



## James L. Huston III

June 13, 1943 - June 2, 2022

If you would like to view the service by Livestream please select this link (<https://smokerisebaptist.org/jim-huston/>).

James Leroy Huston III, 78, of Lilburn, GA died June 2, 2022 due to complications of Parkinson's Disease caused by Agent Orange. He was born in Camp Hill, AL, June 13, 1943. He was preceded in death by his parents, Frances Elizabeth Wood Huston and James Leroy Huston, Jr., and a brother John Edgar Huston.

He was a devoted husband, father, grandfather and is survived by his wife of 55 years, Sara Ruth Lanier Huston; two sons and daughters-in-law: James Michael (Michelle) Huston, Sr.; Ralph Lanier (Joanie) Huston, of Lawrenceville, GA; brother, Michael Wood (Deborah) Huston of Birmingham, AL; sisters-in-law, Martha Louise (Omer) Burnett, Jr, M.D. of Nashville, TN, and Elizabeth Anne (Charles) Lanier of Lilburn, GA; four grandchildren: James Michael Huston, Jr, of Nashville, TN; Lauren Elizabeth Huston (Darian) Bowen, of Dallas, GA; Matthew Robert Huston, of Sandy Springs, GA; Claire Elizabeth Huston, of Lawrenceville, GA; step-grandchildren: Lauren Ane Magana of Sandy Springs, GA; Marissa Michelle Magana of Norcross, GA; numerous cousins, nieces and nephews.

He grew up in Birmingham, AL where he was a 1961 graduate of Woodlawn High School. He earned his bachelor's degree from Samford University and a master's degree from Georgia College. After two years as a teacher, he completed USAF Officer Training School and began a year of pilot training at Williams AFB, AZ. Upon completion in 1969, he was assigned to Cam Ranh Bay Air Base, Vietnam as an O-2 Forward Air Controller, 1970-71. His military career included numerous assignments: T-37 Flight Training Instructor Pilot at Laughlin AFB, Tx; Signals Intelligence Officer at Hahn AFB, West Germany; Intelligence Plans, Programs, Resources and Systems Staff Officer and SAC KC-135 Tanker Pilot at Wurtsmith AFB, MI and Robins AFB, GA; Operations Officer, Robins AFB, GA.

His military decorations include the Distinguished Flying Cross, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal with 4 Devices, Distinguished-Presidential Unit Citation with 1 Device, AF Outstanding Unit Award with 3 Devices, Combat Readiness Medal, National Defense

Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal with 4 Devices, Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Device, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, AF Overseas Short Tour Ribbon, AF Overseas Long Tour Ribbon, AF Longevity Service Award Ribbon with 4 Devices, AF Reserve Medal, Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon with 1 Device, and AF Training Ribbon. He retired with rank of Captain in 1988 with 2300 hours flight time. The family moved to Atlanta in 1990. He continued his pilot career in commercial cargo with Southern Air Transport, Express One, and Southern Air Inc, flying Boeing 707, Boeing 727, Lockheed Hercules C- 130, and Boeing 747. He flew many missions in the Middle East in support of US Desert Storm and Gulf War II operations. He was involved with international relief groups doing deliveries and airdrops of food in Somalia, Sudan and 14 other countries. He especially enjoyed his Africa flying, earning the nickname of "Jungle Jim." He accumulated nearly 10,000 hours of flight time, traveling to 5 continents. He reluctantly retired in 2003 due to FAA age restrictions.

Jim was a committed Christian, life-long Baptist and a member of Smoke Rise Baptist Church. During his Air Force years, he was active in churches large and small. In Vietnam, he spent his free time working at the nearby Baptist orphanage. His family often found their church home before they found a house. He was a deacon, a leader in youth and adult ministries, a choir member, and sometimes the music director in small churches. Following his second retirement, he and Ruth became mission volunteers, a goal they had set early in their marriage. He led volunteers in Biloxi, Mississippi rebuilding after Hurricane Katrina and participated in other Mission projects.

Jim was a loving Dad to his sons, always teaching by example. They learned to repair, build, and maintain just about everything. He coached and watched their soccer teams, attended their school activities, listened to band and choral performances, and drove endless miles for family vacation and camping trips in the USA and Europe. To the grandchildren he adored, he was the "Papa" who attended their games, swim meets, band concerts, graduations; worked on their cars; and loved taking them on lengthy summer RV trips.

The family would like to thank his many health professionals and caregivers, especially those at the Inspiration Unit of Dogwood Forest of Grayson and Bridgeway Hospice. Tom M. Wages Funeral Service, Snellville, GA is handling arrangements. The family will receive friends at 10:30 AM prior to the funeral service at 12:00 PM on Monday, June 6 at Smoke Rise Baptist Church, Stone Mountain, GA. Interment will be at Hillcrest Abbey East Memorial Park, Savannah, GA on Wednesday, June 8 at 12:00 PM. Pall bearers are his grandsons and nephews. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorial donations be made to the World Missions Fund of Smoke Rise Baptist Church, 5901 Hugh Howell Road, Stone Mountain, GA 30087.

Due to COVID-19 regulations, our staff is committed to taking care of our guests and families that we serve. We also ask all guests and family members attending visitations

and services to please continue social distancing and if desired to bring and wear a mask. Condolences may be sent or viewed at [www.wagesfuneralhome.com](http://www.wagesfuneralhome.com). Tom M. Wages Funeral Service, A Family Company, 3705 Highway 78 West, Snellville, GA 30039 (770-979-3200) has been entrusted with the arrangements.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JUN 6. 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Smoke Rise Baptist Church  
5901 Hugh Howell Road  
Stone Mountain, GA 30087

## Celebration of Life

JUN 6. 12:00 PM (ET)

Smoke Rise Baptist Church  
5901 Hugh Howell Road  
Stone Mountain, GA 30087

## Interment

JUN 8. 12:00 PM (ET)

Hillcrest Abbey East  
1600 Wheaton Street  
Savannah, GA 31404

# Tribute Wall

CR

“ Jim and I were at Robins AFB together in the early '80s. I was his copilot. We shared alert, flying, even a trip to England and Germany in '83. He was an enormously positive influence on me, even to this day 40 years later. Jim's solid Christian character, wisdom, caring kindness, patience and cheerful spirit were always on display regardless of in the air or on the ground. To this day I carry the many memories and lessons of life I learned from him, and did my best to emulate much from my friend and partner. Ruth, I'm in SC and unable to attend the celebration today of a life well lived. God bless you.

Crosby Ruff - June 06 at 08:25 AM

SH

“ So sorry for your loss Ruth. Praying for you and your family during this sad time. Love, Stephanie Hodgin

stephanie hodgin - June 06 at 07:48 AM

RH

“ 194 files added to the album James L. Huston III



Ruth Huston - June 04 at 01:05 PM

ST

“ There are people that God brings into your life at a special moment. They encourage and help you to become the person God intended. Jim was one of those people for me. I will never forget our time together at Hahn Baptist Church. Jim was such a great Christian and leader. He had the ability to handle difficult things with such a positive spirit. My life is richer because of Jim. My time with him is etched into my life.

Ruth, Tex and I send our love and sympathy to you and all the family. Thank you for your friendship.

How I thank God for the knowledge that Jim is in the presence of the One he love so much.

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**Sammy Tippit** - June 04 at 10:43 AM

JR

“ Ruth and family, Harriet and I are so sorry to hear about Jim. He was quite a guy and obviously was a vibrant Christian as well. as a very productive fellow. We will try to make the service if at all possible but we are now in NC attending Stephen's (4th son) retirement. We love you all and plan to see you.

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**james ray** - June 02 at 10:45 PM

RH

Thank you, Jimmy and Harriet, for your kind words. We would love to see you if your plans work out. I'm sure you fondly remember all the trips I made with you 2 newly-weds between Birmingham and Savannah---I was either asleep or talking about Jim! He loved the time we were able to spend with you. You were wonderful examples for us.

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**Ruth Huston** - June 03 at 06:04 PM

RA

“ I have 50yrs of memories of the best dad to ever live. I recall one meaningful one being when I was working toward my pilot license and my flight instructor and I flew to Statesboro for my FAA Checkride in a tiny Cessna 172. My dad wedged himself in the backseat of the plane and went with us. After passing my checkride, my dad flew back riding in the front seat as my copilot and with me as Pilot in Command. My dad was my teacher, my mentor, my inspiration and my cheerleader (literally he was a cheerleader in college) through my entire life. Like him I served in the Air Force and flew on the exact same planes with the exact same squadron he had only 10-15 yrs before. My dad may no longer be here physically but his love will live eternal. Love you Capt Huston! Your son, Ralph

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**Ralph** - June 02 at 06:46 PM

CS

*Definitely a memory to keep close to heart! I'm very sorry for your family's loss of your dad, Ralph. Grief is a heavy journey... I hope you and yours are comforted together in the days, weeks, and months to come. 💙*

*- Christi (Register) Sproule*

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**Christi Sproule** - June 04 at 10:51 AM

CC

*Ruth and family, I am so sorry for your loss. After reading the obituary I never new Jim accomplished so much in his life.  
Looking forward to seeing everyone at the graveside service in Savannah.*

*You are in my prayers.*

*Curtis Carter*

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**curtis j carter** - June 05 at 06:30 PM

KP

*Ruth, I am sorry for the loss of your husband. May God's love comfort you and your family in this time of grief. As I read the obituary, I was moved by the many contributions of your husband to the world. What a fine person.*

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**Karen Post** - June 05 at 09:31 PM

BF

*I never met Jim, but if he was with the USAF and Southern Air Transport, then he is a "brother" to me. I was a Pilot with SAT from 1965 to 1975.  
I pray that Almighty God would be pleased to hold Jim in the palms of His mighty hands, where he will forever be happy, safe, and comforted by the closeness of Almighty God, Jesus Christ, and The Holy Spirit.  
My most sincere sympathies and warmest condolences to all of Capt. Huston's family and friends.*

*Bill Fisher,  
Fernandina fBeach, FL  
USAF '57-'64  
SAT '65-'75*

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**Bill Fisher** - June 06 at 01:31 AM

RH

*Thank you, Bill, for your kind words and encouragement. I know Jim will be happy to meet you one day. as a "brother" in many ways, and so will I. Your note means a lot to me. Ruth Huston & family*

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**Ruth Huston** - July 21 at 03:33 AM