



James Odell Collins

December 19, 1931 - August 15, 2025

James Odell Collins was born December 19, 1931, in Arapahoe, North Carolina. Odell, as he was called by his family, was the second oldest of 15 children born to the late James Henry Collins and Phoebe Blango-Collins. Odell attended Pamlico County Training School in Bayboro, NC. He enlisted in the United States Air Force when he was 19 yrs old. After his service, he returned home to help his mother care for his ill father and younger siblings. He married the love of his life, Sarah Elizabeth Tripp in 1952, and moved to Connecticut where they raised six children.

With Sarah by his side, Odell opened his heart and home to his family migrating from the south, providing a place to stay or whatever support was needed; often putting their needs before his own. This tradition continued even until his death with his response to the question “How are you doing?” being, “I’m pretty good”; heading off others worrying about him.

Odell was blessed to retire from Winchester Repeating Arms, New Haven, and Pratt & Whitney, North Haven, CT. A family man at heart, he remained very active in family gatherings and celebrations especially the Blango-Collins family reunions. He could always be found with his brothers Richard and Ernest by the deep fryer. He was known for his fish frying skills, and enjoyed receiving compliments on his cooking.

Pop, or Granddad, as he was so fondly called, was very active in the lives of

his grandchildren. He became the pick-up and drop-off cab. From sports to band rehearsals and concerts, he was there waiting to assure each got home safely.

Odell loved to sing and was a devoted singer in the gospel group, The Collins Brothers. He frequently sang lead on “One Day at a Time” and “I’ve Decided to Follow Jesus”. Although reserved, he consistently performed when it was his turn to lead.

As an active member of Pitts Chapel United Freewill Baptist Church, Odell was a member of the Male Chorus and Outreach Ministry. He would pick up and distribute food in his van, always calling everyone he knew, assuring there was no need overlooked. He remained faithful and attended church as often as was physically possible, even getting rides with other members when available.

He was preceded in death by his wife Sarah, son Dallas Collins and daughter Laura Collins-Moye; his great granddaughter, Elena Hernandez; his parents: James Henry Collins and Phoebe Blango-Collins-Randall; brothers: Thomas Richard, Wilbert, Calvin, and Dallas Collins; sisters: Baby Girl, Naomi, Katiebell and Phoebe Lennetta Collins; bonus father: Herbert Randall; bonus siblings: Herbert Clinton, Gaston, Edward Earl, Evelyn Randall and Wilson Miller.

Odell leaves to treasure his memory, his children: James Odell (Donarine) Collins, Jr. of Greenville, NC, Herman Jeffrey (Lorna) Collins of Phoenix, AZ, Barbi Lynn Collins of Virginia Beach, VA, and Kenneth Leon Collins of Derby, CT; siblings: Charlie “Jack” (Cornelia) Collins of Felton, Delaware; Clarence (Evangelist Mary Frances) Collins, Ernest (Overseer Annette) Collins both of Hamden, CT; Persivia (Nona) Collins, Bishop Eugene Collins both of New Haven, CT.; and Shirley Mae Whitney of Arapahoe, NC; bonus siblings:

Sultan, and Ruth Randall of CT; brother-in-law: Charlie (Janie)Tripp; sister-in-laws: Mamie Wilson, and Lillie Ferguson; and a Special Friend of his heart, Perleatheia "Lisa" White.

He is also survived by his grandchildren: Toya, Christopher, Jason, James III, Janell, Troy, Kyle, Anosha, LaTaysha, Bryce, Jasmine, Veoncee and Kayden; great grandchildren: Hailey, Christian, Sebastian, Elijah, Jada, Moriah, Hunter, August, Micah, Haaze, Ezra, Noah, and Khyleena; along with a host of nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

Cemetery Details

Beaverdale Memorial Park

90 Pine Rock Avenue
New Haven, CT

Previous Events

Calling Hours

SEP 8. 10:00 AM (ET)

Pitts Chapel U.F.W.B Church
64 Brewster Street
New Haven, CT

Funeral Service

SEP 8. 11:00 AM (ET)

Pitts Chapel U.F.W.B Church
64 Brewster Street
New Haven, CT

Tribute Wall

PM

“ You were a very special person and always looked for ways to help others. You are missed “Pops”



Paula Meyers - September 08, 2025 at 11:26 AM

DC

“ My dear Uncle Odell is going to be remembered by me with his smile and laughter!!! And our debates of which restaurant had the best chicken. Lol he was adamant that KFC was his preference not changing. Something about if not broke don't fix it... lol. Irregardless we always had some good conversations. Always ended our conversations with I love you.....his spirit lives on and the resurrection is coming. Till that day arrives rest in peace. Love you Uncle

Debbie Carey-Sudler - September 07, 2025 at 09:05 PM

DC

“ Debbie Carey-Sudler lit a candle in memory of James Odell Collins



Debbie Carey-Sudler - September 07, 2025 at 08:53 PM

DB

“ MY CONDOLENCES TO THE BLANGO AND COLLINS FAMILY
MAY WE ENDURE WITH STRENGTH AND HUMILITY AND
ACKNOWLEDGE THAT EVERY DAY IS A GIFT BE BLESSED
FAMILY SINCERELY DAVID BLANGO

David Blango - September 07, 2025 at 08:24 AM

BM

“ To The Collins Family,

*I extend my heartfelt condolences to you all.
My prayers and thoughts are with you all. To
be absent from the body is to be present with
the Lord. May God strengthen you all during this difficult time of
bereavement and throughout the days to come.*

*God Bless,
Yours Truly,
Sister Bernadette McCall*

R.I.P. Mr. Odell 🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏

Bernadette McCall - September 06, 2025 at 12:07 AM



EC

“ Ernest Carr lit a candle in memory of James
Collins



Ernest Carr - September 05, 2025 at 10:21 PM

KC

“ *Kim Chambers lit a candle in memory of James Collins*



Kim Chambers - September 04, 2025 at 09:06 AM

TC

“ *Troy and Anita Collins purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of James Odell Collins.*



Troy and Anita Collins - September 02, 2025 at 05:33 AM

PS

“ *Sending my heartfelt sympathy and prayers and condolences to the Collins family and his children, grandchildren etc. He was a great and pleasant man. May he rest in peace.*

pamela spruill - August 29, 2025 at 03:04 PM

AD

“ *Alice Manley & Family Dover, DE lit a candle in memory of James Collins*



Alice Manley & Family Dover, DE - August 25, 2025 at 03:23 PM

TF

“ *The Gilmore Family (Westover family) purchased the Florist Choice Bouquet for the family of James Odell Collins.*



The Gilmore Family (Westover family) - August 25, 2025 at 01:34 PM

BS

“ *Deepest condolences to the Collins family in the time of this great loss. My late husband Isaac Scott of "Dea" as they called him was a long time friend of Odell's and they sang in Pitts Chapel's Male Chorus for many years. The scripture says absent from the body is present with the Lord. God will sustain you in this most difficult time. Beverly Scott, Suffolk VA*

Beverly Scott - August 21, 2025 at 08:20 PM

MB

To the entire Collins family, may you find comfort in knowing that others care. You have our deepest condolences from Margaret Erkard Bessette

Margaret Erkard Bessette - September 07, 2025 at 03:41 PM

EE

“ *Eileen Esdaile lit a candle in memory of James Collins*



Eileen Esdaile - August 20, 2025 at 08:46 PM

KC

Our prayers are with the family during this time. May God continue to comfort the family and wrap His arms around the family with love and peace.

Love Keyren Corey & Family

Keyren Corey - August 24, 2025 at 05:37 PM