



Mr. William H. Slade

August 10, 1919 - August 29, 2013

William H., of Huntington Station, passed away on August 29, 2013 at the age of 94. Beloved husband of the late Janie. Loving brother to Blonnie. Devoted friend of Mary Simon.

William Henry Slade
1919 - 2013

William Henry Slade was born in Marks Creek Township (Wake County), N. C. on August 10, 1919 just east of the state capital, Raleigh. His parents, Sir Walter Raleigh Slade and Blonnie Pair Slade raised him in a loving home with seven children that stressed the importance of education and their Baptist religion. William was baptized at an early age and educated in the Raleigh public school system.

After high school graduation, he continued his education at St. Augustine's College (created and supported by the Episcopal Church) for 2 years before enlisting in the U.S. Army as an air cadet in April 1941. He was called to active service on July 12, 1941 at Fort Bragg Pope Field, where he passed the examination to qualify for aviation training. He was then sent to train at an airbase in Quero, Texas, but was not allowed to train there due to race. After two weeks in Quero, he was assigned to the Tuskegee Airbase in Tuskegee, Alabama where the Army Air Corps had just established (in June 1941) a program to train African Americans to fly and maintain combat aircraft and

formed the first all-black flying unit, the 99th Pursuit Squadron. William trained there until October 15, 1941. William Slade was one of the 13 members of the original class (42-C) of "Tuskegee Airmen" (and was the last of them still living) who are revered as an elite group of aviators who contributed to the success of the Second World War. The highly publicized successes of the Tuskegee Airmen helped pave the way for the eventual integration of the U.S. armed forces under President Harry Truman in 1948.

William reenlisted in the Army on August 22, 1941, and, after training in automobile maintenance, received a Staff Sergeant rating and was accepted for Officer Training School in chemical warfare. While waiting, he completed the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) in French and Foreign Area just prior to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, embroiling the United States into World War II.

While serving in the Army, William met and married Janie Mae Sawyer on August 25, 1942. She maintained their home in New York City while William went back to the war.

William was selected as cadre for the formation of the 81st Signal Construction battalion, where he attained the rank of Master Sergeant. He served over a year in the Pacific in a unit that received a Presidential Citation. William retired from active service in January 1946.

After returning home to New York, William and Janie quickly found a church home at Trinity Church in New York City. At Trinity, William taught Sunday school for many years. He also served, from time to time, on many committees, including Liturgical, Stewardship, Camp & Conference, Healing & Confirmation, and Witness & Outreach. He was an acolyte, a Eucharistic minister, and was once President of the Congregational Council. William was also elected to serve as a Vestry Representative. William served in every possible capacity as a lay minister.

William and Janie extended their faith and stewardship to others by opening their home to young people who were newcomers to the New York area – some from abroad, seeking education or employment.

William's civilian career was as successful as his military service. He quickly landed a job in financial services with a Wall Street firm, where he worked as a financial advisor for over 30 years. Later he worked for Farrell Lines, an international shipping firm with the second largest U.S.-flag merchant fleet of 44 ships, until his retirement in the mid 1980's. William and his wife, Janie enjoyed their retirement together until her passing in February 1999.

William continued to reside in New York City until 2006, when he moved to The Atria, a quiet, retirement community in Huntington, New York. He became active in many Atria activities including their religious services, exercise programs, French classes, men's club, bridge and bingo games and others. William soon found ways to help others, and served as a resident advisor and as an Atria Ambassador who welcomed new residents.

As a Huntington resident, William transferred his membership from Trinity Church to the local Episcopal Church – St. John's, where he soon became a Lay Reader and a strong supporter of church programs.

William earned many honors and awards during his life.

- The Tuskegee Airmen were collectively awarded the Congressional Gold Medal (CGM) by President George W. Bush and the U.S. Congress on March 29, 2007 in a ceremony inside the Rotunda of the U.S. Capitol.
- On December 11, 2011, William was honored by the Huntington, N. Y. city council for his service as a Tuskegee Airman and as a veteran of World War II.
- William was invited to be honored with other surviving Tuskegee Airmen at the White House on February 10, 2012, followed by an appearance at the BET Honors TV show in Hollywood, California the following night, but was physically unable to travel.

- The oral history of William's experiences becoming a Tuskegee Airman was videotaped by the Tuskegee Airmen Corporation which can be viewed online.

William H. Slade was called home to God peacefully at The Atria on August 29, 2013. All in his extended family loved this saintly man dearly. William was preceded in death by both of his parents, his beloved wife, Janie, and 5 of his siblings. Surviving are his sister, Blonnie L. Slade; 4 nieces, Barbara Ann Smelter, Mary Simon, Helen Plump, and Jean Porter; 4 nephews, Michael Graham, Franklin Porter, John Franklin Sawyer Jr., and Adolphus Plump, Jr.; 8 great nieces, 7 great nephews, several cousins, including William Thomas, Sr., and a host of other family and friends.

Previous Events

Wednesday Visitation

SEP 4. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

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

Church Service

SEP 5. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. John's Episcopal Church
12 Prospect Street
Huntington, NY 11743

Tribute Wall



“ *A.L. Jacobsen Funeral Home, Inc. created a Tribute Video in memory of Mr. William H. Slade*



A.L. Jacobsen Funeral Home, Inc. - August 29, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ *Mr. William H. Slade*

November 27, 2022 at 05:33 PM



“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



Kathy Randolph - September 12, 2013 at 07:08 PM



“ 7 files added to the album Memories Album



A.L. Jacobsen Funeral Home, Inc. - September 04, 2013 at 12:36 PM