



## Brenette Hooks

September 19, 1920 - November 25, 2015

Brenette Davis Hooks was the sixth child of thirteen children born to Frank and Ida Nunn Davis on September 19, 1920, in the rural area known as Littig, Texas. She and her twin sister were born weak and sickly, thus began one of her first challenges in life-survival. Brenette survived and she and her family continued their migrant lifestyle as cotton field workers around the Texas areas from Lee County to Travis, and eventually, Williamson, settling in Taylor, Texas in 1929. A year later, Frank died placing the family's survival in precarious straights, but as a family they worked diligently, pulled through, and prospered.

School attendance was sporadic due to their travel and then the onset of the Depression, which exacerbated their means of subsistence. Yet, Brenette held fond memories of her limited time in school; she loved learning and exhibited a lifelong interest in Earth Sciences and biographies. She had an affinity for reading and her favorite books were the Bible and the dictionary; they were mainstays in her life until the end. Times were hard during and after the Depression, and as the older siblings came of age they left for the CCC camps and the military in order to help support their widowed mother and younger siblings financially. From their example, Brenette learned the importance of self-sacrifice and developed a strong work ethic.

Times being what they were, there were years of chopping and picking cotton; challenges were meant to be overcome; quitting was not an option. Soon, Brenette would begin what would become her lifelong work as a domestic worker. At age 13, when not working in the fields, she was seeking work as a domestic helper by walking the white neighborhoods knocking on doors and accepting daily chores such as washing laundry in a #3 tub and hanging laundry on the line to dry. She would iron, and houseclean; many times for as little as 25, 35, or 50 cents a day. It was grueling work, but necessary to sustain the family's well-being. She didn't complain, but persevered. She was a reliable and conscientious worker and was soon able to secure several regular households of employment. She worked for over fifty years for Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Schroeder and Mr. and Mrs. G.G. Conoley. She took great pride and self-satisfaction in doing a hard day's

work and being self-sufficient, and having a 'good' name in the community.

Early on, the family attended church at Mt. Carmel Baptist Church, until one day when walking past the Church of God in Christ (COGIC) on Simon Street. . . Brenette said, "I heard a voice telling me to join that church." On June 19, 1934, under the leadership of the late Elder B.J. Woods, she united. Once accepting Christ in her life, all her focus became about God's will for her life and others. She was all in for the Lord, and her musical talent of 'secretly' singing Bessie Smith and Sister Rosetta Tharpe songs in the fields transitioned into gospel music only. Her favorite songstress then became the great Mahalia Jackson. Brenette was well known throughout the Taylor area for her uplifting gospel vocals. Singing in churches and over the local radio station KTAE. Church life was foundational in her life. She was the church pianist for nearly fifty years, and served in many other capacities in the Church of God in Christ #1, in Taylor. She remained a faithful member in attendance and duties until her failing health.

In 1943, Brenette met and married Charley Smith and to their union a daughter, Hortense Carolyn was born. Many years later, on November 14, 1953, she married the widower, Robert Hooks and to them a daughter, Hannah Margaret was born. Brenette Davis Hooks lived a long and Christ based life. She outlived her parents, spouse, Robert, 2 grandchildren-Elaine and Bonny Jean, all of her siblings, most of her cousins, and contemporaries. She lived through the Depression, WWII, Jim Crow Laws, the Civil Rights Movement, a man landing on the moon, and witnessing the first black president of the United States, Barack Obama, being sworn into office. With her third grade education she bought a home, maintained a literate rich home, devoted herself to church and community, sent a child to college, and offered financial and wisdom support when and where needed. Yet, her greatest legacy to those who knew and loved her was goodness, honesty, and a steadfast unwavering faith that no matter the circumstance God would work it out. Not too bad for a woman with a third grade education and the Lord on her side.

And so, on the night of November 25th, having fulfilled her family's inheritance of longevity, Brenette peacefully transitioned from this life to her eternal rest. Her legacy includes her eldest daughter, Carolyn Jones, her devoted daughter, Hannah Margaret Hooks. And continues through caring grandchildren, Harmon Weston, Jr., Sharon Nolan Houston, and Tonnette McLendon, nine great-grandchildren, nine great great grandchildren, one niece, Gloria Ann Davis, and loving grand-niece, Audrey Amos-McGehee, other loving relatives, church members, and a plethora of friends. She will be greatly missed.

hooks\_cover new

# Cemetery

---

## Taylor City Cemetery

1101 E 4th Street

Taylor, TX,

# Events

---

**DEC 4** **Family Visitation** 04:00PM - 06:00PM

---

**4**

A Life Celebration by Franklin

510 S Main St., Taylor, TX, US, 76574

**DEC 5** **Celebration Service** 10:00AM

---

**5**

Metropolitan A.M.E. Church

1101 E 10th Street, Austin, TX, US, 78702

# Comments

---



“ Hannah Mae, praying God's peace and blessings for you and your family during this period of grief! Be well!

**Samuel Ross** - December 03, 2015 at 06:47 AM

---



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Brenette Hooks.



December 02, 2015 at 07:06 PM