



Charles Richard Bryant

February 11, 1938 - July 12, 2017

"Charlie" (Charles Richard) Bryant, 79, man about the Mesa, passed away early Wednesday, July 12, 2017 following an in-home accident. Born February 11, 1938 in Richmond, Virginia, Charlie attended Thomas Jefferson High School where he discovered his love of writing. Post high school he served in the Army National Guard. Noteworthy is that he was in the VA Guard unit which escorted the first black students into Little Rock (AR) High School in 1957. He continued his education at Richmond Professional Institute (now Virginia Commonwealth University) earning a degree in Social Science/Journalism (1962). With his new degree in hand, Charlie traveled to New York City where he lived in Greenwich Village and wrote for the Village Voice.

In 1963, Charlie married Jane Marshall ('Marty', later divorced) Meredith of Richmond. Together, they moved to Santa Barbara where they had their only child. In 1979, Charlie settled into his Mesa home. Charlie loved Santa Barbara - both it's location, and it's people. As a gifted published poet, his literary skills were apparent and he was accepted into the Santa Barbara coffee-house culture where he was often asked to give poetry readings. The Santa Barbara Free Press interviewed Charles and did a feature article - "The Poet of the Mesa" - complete with photographs.

Charlie became well known in and around the city with Bryant's Tree Service, caring for many of the city's beautiful trees, both private and public, for 35 years. He took great pride in his work, and for many years after his retirement

enjoyed revisiting trees for which he had a special personal interest. During the 1960's and 70's, Charlie was also an active volunteer fire fighter helping whenever he was needed.

Poetry, books, boxing (awarded while in the Guard), motorcycles, movies, and beaches were some of his passions, along with a deep appreciation for nature and animals, especially horses and dogs. Most of all, however, Charlie loved hearing people's stories, but sharing little of his own. He spent his later years strolling through his neighborhood with his rusty-colored, four-legged pal Uma, gathering stories, spreading Mesa news, and making regular coffee stops with friends. Just about everyone on the lower Mesa knew, or knew of, this Mesa fixture.

Charlie was preceded in death by his only child, Meredith Lee Bryant Hudson, and his parents. He is survived by his Virginia family; sister Barbara Bryant Ford and grandson Marshall Cramer Hudson.

Sincere thanks to the Cottage nurses on 3 Ridley - Tree (appropriate!), and the staff at The Californian Skilled Nursing who showed compassion and patience during his final days.

Untold stories are coming to light of this many-faceted one-of-a-kind. A truly unique, witty, and talented "individual". Charlie is greatly missed by those who knew and loved him. Surley a book and movie will follow?

At his request there is no visitation or formal service.

Tribute Wall

SM

“ *Please join friends and neighbors at The Douglas Family Preserve on the Mesa, August 6th at 2:00-3:00pm for an informal celebration of Charlie Bryant's life. Please wear casual attire, sunhat and bring a fold up chair if you prefer to sit. And of course, your personal stories and warm memories to share of our 'Man about the Mesa' that we all so dearly loved and miss.*



Susan McIntire - July 28, 2017 at 07:45 PM

RG

Do you know in what year this photo of Charles was taken ?----
Sincerely Ralph

Ralph Gray - August 08, 2017 at 10:29 AM

"P

“ *1 file added to the album New Album Name*



"Patty" - July 23, 2017 at 06:44 PM

"P

“Charlie and I were best friends since college and forever after. I'll send more things as I find them, but here is one of his poems:

WANDA

*I used to hate it—
the phone ringing about 9 a.m.,
someone selling insurance
at exceptional rates.*

*Then Wanda called.
I would buy anything
from that voice
except insurance.*

*I suggested she quit her job,
come to sunny Santa Barbara,
marry me,
have my offspring.*

*“I'm black,” she said,
“and you're not.”
A sexy voice,
and brains too.*

*I think of our apricot children;
intelligent,
melodic,
and fully insured.*

--Charles Bryant

"Patty" - July 23, 2017 at 06:30 PM

RG

`Thanks for sharing the photo of Lois and Richard as well as Richard's poem "WANDA"-----Ralph

Ralph Gray - July 24, 2017 at 08:26 AM

CY

“ Dear Charlie, I have some tender memories of you from my earlier days. Since I have returned to Santa Barbara after a 40 year hiatus I've been wanting to re-connect with you. I loved and missed your kindness and warm spirit. Alas, now you've moved on before we could meet up once again. You will always remain in my thoughts as a beautiful, gentle soul. R.i.p. my friend. Love, Caity

Caity Young - July 22, 2017 at 09:57 AM

RM

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall

Rev. Susan McIntire - July 20, 2017 at 11:37 PM

RW

“ Dear Charlie, Only in your passing have I come to get to know your better. I will truly miss our casual coffee chats, our playful bantering. We should have had more coffee together, more tours of 'your' trees around SB. Charlie, I hardly knew ye.

Ron Westerman - July 20, 2017 at 09:50 PM

RG

Dear Ron, By your selfless actions on behalf of Richard ,you proved YOU were/are a TRUE friend and Blessing to our Mutual Friend Richard. I thank "GOD" for you.-----Sincerely,Ralph Gray

Ralph Gray - July 21, 2017 at 07:40 AM



“ We will miss you Charlie...what a sweet man. Loved seeing you on your walks and hearing your stories. Diane

Diane Green - July 19, 2017 at 06:27 PM

LG

“ Lynne Gray lit a candle in memory of Charles Richard Bryant



Lynne Gray - July 18, 2017 at 06:34 PM

RG

bless you Lynne Marie---Love Dad Gray

Ralph Gray - July 18, 2017 at 07:58 PM

EG

“ Erica Gray lit a candle in memory of Charles Richard Bryant



Erica Gray - July 18, 2017 at 09:04 AM

EG

Condolences to Charles family & friends.

Erica Gray - July 18, 2017 at 09:08 AM

RG

Dear Daughter Erica----Richard would like the Candle----- as it would make him recall the Sun light at Santa Barbara, Ca. that he loved so much.-----Love Dad

Ralph Gray - July 18, 2017 at 11:55 AM

SV

“ My mind is flooded with so many wonderful memories of the many years I was blessed to know Charles. Sweet memories such as the time he planned an Easter egg hunt for me with clues written in poetic format There were also treasured memories of times spent with him in book stores where he recommended books he felt I should read then would sometimes surprise me with one to take with me back to Ohio. We spoke weekly on the telephone for many years. Charles would call me and politely ask if I minded calling him back, of course, I was pleased to because I had unlimited long distance. My sister would tell me that I was my happiest with Charles...he could always make me laugh. He has been a significant part of my life for many years and I cannot imagine life without him. Charles will forever remain in my heart.

Sue VanSant - July 17, 2017 at 09:53 PM

RG

Dear Sue, Thanks for sharing your sweet loving memories of our mutual friend Richard (Charles)-----Ralph

Ralph Gray - July 18, 2017 at 11:50 AM

RW

Sue, Sincere thanks for you composing such beautiful obituary for my friend of such a short time. Regrets that I did get to know 'the Charlie of the past'-- but for the fun times we did have together, I am grateful.

Ron Westerman - July 31, 2017 at 02:46 PM

SV

Dear Ron, Charlie always spoke highly of you , he felt he could depend on you and valued your friendship. I don't believe, however, that even Charles realized how truly blessed he was to have you in his life. I will be forever grateful to you for all the care and companionship you gave him during his last days. Knowing that you were there and that Charles did not have to die alone has been a great comfort to me. Thank you, Ron for everything. Sue

Sue VanSant - August 04, 2017 at 11:22 PM

RG

“ on Nov.2nd 2008 My Dear Friend Richard (CHARLES) Bryant
SENT ME his poem titled;
DELIVERING THE STORM

*The river is crazy with water.
Like a woman pregnant with a monster
she sings a high tune----
already kenning.
Such music slides down mountains
above the avalanche
or enters the wind
when its breath is on fire.
Spread wide by flood
the river seethes in a brown boiling
as cold as the eyes
of the fetus she will bare
to stillbirth on the delta's mud.*

*Thanks Dear Loved Friend for sharing your well lived life on your
own terms.-----Ralph*

Ralph M. Gray - July 17, 2017 at 09:52 PM