



Lona M. Simmonds

June 10, 1924 - August 9, 2021

Lona Mae Martin Simmonds was born to the late Charlie and Allean Martin in Ethelsville, Alabama. To this union were born ten children; consisting of three boys and seven girls. Lona was the mother of two sons, Alphonso and LaGressa, who she loved dearly. She was affectionally called “Madea” by her sons and daughters-in-laws and “Big Mama” by her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Lona received her formative education in the Ethelsville Public School System. Upon completion of school, she and her sister, Jackie, moved to St. Louis where they became licensed cosmetologists. They became joint owners of the Saint Louis Beauty Salon on what was then Easton Avenue; the street has since been renamed Martin Luther King Ave. Never one to sit idly by, her second venture into the business world was as a Real Estate Agent. She fared well in real estate; she was very successful and well-respected in the field.

Lona was a member of Scruggs Memorial CME Church for many years and in later years she became a loyal member of the Worldwide Church of God. She was an avid reader of the word and enjoyed Bible Study. Lona was always busy, she was never one to let dust settle under her feet nor in her house! She had a flare for decorating and she loved to beautify her house inside and out.

Lona was a conversationalist and she had an opinion about most topics. She was independent, self-sufficient and, indeed, outspoken and direct. Lona was an excellent cook and enjoyed cooking for others. No one could quite make food taste just like hers. She would give the ingredients but not quite all of them! No one could mimic her cooking and it was always delicious!

Lona loved her family and enjoyed family gatherings, good times, good food, good shopping, a beautiful yard, laughter, and conversing about the Bible.

Lona leaves to cherish her memory two sons, Alphonso Richardson (Pat), and LaGressa Cross (Susan); grandchildren, Marcus Cross, Tyron Richardson, Deedre Rice (Anthony), Jarreau Cross and Jessica Cross; four great-grandchildren; Ryan Rice, Reagan Rice, Teryn Richardson, Tyler Richardson; sister, Johnnie Gragg; devoted family friend, Sherrill Jackson; and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

We will be adhering to strict CDC Guidelines, facial coverings and social distancing.

Previous Events

Visitation

SEP 11. 10:00 AM - 10:30 AM (CT)

Valhalla Chapel of Memories
7600 St Charles Rock Road
St Louis, MO 63133

Memorial Service

SEP 11. 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM (CT)

Valhalla Chapel of Memories
7600 St Charles Rock Road
St Louis, MO 63133

Tribute Wall

KA

“ Sending much love and many many hugs on the loss of Aunt Lona. My mother shared with me just how amazing she was! Be encouraged family. The Scripture provides much of it. The loss of a loved one is deeply painful. Praise God He has an answer! He tells us there is a time to weep, but it is short lived..that JOY is on the way. He tells us that what we sow in tears we will one day weep in JOY. No one is more anxious than God to wipe away every single tear from our eyes. As difficult as the mourning process is, I often comfort myself with the knowledge that once we are together with our loved ones again in heaven it will be ETERNAL. No more time apart! Time together everlasting.

I am so comforted when I stare into the clouds with these thoughts. I pray the Holy Spirit sends the same comfort to the family.

Khara Ashburne - September 13, 2021 at 10:15 AM

LR

“ As the Robys reflect on Aunt Lona we think fondly about her love of food, flowers, fun, fashion, friends, faith and above all family! We are eternally grateful for the memories we made with Aunt Lona and they are inscribed on our hearts and shall remain there forever!

G. Ronald, Linda,

Kenny, George II and Gared



Linda Baker Roby - September 11, 2021 at 12:52 AM

VA

“ As I think of my Aunt Lona I think of the letters in her name that describes what she was to me!

L- Love for her family that was Above and Beyond!

O- Outstanding cook, one of the best. I loved her egg custard pies!

N- Neat, never failed to be a neat sharp dresser, kept a beautiful yard and clean home.

A- Awesome, Aunt Lona always paid me nice compliments “Val you’re looking good, but like me those hips aren’t going anywhere!”

.So many memories, I miss her she will forever, live in my heart!

Valda - September 10, 2021 at 09:43 PM

BG

Ms. Simmonds’ son, Al, is married to my college roommate, Pat. While I didn’t know her personally, I can tell she was a very good mother because of the way she raised her son. Sending my condolences to her family. May she rest in heavenly peace.

*Sincerely,
Bertha Ware Gardner*

Bertha W. Gardner - September 11, 2021 at 01:59 PM

TP

“ Aunt Lona,
Unconditional love for family,
Undeniably made the best pound cakes,
Unimpeded in keeping a well-manicured lawn,
Unafraid of telling you how she felt,
Unapologetically a hard worker,
Unwavering love for God.
Love always,
Great Nieces and Nephews



Trina Petty-Rice - September 10, 2021 at 07:48 PM

VB

Aunt lona, (was like a aunt to me too) I went to brunch once at her house and everything was so delicious. The salmon croquettes were the best. Aunt Lona dressed very stylish and her earrings were very fashionable. She had a compliment and a big smile whenever I saw her. She will truly be missed. Vera Baker

vera Baker - September 11, 2021 at 12:04 PM

AC

“ This is Anita Clay, a longtime friend of Ann King. I am honored to have shared Aunt Lona with her family. She was a fearless, opinionated, renaissance woman. My memories of her range from watching her up on a ladder, down on her knees laying tile, shopping in ripped jeans to cooking wonderful breakfasts and delivering unsolicited, pointed, humorous advice to us younger women about life in general and men specifically. She was truly one in a million and I will miss her immensely.

Anita Clay - September 10, 2021 at 09:34 AM

LR

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*G. Ronald, Linda,
Kenny, George II and Gared*

Linda Baker Roby - September 11, 2021 at 12:44 AM

FM

“ *From Angie & Billy, Nicole & Michael purchased the Pink Tribute Spray for the family of Lona M. Simmonds.*



From Angie & Billy, Nicole & Michael - September 08, 2021 at 02:58 PM

LS

“ *Loretta, Diane, Connie, and Sheila purchased the Southern Magnolia Tree for the family of Lona M. Simmonds.*



Loretta, Diane, Connie, and Sheila - September 07, 2021 at 07:30 PM

JL

“ *Johnnie Lee purchased the Reflections of Glory Wreath for the family of Lona M. Simmonds.*



Johnnie Lee - September 07, 2021 at 07:00 PM

AK

“ We have so many wonderful memories of Aunt Lona! She loved feeding people, especially her famous breakfasts and many delectable, delightful, delicious cakes! Most of all Aunt Lona loved family and keeping the family together.....family, this is a legacy we must continue!

Ann King - September 07, 2021 at 10:40 AM

AK

This is Ann, another memory I must share. I had knee replacement surgery and was not driving for a period. Aunt Lona and I were going out to eat, so she was driving, Aunt Lona did not concern herself to much about speed limits, but that is another story. Back to the story at hand, we went to her car, I got in the back seat, there was more room to stretch my legs. Aunt Lona looked back and said, "what do you think I am doing, driving Miss Daisy " ? She continued, on the way back, you get your hips on the front seat " .

Ann King - September 07, 2021 at 10:55 AM

SJ

“ To M' Dear,

We met when I was a teenager and always had a special relationship that expanded over years. I admired her strength and tenacity. Our friendship lasted over life's ups and down. When I was diagnosed with breast cancer I woke up to see M' Dear at my bedside. When I completed my Masters Degree M'Dear was with me for the celebration. As M'Dear was aging and started to experience the human struggles I visited her often. If I noticed something that wasn't right I did not hesitate to call Phonzo. Like the day I came to visit her and her worker was curled up in bed. Yes I called Phonzo as soon as I got in my car. M'Dear was an excellent cook and I can testify to how good her food was.

When you have a lifetime of memories, it's hard to pick a special one. My life has been richer by having M'Dear in my life. I loved her and she loved me and she told me I would never be out of her family. I'm glad I never tried.!

Rest in Peace M'Dear

Love Butch

Sherrill Jackson - August 26, 2021 at 10:45 PM

CW

I am a dear friend of Ann King and met Aunt Lona about five years ago at a family reunion. From the day I met her I fell in love with her spirit. She will surely be missed. Carolyn Woodson

Carolyn Woodson - September 10, 2021 at 05:50 PM