



## Mrs. Ruth Josephine Holland

March 27, 1928 - October 8, 2024

Livestream Link -> [www.youtube.com@events1081/streams](http://www.youtube.com@events1081/streams)

Ruth Josephine Belser Holland was born on March 27, 1928, in Camden, New Jersey, to Felicia House and Jerome Belser. She was the second of four children. She and her siblings were reared in Gold Hill, North Carolina. Ruth later moved to Washington, D.C. where she graduated from Cardozo High School while working part-time at the Pentagon. Mommie (Ruth) lived a full life and left us these legacies:

### Legacy of Determination:

Ruth embodied female independence long before it was fashionable. She was industrious and discovered her love of photography at Webb Studio on 7th Street NW. There, she met the love of her life, James Everett Holland. The two fell in love and soon eloped, beginning a beautiful life together in Detroit, Michigan. There he earned his electrical license, and Ruth became a devoted homemaker, raising their four children, and supporting Everett's career.

### Legacy of Courage:

In 1960, the family moved back to DC due to a pivotal life changing event. Everett was selected as the first African American electrical journeyman to integrate the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (Local 26). This historical milestone was negotiated by then-Vice President Richard Nixon,

George Meany of the AFL-CIO, and Sterling Tucker of the DC Urban League. During this time, he also earned his Master Electrical License. Through this tumultuous time, Ruth provided emotional security during the many challenges.

#### Legacy of Entrepreneurial Spirit:

Ruth was a force to be reckoned with and in 1963 she opened her own photography business, The Oriental Studio on 7th Street NW. She took pride in teaching her husband and eldest daughter, Sandra how to develop photos, passing on her skills to the next generation. The family later expanded into the neighboring grocery business, which became a beloved memory for her children. They could indulge in all types of foods which did not help their retail sales :). Despite the demands of running multiple businesses, Ruth managed to balance work and raising her children. Ruth had other hidden gifts. She was a skilled seamstress, making her daughter's clothing, and making professional draperies and furniture covers without the use of commercial patterns. In partnership with Everett, she owned, constructed and managed several rental properties in Washington, D.C. and Maryland as well as the Caribbean. Also, they designed and built furniture.

#### Legacy of Service:

In mid 1960, Ruth and Everett began opening their home to Howard University women students. She later expanded this service to out-of-state females accepted as administrative staff for the FBI. Over the many years, more than 60 amazing women fondly called this home the Mills Ave Dorm (MAD). Through this wonderful endeavor we even gained a bonus sister, Parthenia (aka Polly) Clarke.

#### Legacy of Self Determination:

In late 1960, Ruth, in her indomitable spirit, sold her businesses and decided to pursue a new passion—early childhood education. She earned her daycare

provider certificate from Prince George's College and opened "Big Bird Day Care." This nurturing environment became a jewel not only for her grandchildren but amongst the community. Ruth was a community activist. She was an advocate for major neighborhood improvements including Rollingcrest-Chillum Community Center and Splash Pool, Rollingcrest Commons Senior Development and Chillum Neighborhood Park.

#### Legacy of Resilience:

In June 1992, after 44 years of marriage, Ruth faced the heartbreaking loss of her husband, Everett. While grief could have overwhelmed her, she found new joys in life through bowling where she collected numerous trophies, traveling and making lifelong friends. She embraced a passion for dancing becoming a founding member of the "Snappy Steppers" senior line dance group. She was a member and formerly held officer positions with the renowned Banneker Ballroom Dance Club which she truly loved. Her energy and zest for life touched everyone she met.

#### Legacy of Faith:

Ruth's faith in God was woven into her being. She became a longtime member of New Dawn Baptist Church. Her spiritual journey was shared with her daughter-in-law, Dorothy, further deepening her connection to family and community.

In late 1995, Ruth married Joe Montgomery and attended Brooklyn Union Baptist Church, and they later divorced. Thereafter, her days remained filled with the same grace, strength, and generosity that had defined her life.

#### Legacy of Family:

Ruth leaves behind a legacy of love, wisdom and an unwavering commitment to her family. She is survived by her children, Sandra Handon (Reginald), Steven Holland (Dorothy) Dr. Pamela Ballard (Dennis), Vickie Holland

(daughter in law); goddaughter Parthenia Clarke; grandchildren; Michael Jason (Roberta), Steven Everett, Jasmin, Khadia, Dr. Amber Ballard and Bria and god grand godchildren Tiffany and Warren; great grandchildren, Skylar, Karima, Shaquanne, Shahirah, Taahirah; great, great grandchildren, Haven, Nahly, Naheim; god great grandchildren, Damious, Daelynn and a host of relatives and friends. Ruth was preceded in death by her husband, Everett, two sisters: Jean and Helen: one brother Joe and her son Kenneth Everett Holland. Her memory will forever be cherished by those who had the honor of knowing her.

# Cemetery Details

## National Harmony Memorial Park

7101 Sheriff Road  
Landover, MD 20785  
(301) 772-0900  
[http://www.nationalharmony.com/home/contact\\_us.html](http://www.nationalharmony.com/home/contact_us.html)

# Previous Events

## Visitation

OCT **22**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Solid Rock Full Gospel Baptist Church  
7711 Walker Mill Dr  
Capitol Height, MD 20743  
(301) 499-1001

## Funeral Service w/ Livestream

OCT **22**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (est)

Solid Rock Full Gospel Baptist Church  
7711 Walker Mill Dr  
Capitol Height, MD 20743  
(301) 499-1001

## Repass

OCT **22**. 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM (est)

Solid Rock Full Gospel Baptist Church  
7711 Walker Mill Dr  
Capitol Height, MD 20743  
(301) 499-1001

# Tribute Wall

DM

“ My condolences to the children, other family members and friends on the loss of Ms. Ruth. She was a lovely and amazing lady. I cried reading her obituary as it contained info. I did not know about her. I do remember her and the dancing group. What a woman she was and what an amazing life she lived! She is resting now with our Lord and Savior. We shall see her again as the Lord as promised.



Debra Alexander (nee Montgomery) - November 30, 2024 at 06:55 AM

AA

“ Love and condolences from a 1973 resident of 2903 Mills Ave. N.E. Fond memories of the fun times we had and the acquaintances that were made.



Ann Beatty Anderson - October 29, 2024 at 06:46 PM

CM

“ Cassandra McLeod lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Ruth Josephine Holland



Cassandra McLeod - October 21, 2024 at 10:43 AM

PH

We are so sorry for your loss our prayers are with the entire family. Patricia House and family.

Patricia R. House - December 30, 2024 at 09:43 PM

CS

“ I moved to the area from the Bronx and met the Holland, Handon, and Ballard families in 1993. I was amazed that they all lived in the same neighborhood also! I don't remember ever hearing "Grandma" say much, but I don't think I'll ever forget how much grace and a pure sense of ease she carried about her. Her tone of voice, her house, her car, her clothes-her spirit-everything just oozed with style. I mean a Harlem Renaissance, Black Power and Excellence level of style and grace: timeless, unforgettable and everlasting. Looking at the times she lived in, and reading about so many of her accomplishments in her wonderful life, perfectly aligns with my feelings about her from the time that I met her over 30 or so years ago.

I am grateful for the long line of women that have come after her, and for their roles in my life. I understand better now why they are so special to me. May the family find peace in this life that was so, so, well and honorably lived. May you all be immensely blessed!  
Love, Charlene (Chi-Chi), Kane and Family.

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**Charlene S** - October 18, 2024 at 05:51 PM

SH

Chi-Chi, thank you so much for your gracious comments and for allowing us to be your extended family..forever❤️

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**Sandra Handon** - October 19, 2024 at 01:21 PM

PE

“ Patricia and Michael Evans purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Mrs. Ruth Josephine Holland.



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**Patricia and Michael Evans** - October 18, 2024 at 12:58 PM

PE

“ Patricia and Michael Evans planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mrs. Ruth Josephine Holland.

Patricia and Michael Evans - October 18, 2024 at 12:58 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Mrs. Ruth Josephine Holland.



October 17, 2024 at 02:52 PM

BH

“ To the Family, I am sending my love and prayers of comfort to you all! My father, Hugh A. House, Sr. told me about his cousin. He said to safe guard, the family legacy of Martha Reid and E.A. House. Cousin Ruth is resting safe in the arms of the Lord. Rest in eternal peace.

Beverly A House-Kerr - October 15, 2024 at 09:01 AM

ZI

“ Mom Ruth, thank you for always being so kind and thoughtful. Your spirit will live on in our hearts and memories. Love, Zelda

Zelda E. Irby - October 14, 2024 at 02:35 PM