

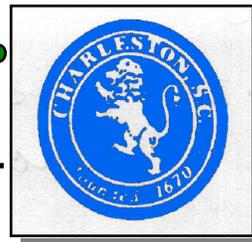
Charleston Club Tattler

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Catherine Manor Briggs - Trailblazer

Lady Catherine ~ Trailblazer & Friend, Dies at 92 Yrs Old

Catherine Elaine Manor was born in Coffee, GA (near Alma, GA) on July 24, 1925, the daughter of the late, Oscar and Lillie Jones Manor; her father worked in Georgia's turpentine industry as a "bark chipper," harvesting pine resin from pine trees for the turpentine industry. When she was a toddler the family moved to Charleston and lived in "railroad housing" in the North area of the city. Catherine and her three siblings; older brother Rev. Lee S. Manor (diseased), Barbara Jackson Richardson and Alethia (Habeebullah Muhammad) once lived at 126 Hanover St. Her first schooling was at 4-Mile School in the Rosemount area, on Meeting Street Road. Catherine was a smart student and skipped the second grade while in school.



She started Burke Industrial School in 8th grade, and played forward on Burke's "girls 3 on 3" basketball team. She has fond memories of her high school days and graduated from Burke in 1943. Her mother wanted her to become a "trained-nurse" so she entered SC State College's WW II Cadet Nursing Corps. Then she enrolled in Washington's Freedmen's Hospital School of Nursing where she continued her education and graduated in June 1947. With her Registered Nurse (RN) certification in hand, she returned to Charleston and applied for a RN position at Roper Hospital, only to be told "we don't hire colored," but that she could apply for an assistant nursing position. Catherine rejected the idea and returned to Freedmen's for employment. She remembers sharing a house with five (5) other nurses, they were on "easy street," they made \$2,644.80/year each. They called themselves the "26-44-80 Club." Soon, one by one they got married and the club dissolved.

Catherine Briggs was adventurous; she joined the newly formed U.S. Air Force Nursing Corp in 1951, her first duty station was a 1-year tour in Denver, CO. Next tour was not what she wanted (Europe), but at Elmendorf AF Base, in Anchorage, AK. First Lt. Manor spent a 2-year tour in Alaska in the base's general hospital. There she met and married California native, Albert David Briggs, Sr. in Alaska. The couple had two sons, Albert David, Jr. and Joseph Spencer Briggs. The couple lived in Los Angeles, CA for years before divorcing in the 1967.

Catherine returned to the Washington area and continued to seek more education. She attended Howard University, Catholic University, Maryland University, University of the District of Columbia, George Washington Uni-

versity and attended numerous workshops and professional and religious courses of study. She applied for and worked at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and at DC Psychiatric Services where she served as a Registered Nurse for over 50 years.

When she moved to the Washington area, she joined the Douglas Memorial United Methodist Church and served in the Sunday school, Bible Study group, and served as President of the United Methodist Women. Soon thereafter she moved to the Upper Marlboro area and joined Gethsemane United Methodist Church where she continued to work for the church.

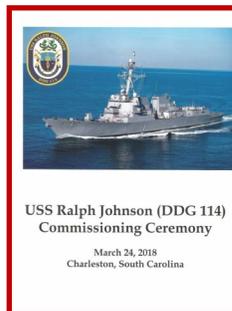
Catherine was fiercely committed to her family. She was "the rock" on which the family could depend, she was the matriarch of her large family. As a RN she was 'the family doctor,' she would always lend a helping, healing hand when anyone got sick. She was also very generous and kind-hearted. When a family member fell on hard times, she was there. When family needed a place to stay, her door was open. She loved her family reunions, Catherine missed only one Jones Manor Gray Multi-Family Reunion in the over 40 years. Even when she fell ill, she still attended, she loved her family, she was always there!

Catherine Manor Briggs loved to travel, she made it a point to travel to the four corners of the world. Having lived in Alaska, Catherine wanted to visit South Africa, Asia, Europe, and South America. She enjoyed visits to Guyana, where many called her "Lady Catherine!"

Ms. Briggs moved to Cameron Grove, a seniors' community, where she took part in many activities, especially line dancing and the exercise groups. She was an active member of the Charleston Club and served as the club's treasurer. She leaves her cherished two sons, Albert David, Jr. and Joseph Spencer, three grandsons, two beloved sisters, Mrs. Barbara Jackson and Habeebullah Muhammad, Daughter-in-Law Vanessa and many cousins, nieces, nephews, friends and former colleagues.

USS RALPH JOHNSON (DDG 114) COMMISSIONED

An overflowing audience of 2,000+ were on hand March 24th as the Navy commissioned its newest destroyer, USS Ralph Johnson (DDG 114), at the Columbus Street pier in Charleston. The ship is named for Private First Class Ralph Johnson who grew up in Charleston. Senator Tim Scott (R-SC), Mayor John Tecklenburg, Burke High School R.O.T.C. cadets, local dignitaries and a host of Johnson family members & friends were present for the occasion. Special guests for the



ceremonies were members of Pfc Johnson's fifteen-man reconnaissance patrol unit of that fateful day on March 5, 1968. Charleston Club members; Ned E. Felder, Clarence H. McNeill and Sandra McNeill were also in attendance. The Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center at 109 Bee Street also bears his name.

Being from a large family of 14 kids, Ralph's early days were spent with his grandparents, West Ashley on S.C. Highway 61 near Savage Road, where he attended St. Phillips A.M.E. Church. When he reached school age he moved to downtown Charleston with his parents who lived on Coming Street. He attended Courtenay Elementary School on upper Meeting Street (now the site of Charleston Progressive School) and Simonton Jr. High School which was bounded by Morris, Jasper, Marion and Smith Streets. Eventually he dropped out of school and went into the Job Corps, a federal program with a mission of helping young people ages 16 through 24 improve the quality of their lives through vocational and academic training. Johnson's sister Helen Richards describes her brother as a quiet person, always willing to help others. She says Johnson was a fun-loving, but deliberate young man capable of making split-decisions and immediately acting on them. He was a selfless person who knew where he wanted to go and took the steps to get there. He saw the Marine Corps as a step into the future he wanted for himself and his family. While in the Job Corps Johnson eventually landed in Oakland, CA, where in 1967 he enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserves. A year later he joined the regular Marine Corps. He was 18 years old.

Just after turning 19, Ralph found himself serving in Vietnam with the Marine Corps' 1st Reconnaissance Battalion. The job of Recon units is to go behind enemy lines and report any activity – very dangerous work. During a morning mission on March 5, 1968 his unit's position was discovered by the enemy who then attacked repeatedly with a much larger force. During one of the attacks a grenade was thrown into the "fighting hole" he shared with two other marines. Without hesitation, Ralph shouted for the others to get back while he threw himself on the explosive device. Ralph Johnson was killed (instantaneously) when the grenade exploded, but those whose lives were saved were able to hold the defensive perimeter and keep the enemy from overrunning and killing the remaining members of his patrol. For his selfless and heroic actions, Ralph was awarded the nation's highest military decoration – **The Medal of Honor**.

The Navy and the Country honored Ralph's sacrifice and service with the commissioning of the USS Ralph Johnson on March 24th. A ship's commissioning is a time honored ceremony steeped in Naval tradition that signifies the ship becoming a member of the Fleet. It is truly a patriotic, family event not many people get to witness.

Linda Brown, student in Brown v. Board of Education case, dies at 76 years old

Linda Brown, who as a little girl was at the center of the

Brown v. Board of Education case that ended segregation in American schools, died on Sunday, March 25th in Topeka, KS; she was 76 years old. Brown was 9 years old in 1951 when her father, Rev. Oliver Brown, tried to enroll her at Sumner Elementary School, then an all-white school near her Topeka home. When the school blocked her enrollment her father sued the Topeka Board of Education. Four similar cases were combined with Brown's complaint and presented to the Supreme Court as Oliver L. Brown et al v. Board of Education of Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas, et al.

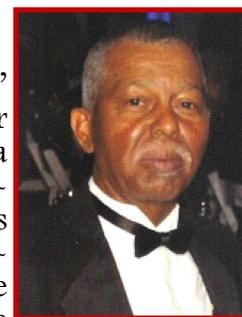


While her name will forever be a part of American civil rights history, her contributions to the community after the case are part of her legacy, too, longtime friend Carolyn Campbell said. Campbell attended St. Mark's African Methodist Episcopal Church, where Brown played piano and taught children how to play. Before her death, the church dedicated the piano to her. Campbell described her as a "very quiet person, but spiritual, patient and very kind." "Linda was a spiritual Christian woman that loved not only the Lord, but she loved her family and took on the responsibility of what Brown v. Board of Education meant to her. Her legacy will be that she shared all of her life with all of us," Campbell said.

She was also instrumental in one of the church day care programs, *"She would read books to children, and she was all about children and education."*

Meet William "Spuddy" Pickering

Meet William Henry "Spuddy" Pickering, Sr., the April honoree for Business in the 2018 South Carolina State University Stellar Alumni calendar. Since his early childhood he has been known to both friends and associates alike as "Spuddy" Pickering. He is the seventh of eight children in the family of the late Dr. Lorenzo I. Pickering and Esther Robinson Pickering in Charleston. He was born on December 25, 1947 (Christmas Baby) and the family of four boys and four girls lived at 5 Maverick Street near County Hall. Dr. Pickering was a family dentist with his office on Cannon Street and Mrs. Esther Pickering was a "model" homemaker of the 1950/60s.



Spuddy completed his elementary school education at I.C.S. (Immaculate Conception School) then he transferred to Burke High School where he graduated in 1966. Then it was on to South Carolina State College (University) earning a Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil Engineering in 1974. He was there on that fateful Thursday, February 8th, 1968 when The Orangeburg Massacre took place. This horrific incident ended when three young men, Samuel Hammond, Henry Smith, and Delano Middleton, were

killed and 27 other students wounded by highway patrolmen. It was fifty (50) years ago this past February that SCSU commemorated this worst example of violence on a college campus in South Carolina history.

In the early 1970s he married Hollywood (SC) native, Elaine Porter Pickering. They have been married for 45 years and have three children; Dawn (Sam), William H., Jr. (Melinda), and Dana (Paul). The Pickering's have eight (8) grandchildren. For years Spuddy and Elaine have had dual homesteads: 670 Boulevard Street in Orangeburg and in Charleston (West of the Ashley). In the late 1950s, Dr. & Mrs. Lorenzo I. Pickering purchased a very large track of acreage on Wadmalaw Island for the family's use.

Mr. Pickering has over 47 years of engineering and construction experience. He has worked with Proctor & Gamble, General Motors, and several other major companies. His positions have included superintendent, project manager, construction engineer, planning engineer, and start-up coordinator. He served as a Medical Flight Technician with the U.S. Air Force Reserve. He was selected for involuntary call-up duty during Desert Shield and Desert Storm and other conflicts. He is currently the Co-Owner and President of PNP Construction Company.

When asked, how did you get started in your business? He replied, *"As a young man, my uncle Charlie (Pickering) and I worked in partnership doing residential construction. I enjoyed the independence of working for myself, then I decided that I enjoyed the freedom, and I wanted to work for myself again one day! After retiring from several big construction firms, my nephew, Randy (Pickering) and I started a general construction company called PNP Construction Company."*

As with most entrepreneurs/small business owners, the biggest and/or significant pit-falls have been employee retention and finances. *PNP Construction* became synonymous with building/modifying churches. Royal Baptist Church on Luella Avenue in North Charleston and Calvary Baptist Church at 620 Rutledge Ave. (site of the old Piggy Park Drive-in) are two of his most gratifying projects.

His hobbies include working on construction projects, tailgating at South Carolina State University football games, spending time with family and friends, and playing with the grandchildren. The entire family loves to travel...up and down the east coast, trips on the west coast including Alaska and Hawaii. Travels abroad include, Mexico, Canada, Central America, South America, Europe, Northern Africa, Middle East, and the Caribbean Islands. There is no doubt he is committed to South Carolina State as he routinely gives back to South Carolina State... *"I am a committed member of SCSU Alumni Association on the National and Local level. I donate finances, time, and support to South Carolina State University."* His life motto is: *"Love all, trust a few, and do no wrong to none. Bless others and you will be blessed!"*

Spuddy and Elaine came to the Charleston Club's 2013 Reunion and enjoyed themselves immensely...they both are planning to return to our 2018 Grand Reunion in July.

"Billy" Lesesne dies at age 88 yrs old

Mr. William Louis "Billy" Lesesne entered into eternal rest on Sunday, March 18th, in Charleston; he was 88 years old. "Coach" Lesesne was the fifth son and the youngest of the six children of Stephen and Hattie Singleton Lesesne. He was the last of the original Lesesne clan. A retired school teacher, former football & basketball coach with the high schools of Charleston and Summerville.



Billy was born on May 29, 1929. A graduate of Avery Institute ('47) and Claflin University ('51), it was at Claflin that he met and married Maryette Maxwell of Jacksonville, FL. He was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1951 and served in the 82nd Airborne Division during the Korean War as a Master Parachutist. Following his honorable discharge, he returned home and began his teaching and coaching career in the Charleston area.

Coach Billy Lesesne gained great respect during his ten years at Alston High School (Summerville, SC) coaching both Boys and Girls basketball in the 1960s. Home-going Services were held on Thursday, March 22nd, at Wesley United Methodist Church on Meeting St. Interment was at Sunset Memorial Gardens in North Charleston. He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Maryette Maxwell Lesesne. His children Valentino D. Lesesne (Michele), Valeria G. Lesesne-Hasea, and Veatrice N. Lesesne. And a host of Grands, Great-Grands, In-Laws, Nieces, Nephews, Cousins, and Friends.

City plans to buy vacant East Side school

The City of Charleston plans to buy vacant East Side school for affordable housing. The Charleston County School District is still seeking a buyer for the old **Henry P. Archer School** building on the East Side. The Nassau Street building previously housed Sanders-Clyde Elementary. The Charleston County School District and the city of Charleston are teaming up on a plan to turn an unused school building into affordable housing, and at the same time, shore up funds to restore Burke High School's football field. The district plans to sell its Archer School property on Nassau Street to the city for \$3.25 million. If City Council approves the deal, the city would redevelop it primarily for an affordable housing facility with a possible mix of other uses. The agreement specifies that at least 30 percent of the units would have to be offered to district employees at affordable rates.



City officials haven't worked out how much the redevelopment would cost, when it might be completed, or how many total units it might offer. The city would pay for the property with a grant from the Local Development Corp., a nonprofit organization that primarily makes loans to locally owned businesses to foster economic development. It

was infused with \$22.8 million in June when the Charleston Place developer paid back money it borrowed to construct the luxury hotel in the mid-1980s. The school district already owes the city \$2.27 million for property exchanges made in 2011, so the net cost to the city is a little less than \$1 million.

As a part of the deal, the district would agree to spend the proceeds plus another \$1 million to renovate Burke's Stoney Field, a total of \$4.2 million. The city owns Stoney Field but it's used by the downtown high school. Burke's football team has been playing at other schools' facilities since 2015, when heavy rains made its home field unplayable. The committee postponed its decision allowing city staff to ask the district to extend the timeline so the city can inspect the Archer School before agreeing to buy it. The proposal comes amid a region-wide affordable housing shortage, a crisis most acutely felt in centralized areas like the Charleston peninsula where housing prices are far outpacing workers' wages.

~ The Post and Courier

Charleston Club Tattler ~ One liners . . .

♦ **Charleston Club's 2018 70th Grand Reunion July 19-21** is only months away, we are in automatic mode. The club's website has registration information <http://charlestonclub.org/>. The club **needs everyone** to continue to sign up and register...and secure their hotel rooms!

- Souvenir Journal Pictures are all but complete, waiting on a few mail-in photographs. **Thank you for your cooperation!**
- Souvenir Journal Ads are coming in mid-April, we need more ads! ***We need all club members to solicit a few ads!***

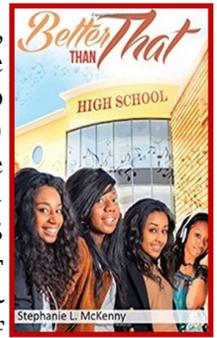
♦ The **41st Annual Cooper River Bridge Run** will be **April 7, 2018**, it is the 3rd largest 10 K race in the U.S. and one of the largest in the world averaging 40,000 participants. It takes place in beautiful Charleston, SC, chosen as the #1 destination city in the country according to Condé Nast Traveler Magazine. It includes world-class competition in a unique setting with unparalleled participant satisfaction. The main goal is to promote continuous physical activity and a healthy lifestyle through education and opportunity.



♦ The Charleston Alumni Chapter of South Carolina State University will host an **"Evening of Jazz"** featuring SCSU Jazz Band on Saturday, April 7th at the Burke High School Performing Arts Center, 244 President Street at 6:00 p.m. Proceeds to benefit The Scholarship Fund. Contact information; Clint Fields (843-763-7912) and Ken Morris (843-501-7794).



♦ The Burke High School Foundation, Administration and Faculty will be participating in the Piccolo Spoleto Arts Festival (May 25th ~ June 10th) this Spring with a play by Stephanie McKenny's **"Better Than That."** Tickets for the play go on sale May 1, 2018 at Ticket Hotline [866-811-4111](tel:866-811-4111) or online www.piccolospoleto.com. **Better Than That** goes into the lives of four teen girls that deal with teen issues. BHS Foundation is a S.C. registered 501.c3 with IRS approval for tax deductible contributions. For more information, please contact: Barbara Dilligard - or Stephanie McKenny.



♦ **"I will be back,"** says **Raven Saunders**, . . . the Burke High School graduate Raven Saunders, a four-time NCAA shot put champion who ended her college career in mid-February 2018. She says she plans to return to competition at some point. In a social media post, Saunders provided a clue to the personal and medical reasons for her decision to end her career at Ole Miss, and said, **"I will be back."**

"Thank you for all of the kind words and support through this tough period," Saunders wrote. *"I am using this time to focus on myself and getting back to full health."* *"To my fellow athletes you don't always have to act like you have it all together,"* she posted. *"As a college student athlete times can get very hard. Take the time to focus on your mental health as you would the physical."*

Martin Luther King, Jr.
(January 15, 1929 – April 4, 1968)
Just after 6 p.m. (CST) on Thursday, April 4, 1968, **Martin Luther King, Jr.** is fatally shot while standing on the balcony outside his second-story room at the Lorraine Hotel in Memphis, TN. He is rushed to St. Joseph's Hospital, where he is pronounced dead at 7:05 p.m. He is 39 years old. This Wednesday, April 4, 2018 will be the 50th Anniversary of his death.

"His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord." - Matthew 25:21

Happy Birthdays!

April 2018

Michelle Gaston - April 3rd, ~ Vanessa Tabern - April 4th,
~ Emmett Russell - April 8th, ~ Mark Evans - April 12th, ~
Jack Rogers - April 14th, ~ Clarence McNeill - April 23rd,
~ Alethia Starke - April 27th.
~ The Fly on The Wall I