



Dover D Downing Jr

December 12, 1937 - August 12, 2025

Dover D. Downing Jr. passed away on August 12, 2025. Services were held Saturday, August 16, 2025, at Union Baptist Church, 301 Pennington Avenue, Trenton, NJ 08618.

Dover Daniel Downing, Jr. was born on December 12, 1937, in Trenton, NJ, the third of eight children and first-born son of the late Bernice and Dover Daniel Downing, Sr.

Dover was a bright child who early in his life was recognized for his intelligence and kindness. He considered his mother his first teacher, who taught him basic arithmetic and how to read before he entered elementary school. Dover received his primary education in Trenton and recounted benefitting from Trenton, N.J. school desegregation (which occurred in 1944) by being able to attend a school closer to his home. He would eventually attend Junior 1, where as a 9th grader he was named the Best Male Student. He then went on to Trenton Central High School where he would letter in Varsity Basketball and Track and Field, graduating in 1956. Dover attended Lafayette College in Easton, PA where he played club basketball, before transferring to Temple University where he completed a Bachelors of Arts in Business Administration.

Dover then served in the United States Army rising to the rank of Private First

Class. He further enlisted in the Army Reserves and was Honorably Discharged in April of 1968.

The Allstate Insurance company hired Dover in 1970. That same year, on September 26, he would marry Charlotte Marie Utley. These two events would profoundly shape the remaining course of Dover's life. In 1979, a promotion at Allstate led to his transfer to upstate New York where he settled his family in Fairport, a suburb of Rochester. Dover went on to become the head Territorial Claims Manager for the upstate region covering the Syracuse, Rochester and Buffalo territories. He would spend the next 35 years of his life in upstate New York.

Dover was a committed husband and father who led by word and deed. He coached his sons in youth sports (basketball and baseball) and demanded excellence in school; he and Charlotte created a community with other suburban African American families—formally named the Perinton African-American Heritage Committee--to raise their children in a Black affirming environment. Joyous memories from that time in Dover's life surely include the athletic achievements of his sons, but perhaps most notably, the 1990-91 Fairport varsity basketball season where both his sons started, Stuart a senior guard and All-Greater Rochester standout and Keith a sophomore.

Dover retired from Allstate in 1995 after a 25-year career. He would give much of his time and talents serving on boards in the Rochester area and became an active member of the Mt. Olivet Baptist Church where he sang in the Men's Choir, and served as Treasurer and then Chair of the Board of Trustees. In his support of the church, Dover organized an annual golf tournament at Eagle Vale Golf Club where church members along with friends and family, coming from near and far, would participate in what always proved to be a memorable

outing.

Dover and Charlotte returned to NJ, to the Somerset area, in 2014, wanting to spend their retired years near family and having the opportunity to regularly see their grandchildren. In the last 2 years of Dover's life, his health waned. He passed peacefully surrounded by his wife, two sons and loved ones at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital on August 12, 2025.

Dover, known as "Sonny" to his siblings, was predeceased by his two older sisters, Josephine "Feen" Downing and Ethel "Mickey" Downing Johnson, younger brother, Eugene M. Downing, Sr., special cousin, Bob Downing and nephew, Brian K. Downing, Sr.

He is survived by his younger siblings, Alphonso "Giggi" Downing, Barbara "Bobbie" Tillery (Harvey), Bernice "Bunny" Bartee and Cathy Dismukes; sister-in-law, Everene Downing, brother-in-law, Keith Utley (Joann), special cousins Jean Kelly and Karen Phillips and a host of nieces and nephews.

Charlotte, Dover's wife of 54 years, will keep his love in her heart, grateful for so many blessings, among them having three children, April Denise Downing (deceased March 14, 1972), Stuart Downing (Melissa), Keith Downing (Gabrielle) and five grandchildren, Grier, Sofia, Bayard, Stuart and Stratford.

Special acknowledgement to Spring Hills Somerset Memory Care for the compassionate care they provided Dover.

Cemetery Details

Greenwood Cemetery

1800 Hamilton Avenue
Hamilton, NJ

Tribute Wall



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Dover D Downing Jr.

August 17, 2025 at 05:57 PM



“ Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Dover D Downing Jr.



August 17, 2025 at 05:57 PM



“ Saddened to hear of Dover's passing but have fond memories of the earlier days in Trenton, New Jersey. Condolences to his wife, sons, siblings, and other family. May he rest in Peace and Glory.

Patricia Nevius Peterson - August 16, 2025 at 07:10 PM



“ To My Fabulous Friend Cathy and her family: Please accept our deepest and sincere condolences in the loss of your beloved brother Dover. Please take good care of each other and know that you are Blessed. Love, Freda, Jack, Jaclynne, Lauren and Our grandchildren.

Freda White - August 15, 2025 at 10:06 PM

LF

“ Love Alberta, Cecil Lee and family purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Dover D Downing Jr.



Love Alberta, Cecil Lee and family - August 15, 2025 at 08:20 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Dover D Downing Jr.

August 15, 2025 at 08:01 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Dover D Downing Jr.



August 15, 2025 at 08:01 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Dover D Downing Jr.

August 15, 2025 at 03:33 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Dover D Downing Jr.



August 15, 2025 at 03:03 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Dover D Downing Jr.

August 15, 2025 at 03:03 PM



“ Bettye Page-Wilson & Stephen Wilson purchased the Strength & Solace Spray for the family of Dover D Downing Jr.



Bettye Page-Wilson & Stephen Wilson - August 15, 2025 at 02:13 PM



“ Joseph O. purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Dover D Downing Jr.



Joseph O. - August 15, 2025 at 12:37 PM

CF

“ Curtis & Marie Rivers and family purchased the Beautiful Dreams for the family of Dover D Downing Jr.



Curtis & Marie Rivers and family - August 15, 2025 at 12:12 PM

TG

“ The Geter's planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dover D Downing Jr.

The Geter's - August 14, 2025 at 05:54 PM

TG

“ The Geter's purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Dover D Downing Jr.



The Geter's - August 14, 2025 at 05:54 PM