity to travel to various parts of the U.S. during the summers. She was also an active member of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority. In the mist of Virneda's full and busy life she met the love her life Oliver K. Thomas in 1946. On June 5, 1948 Oliver and Virneda became husband and wife. Like any marriage they dealt with hardships that stood the test of time. Even though Virneda was now a wife she remained dedicated to the care and well being of her mother by remaining home for a short period after her marriage. In late 1949 Virneda's husband entered officer's training school Artillery Division at Fort Sill, OK with the U.S. Army. He graduated to become Second Lieutenant. In 1950 Virneda became pregnant with their first child Oliver C. Thomas, born Sept 20, 1950. Due to Oliver's deployment to Korea in June of that year, he was unable to be by her side throughout the pregnancy and birth of their son as well as the death of her mother whom passed 8 days after Oliver's birth. He returned stateside Nov. 1950 due to a severe second injury. She rejoined her husband at Fort Sam Houston Hospital in San Antonio, TX. In 1951 after her husbands reoperation, they moved back to Fort Sill, OK. Oliver was promoted to First Lieutenant in 1952



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and on April 25, 1952 they welcomed their second son John E. Thomas into the world. Later that year they moved to Alexander, Ark. Oliver started working for The Tuberculosis Sanatorium, at the time was the largest African American employer in the state. On Aug 11, 1955 the welcomed the youngest son into the world Dennis A. Thomas. In 1956 Virneda was hired as a supervisor/ teacher at McRae Special Education School. With no prior experience she taught blind children how to read. In 1964 Oliver and Virneda relocated their family to New York City. In 1966 Virneda became a teacher for the Department of Education and remained so until June of 1984. Not to long after Virneda's retirement as a teacher, she and her husband purchased a home in Menifee, Ark where they would stay for the next 20 years. In 2005 they moved back to NY. In Feb of 2007 Virneda's husband was called back home. On July 24, 2013 Virneda suffered a massive stroke that left her paralyzed and bedridden. From that day on she was cared for by her family until her last breath just as she cared for them. She is remembered for her spunk, feistiness, compassion, intelligence, and her giving spirit. She leaves behind her 2 sons John (Migdalia, Sheila) Thomas, Dennis(Stacey) Thomas, 6 grandchildren Aisha (Anthony) Johnson, Tasha Thomas, Nina(Tyrane) Isaac, Shivahn Thomas, L'Aisha Thomas, and Eliyah Thomas. 6 great grandchildren Kailey Bryan, Isaiah Thomas, Amelia Isaac, Nylah Rodriguez, Jasai Bruno and Alyssa Isaac. Her brother Henry(Jeanette) Bradley and a host of other family and friends. Arrangements have been entrusted to Memorial Park Funeral Home, 5668 Poplar, Memphis, TN 38119. "Celebrating Life.....Behind the Stone Wall".



## **Memories only last if you share them**

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