

A daughter's reflections

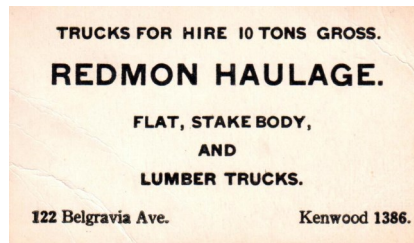
1. I am privileged to have been given this opportunity, as the eldest, to provide you with some personal insights to our father. I also want to acknowledge that this presentation was a concerted effort of my siblings and their families.

Our father, **Freemon Redmon was born in Toronto in 1925**, the youngest of six siblings. His parents had moved from Chicago in 1913, as they felt that Toronto afforded Blacks better opportunities. The Redmon family moved to a middleclass area in the west end of the city.

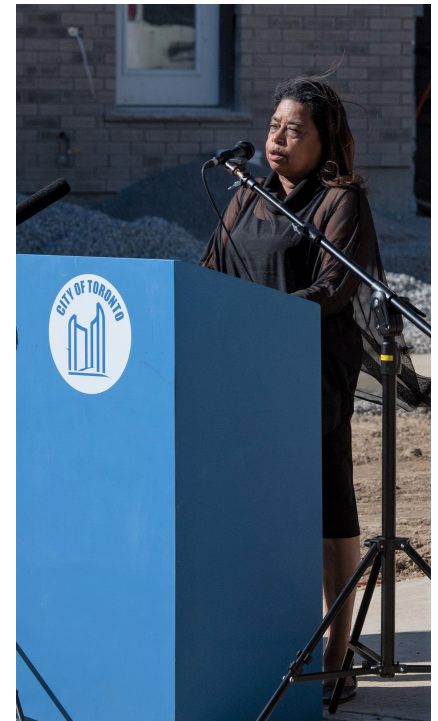
(North of Eglinton at Oakwood)

2. Our dad's father, Nathan Redmon, owned a fleet of trucks that hauled building material and almost all his employees were European Canadian.

Our dad and his siblings were one of the few Black youth in the area. Growing up, Freemon graduated from Vaughan Road CI and then worked in the family-owned business.



Redmon Haulage was Toronto's first Black owned haulage company



Brenda Ferguson
Eldest child of Freemon & Winnie
Shares her reflections.



3. Dad met our mother **Winnifred Upshaw, a Mi'kmag/Afro-Nova Scotian** in 1949 and they were married that year. Together they purchased an acre of land in Wexford Heights (now called Scarborough) where he built the family home. Our parents were a close couple and through them we saw what it meant to have a loving and devoted husband. They raised their family of 7 siblings. Dad was also an intelligent, understanding, and playful father to us.

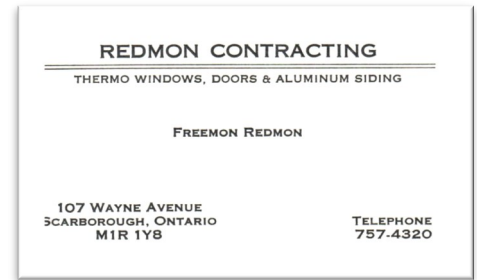
4. As the family grew our parents became grandparents and great grandparents. Dad was a **proud and loving grandfather** and very grateful to have the opportunity to also become a great grandfather. I would be amiss not to mention his relationships to his many nieces and nephews. I believe that he was often a favourite uncle to our many cousins.

Dad was a kind, soft spoken man who **lived his life with gratitude and thankfulness**. Dad attended all of our events and many of those for his grandchildren and great grandchildren.



5. We remember that he would often say that self-praise was no praise and in keeping with this belief **it was rare to hear him discuss his accomplishments**. He responded quietly and civically with projects and support, giving back to those around him. He was active in the community, volunteering in youth organizations, sponsoring sports and the first Black Debutante Ball in 1968.

He owned his own general contracting company in the 1970's.



6. After he retired, he was invited to speak at the University of Toronto Summer Mentorship Program for Black and Indigenous Youth, and through this he discovered a passion speaking about and sharing his life story of growing up Black in this city. He further collaborated by doing presentations and exhibits for Black history month including one with historian and curator Dr. S. Taylor with The Northern Lights: African-Canadian Stories exhibit. He continued to participate in speaking engagements in schools, colleges and businesses especially during Black History Month. He would tell us

"Thank God I am a Black man born in Canada!"



7. Dad would have loved this celebration, although he would have felt that he didn't deserve this type of recognition. **He loved when everyone came together.** As previously stated, **family and community were important for him.**

Dad travelled to ensure that connections were maintained for the family. He was in New Jersey for his sister's 90th birthday, one of many trips to visit family in the USA. He also travelled down east, to Nova Scotia for celebrations for our mother's family.

Family was family.



8. To enjoy one's life and to contribute was not only to be in a community but to be part of it. Again, I will say that he was loved by all of his 7 children and their spouses and **27** grandchildren and great grandchildren. *Freemon Redmon*, the patriarch of a very large family passed away in April of 2020 leaving **his wife of 70 years**, in the home that they had built.

He is already missed!



***Winnie and Freeman
celebrating their 60th wedding Anniversary***



**Adele, Nathan, Audrey, John, Freeman
1984 — Freeman's home at 107 Wayne Avenue, Scarborough, ON**

**These five Redmon siblings were born in Canada.
Eldest sibling Helen born in U.S.A. — deceased 1981 and not in photo.**

Freemon Redmon / a man for all seasons