

*Obituary*

# Emma Lou Brown

March 22, 1924 – November 10, 2024

Emma Lou Brown, a beloved and esteemed member of the Portland, Oregon community, passed away peacefully on November 10, 2024, at the remarkable age of 100. Born on March 22, 1924, in Oklahoma, Mississippi, Emma was a shining example of kindness, resilience, and generosity.



Emma was the only child of Paul and Mary Smith. In 1946, she relocated to Portland with her husband, Finn Brown, where they built a life rooted in love and purpose. In 1949, they welcomed their only child, Louise Brown Gillette, and purchased a home on NE Rodney Street in the historic Eliot School neighborhood. After the passing of her husband in 1978, Emma continued to reside in their cherished home until 2018, when mobility challenges required her to transition to new living arrangements.

A woman of deep faith, Emma was a devoted member of Mt. Olivet Baptist Church since 1950, where she was the church's oldest living member. Over her decades of service, Emma contributed to her congregation in numerous ways, including as a member of the Deaconess Board, gospel choir, coffee hour hostess, caterer, and the bereavement committee.

Emma worked tirelessly as a domestic worker and caterer, dedicating herself to her profession until her retirement in 2017 at the age of 94. Despite her long career, her greatest joy was her role as a matriarch, deeply devoted to her family, friends, and community. Known for her love of gardening, cooking, and sharing stories, Emma created a warm

and welcoming home where all felt embraced and valued.

Emma is survived by her beloved daughter, Louise Gillette, her grandchildren, Bobette Gillette and Corey Lucas, and her great-grandchildren, Miles Gillette and Kobe Lucas. She also leaves behind many dear friends who will forever cherish her memory. Emma's legacy of love, compassion, and unwavering faith will continue to inspire all who had the privilege of knowing her.

A celebration of Emma's extraordinary life will be held at Mt. Olivet Baptist Church, 8501 N. Chautauqua Blvd., Portland, OR, on Tuesday, November 26, 2024, with a viewing at 10:00 a.m. and service at 11:00 a.m. Arrangements are entrusted to Terry Family Funeral Services, 2337 N. Williams Avenue, Portland, OR. Personal condolences may be shared through Emma's online guestbook at [www.terryfamilyfuneralhome.com](http://www.terryfamilyfuneralhome.com).

Emma Lou Brown will be deeply missed but fondly remembered. May her soul rest in eternal peace.

# Harriet Tubman Named a General



A bronze statue of abolitionist Harriet Tubman is seen at the Maryland State House, Feb. 10, 2020, in Annapolis, Md. (AP Photo/Julio Cortez, file)

## Special Honor for American Abolitionist

(AP) - Revered abolitionist Harriet Tubman, who was the first woman to oversee an American military action during a time of war, was posthumously awarded the rank of general on November 11.

Dozens gathered on Veterans Day at the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park in Maryland's Dorchester County for a formal ceremony making Tubman a one-star brigadier general in the state's National Guard.

Gov. Wes Moore called the occasion not just a great day for Tubman's home state but for all of the U.S.

"Today, we celebrate a soldier and a person who earned the title of veteran," Moore said. "Today we celebrate one of the greatest authors of the American story."

Tubman escaped slavery herself in 1849 and settled in Philadelphia. Intent on helping others achieve freedom, she

established the Underground Railroad network and led other enslaved Black women and men to freedom. She then channeled those experiences as a scout, spy and nurse for the Union Army during the Civil War, helping guide 150 Black soldiers on a gunboat raid in South Carolina.

Nobody would have judged Tubman had she chosen to remain in Philadelphia and coordinate abolitionist efforts from there, Moore said.

"She knew that in order to do the work, that meant that she had to go into the lion's den," Moore said. "She knew that leadership means you have to be willing to do what you are asking others to do."

The reading of the official order was followed by a symbolic pinning ceremony with Tubman's great-great-great-grandniece, Tina Wyatt.

Wyatt hailed her aunt's legacy of tenacity, generosity and faith and agreed Veterans Day applied to her as much as any other servicemember.

"Aunt Harriet was one of those veterans informally, she gave up any rights that she had obtained for herself to be able

to fight for others," Wyatt said. "She is a selfless person."

Tubman's status as an icon of history has only been further elevated within the last few years. The city of Philadelphia chose a Black artist to make a 14-foot (4.3-meter) bronze statue to go on display next year. In 2022, a Chicago elementary school was renamed for Tubman, replacing the previous namesake, who had racist views. However, plans to put Tubman on the \$20 bill have continued to stall.