

## *The Obituary*

### *Miss Me — But Let Me Go!*

*When I come to the end of the road and the sun has set for me  
I want no rites in a gloom filled room, why cry for a soul set free!  
Miss me a little – But not too long, and not with your head bowed low.  
Remember the love we once shared – Miss me ... But let me go!  
For this is a journey we all must take and each must go alone.  
It's all a part of the Master's plan, a step on the road to home.  
When you are lonely and sick of heart go to the friends we must know,  
And bury your sorrows in doing good deeds.  
Miss Me – But Let Me Go!*

**Mr. Willie “Bill” Pinkney**, the son of the late Murray Pinkney, Sr. and Katie Smith Pinkney was born August 15, 1925 in Dalzell, Sumter County, South Carolina.

He departed this life on Wednesday, July 4, 2007 in Daytona Beach, Florida.

He was educated in the public schools of Sumter County, South Carolina.

He was reared in a Christian home and at an early age accepted Jesus Christ as his personal Savior and joined Mt. Olive A.M.E. Church. Later in life he joined St. Luke A.M.E. Church where he remained a member until his passing.

He enlisted into the United States Army voluntarily at seventeen years of age in April 1943 during World War II. He received numerous awards including a Presidential Citation with four Bronze Stars for the battles of Normandy, Saint Lo, Rhine River, and Bostones.

After his military stint his avocations were singing with the gospel music quartets and pitching for the New York Pelicans and the New York Blue Socks in the Negro National Baseball League.

In 1953, **Bill Pinkney**, Clyde McPhatter, Gearhardt, and Andrew Thrasher joined forces and became The Drifters. In 1988, they were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

**Pinkney** was the last surviving 1953 Original member. He has used the name / mark Original Drifters since 1958.

He received many more awards and recognitions for services rendered to his community and The State of South Carolina. He is an honorary Deputy Sheriff of Sumter County; he received an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts Degree from Coastal Carolina University and South Carolina has established a state park at his Dalzell, South Carolina birthplace.

**Bill** leaves to cherish his memories: his children, Earthalee Pinkney Johnson, Marchelle Massey Sandoval, Dorothy Powell, Debra Pinkney Barber, Daryl Pinkney, Rhonda Pinkney Jefferson, Carletter Williams, Terry Woods Pinkney, Rodney Jefferson, Lakeshia Davis, Cathy Caruether, Qawiyy “Brent” Nasheed; three sons-in-law; two daughters-in-law; one brother, Henry Pinkney; two sisters, Eliza Pinkney Pearson and Jacquelyn Pinkney Mathis; two sisters-in-law; two brothers-in-law; twenty-five grandchildren; and seven great grandchildren. He is also survived by a host of nieces, nephews, other relatives, and special friends.

In addition to his parents he was preceded in death by his wife Alma Black Pinkney; a brother, Murray Pinkney, Jr.; a sister, Bessie Hawkins; and one grandson, Willie Earl Pinkney.