



Claris Theresa Waller

November 18, 1922 - December 23, 2025

Celebrating the Life of Claris Theresa Waller

Claris Theresa Waller (nee Burke), known lovingly as "Grandma" to her family, departed this life peacefully on December 23, 2025 at the remarkable age of 103. She was deeply cherished by everyone who had the privilege of knowing her, and she leaves behind a legacy defined by love, compassion, and unwavering dedication to both her family and the broader community.

Born on November 18, 1922, in Grenada, West Indies, Claris was the cherished daughter of Lionel and Mathilda (Mark) Burke. She spent her early years in Grenada, where her parents provided nurturing support and guidance. Her childhood was filled with fond memories, including playful moments such as pretending to conduct class in the yard with the chickens as her students. Claris often recalled with fondness, how she would finish her schoolwork ahead of her classmates and then mischievously try to capture their attention as they completed their assignments.

Encouraged by her father's admiration for the dignity of the nursing profession and the respect accorded to nurses, Claris decided to pursue a career in nursing. In 1942, she left Grenada, traveling on the overnight boat to Trinidad to begin her studies. She was accepted into the nursing

program at Colonial Hospital in Port of Spain, where she excelled in both coursework and clinical training. Claris completed her nursing program in December 1946, marking the start of her lifelong commitment to serving others through nursing.

During her time in Trinidad, Claris met Anthony Joseph Waller (predeceased), a cloth salesman. Their connection began during their youth in Grenada, and after a two-year courtship, they married in June 1949. Together, they built a family and were blessed with four children: Hilary (who predeceased her), Stephen, Alison, and Paula.

In 1959, as the United States experienced a shortage of registered nurses, recruiters from New York visited Trinidad in search of qualified professionals. Claris applied and was accepted to work at Montefiore Hospital in the Bronx. On a sunny day in February 1960, she courageously left her husband and children in Trinidad and Grenada and traveled to New York City to prepare for their eventual reunion. Anthony joined her in 1962, and their children followed in 1964. The family ultimately settled in Huntington in 1969, as Claris continued her nursing career at St. Barnabas Hospital in the Bronx. She subsequently worked at Syosset Hospital and later at Huntington Hospital, where she retired in December 1987.

Claris was an active member in several organizations. She was both a founding member and life member of the National Council of Negro Women, Huntington Chapter, where she held several leadership positions. Additionally, she was a life member of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc., Bronx Chapter, and also a member of the NAACP. Claris also belonged to the Trinidad and Tobago Nursing Association.

Claris was well known for her passion for plants and her remarkable skills

in crafting. Driven by curiosity and resourcefulness, she taught herself to knit using coconut flex as makeshift needles and repurposed string from bags as yarn. These humble beginnings blossomed into an impressive talent for creating beautiful and intricate home goods, utilizing a variety of techniques including crochet, cross stitch, embroidery, and hardanger. Her creativity did not stop there; Claris also learned the art of quilting and generously shared this knowledge with younger members of the National Council of Negro Women (YES), teaching them the craft and inspiring a new generation. In addition to her fiber arts, when her children were young, Claris sewed much of their clothing. Her love for the color red was unmistakable, as it was dominant in most of her creations.

Claris is survived by her children, Stephen (Deborah), Alison, and Paula (Winston); her grandchildren Trevor (Alice), Tracey (Humphry), Richie, Leon, Robert, GiGi, Carissa, Othele, and Cloeth; great-grandchildren Demetrius, Collin, Caleb, Tatyana, Joshua, Anthony, Ally, Brianna, Marika, Kiera, Robert Jr., Kaius, and Micah; and a great-great-granddaughter, Shiloh.

Although Claris was an only child, her warmth and generosity of spirit attracted many people into her life. Throughout the years, she became affectionately known as "Auntie Claris" to a wide circle of individuals who welcomed her into their hearts. Claris cherished these relationships deeply, embracing each person with genuine love and care. Her memory lives on in the hearts of the many nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends who continue to celebrate the impact she had on their lives. Claris's journey was marked by resilience, devotion, and creativity. Through her professional accomplishments as a nurse, her active involvement in community organizations, and her dedication to family, she touched the lives of many.

Her legacy is seen in the generations she nurtured, the young minds she inspired, and the loving relationships she cultivated throughout her life.

Her faith in God and gratitude for salvation through Jesus Christ her Savior were ever-present, and those who knew her continue to give thanks for the rich and rewarding life she led.

To God be the glory!

Cemetery Details

Pinelawn Memorial Park

2030 Wellwood Avenue
Farmingdale, NY 11735
(631) 249-6100
<http://www.pinelawnmemorialpark.com>

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 4. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

A.L. Jacobsen Funeral Home, Inc.
1380 New York Avenue
Huntington Station, NY 11746
(631) 423-2185
jacobsenfuneral@gmail.com

Visitation

JAN 4. 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM (ET)

A.L. Jacobsen Funeral Home, Inc.
1380 New York Avenue
Huntington Station, NY 11746
(631) 423-2185
jacobsenfuneral@gmail.com

Mass of Christian Burial

JAN 5. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Francis of Assisi R.C. Church
29 Northgate Drive
Greenlawn, NY 11740
(631) 757-7435
<http://www.stfrancisgreenlawn.org>

Burial

JAN 5 (ET)

Pinelawn Memorial Park
2030 Wellwood Avenue
Farmingdale, NY 11735
(631) 249-6100
<http://www.pinelawnmemorialpark.com>

Tribute Wall



“ *Delores Tilley lit a candle in memory of Claris Theresa Waller* ”



Delores Tilley - January 05 at 07:59 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Claris Theresa Waller.* ”



January 04 at 06:02 AM



“ *Leon Bennett lit a candle in memory of Claris Theresa Waller* ”



Leon Bennett - January 02 at 07:28 AM



Miss & love you clarabelle

Leon Bennett - January 02 at 07:29 AM