



*Celebrating The Life and Legacy of
Paterson's Icon
Russell Graddy
"Mr. G"*

Obituary

Russell Graddy (Mr. G.) was born in Wrightsville, GA. In 1946, he moved to Paterson, NJ. He entered Monmouth College Business Program to study Business Administration, in addition he became a licensed New Jersey Real Estate Broker. Mr. Graddy worked at Wright Aeronautical Division of Wood Ridge, NJ from 1950 through 1961. He served in the United States Army on the front line as a Dental Assistant during the Korean War, 1951 through 1953. He received an honorable discharge.

As a young man Mr. Graddy wanted to become an entrepreneur, coming from the south his dream was to open a southern style cuisine restaurant. His dream came true when he opened his first restaurant with his wife Loretta in 1961, a soul food establishment, Graddy's BBQ Pitt and Restaurant, with two locations in Paterson, they operated it 1961 through 1978. He followed with Graddy's Wines, Liquors and Deli, a delicatessen and package goods store 1967 through 1974; The Lafayette Club, a banquet and catering facility from 1967 through 1974 located in Paterson, NJ.

In 1963, he established and was the principal founder and operator of RLS Realty, a brokerage corporation located in Paterson, NJ.

In 1967 he was appointed to the Greater Paterson Chamber of Commerce and served as the first African American Board Chairman in 1971 and 1973. In addition, he became the first African American member of the Hamilton Club. In 1973 he was appointed Commissioner of the Paterson Planning Board.

He was formerly the Passaic Valley Water Commissioner (2015). Mr. Graddy served as Chairman of the Water Commission's Personnel Committee and was currently a Paterson Deputy Mayor, Senior Citizens Affairs. Mr. Graddy was the recipient of numerous awards and accolades.

In 1968, Mr. Graddy was one of those instrumental in bringing the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to Paterson just several days before his death to highlight the discrimination in Paterson.

He owned and managed Atlantic City Souvenirs and Snacks, Inc., with his wife Loretta in the Atlantic City Bus Terminal from 1985 through 2004. They were the first African Americans to own and operate a major restaurant in any New Jersey Transit location in the State of New Jersey.

He is currently the owner and operated of Mr. G's Diner at 455 East 18th Street, Paterson, NJ. In 2019 because of his many contributions to the city of Paterson and its residents municipal officials named the two blocks on 10th Ave. between Madison Ave and East 18th Street, Mr. Russel "G" Graddy Way. Mr. G's diner specializes in southern cuisine and serves breakfast, lunch and dinner six days a week.

Mr. Graddy has been a supporter of civic and social organizations in the communities and states where he has lived and done business. He has been a member of the Paterson Advisory Council, Paterson YMCA Board of Directors, Paterson Rotary International, St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center (State Appointed Board of Directors), Life member of the N.A.A.C.P, Life Member of the National Action Network, and Active Supporter of Grandparents Relatives Care Resource Center.

Mr. Graddy was proud he sponsored the first and second Annual BBQ fundraising events for seniors and youth in 2006 and 2007.

Russell Graddy is among the very last persons that was a part of the Paterson African American business community that came north during the Great Migration. They followed their dreams and served the community where they lived.

He is the proud parent of two daughters, Dr. Sharon Graddy and Dr. Lenise Graddy. He is survived by his sister, Pearlie Mae Graddy, Son-in-law, Dr. Christopher Bowe, many nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Saturday, January 15, 2022 - 11:00 a.m.

Canaan Baptist Church

535 E.22nd Street, Paterson, New Jersey

Rev. Barry L. Graham, Officiating

Order of Service

Musical Prelude

Call To Worship

Musical Selection

Scripture **Rev. Allan Boyer**

Prayer **Elder Moses McKenzie**

Mr. "G" as:

Political Supporter **Mayor Andre Sayegh**
Congressman Bill Pascrell
Assemblyman Benjie Wimberly
Councilwoman Ruby Cotton

Friend **John and Cynthia Harris**

Musical Selection

Mr. "G" as:

Activist **Rev. Al Sharpton**
Ms. Jaime Bland (Transit Supporters)

Employer **Velvery Shapiro**

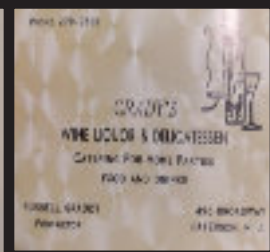
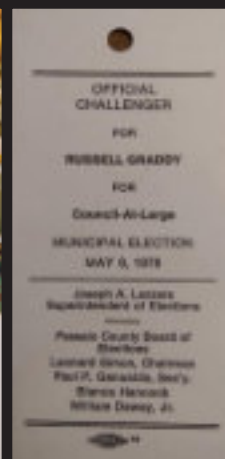
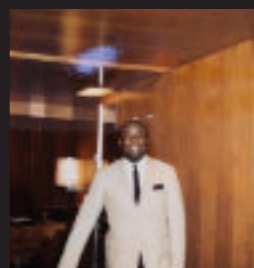
Family (Keeping His Legacy Alive) **Ms. Vivian Gaines**
Dr. Lilisa Mimms
Dr. Sharon Graddy

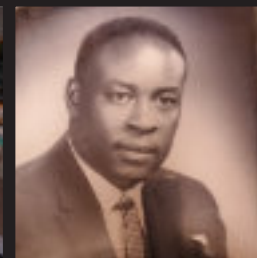
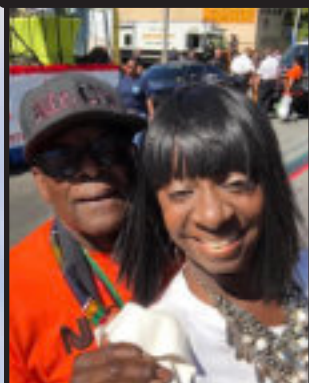
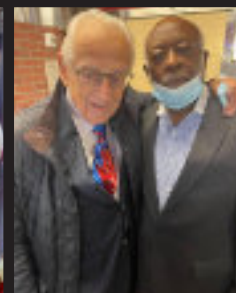
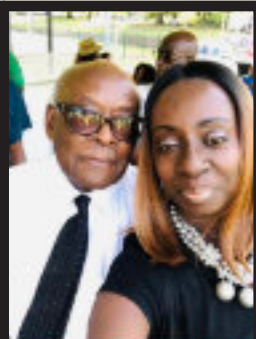
Musical Selection

Words of Comfort **Rev. Barry Graham**

Committal/Benediction

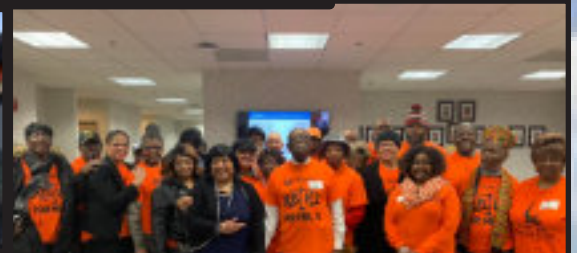
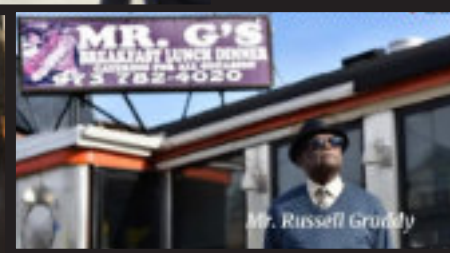
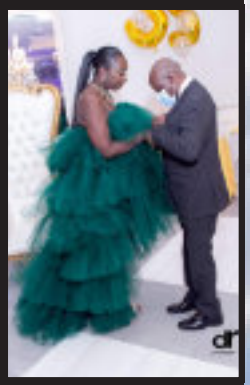
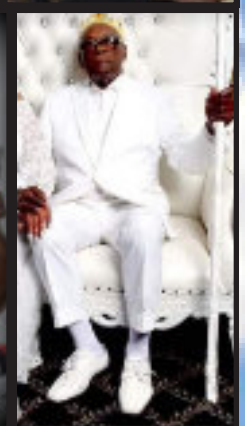
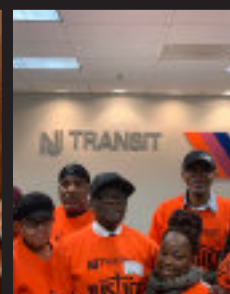
*Repast immediately following the service
In the church Fellowship Hall
(Grab and Go)*





LI. Governor Sheila Oliver • G.U.I. • 11
My deepest condolences to the family &
friends of civil rights activist, community
leader, and h. business owner Russell
Graddy, including Mr. O's diner in Paterson.
New Jersey has lost an icon. 📍

northjersey.com
Paterson returns civil rights activist
Russell Graddy to his home







Special Thanks

To the staff of Mr. G's Diner for their committed service at
Mr. G's and the repast meal preparation.

Commissioner Vincent Arrington - Media Presentation

Rev. Barry Graham - Spiritual Guidance and Support

A very special thanks to Jamar Grayson for the floral designs

All the friends and supporters that showed an act of kindness, condolences,
or love to u during this difficult time.

The Family

Assisting The Family

CARNIE P. BRAGG FUNERAL HOME

Caring for the Community Since 1937

256 Rosa Parks Blvd. • Paterson, NJ 07501 • (973) 278-6330

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To send online condolences, visit www.braggfuneralhome.com



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