

Retired Educator, Lorraine D. Henri, Passes at Age 96

Lorraine “Delores” Davis Henri, 96, born June 30, 1922, to James and Viola Davis of East St. Louis, Ill., died May 7, 2019, in Atlanta, Ga. She was the third child and first daughter of nine children. Lorraine came from a home of God-fearing parents who instilled a love for Christ. She completed Oakwood Junior College and married her “Honey,” Pastor C. Dunbar Henri. Dunbar said that he would marry the first woman he saw on campus, and it was Lorraine who walked in his direction. They married in 1943, and began their life together.

In 1945 they became one of several black couples to represent the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Liberia, West Africa. At the young age of 23, Lorraine was quite courageous and adventurous to live in the back bush of Bassa, Liberia, often alone while her husband traveled on the Lord’s business. Her first home was a tin house on stilts, where she learned to make a home out of little.

They served 19 years in West Africa in Liberia, Nigeria, and Ghana. During that time, Lorraine raised three children (Burdetta, Patricia, and Dunbar), taught cooking classes, directed choirs, provided office support to her husband, and accompanied him on ministerial duties. Once she even officiated during a funeral service. Every two and a half years they returned to America, and for six months Dunbar and Lorraine traveled to Camp Meetings and churches, and visited family and friends around the country sharing about their experiences in Africa.

The Henri family returned to the U.S. in 1964, and spent a year at Andrews



University where Dunbar completed his master’s degree.

The couple joined the South Atlantic Conference in Atlanta, and began their work in Orlando, Fla., and then Dunbar pastored the Berean Church, and Lorraine taught at Berean Elementary School. After several years working in South Atlantic, they received a call to return to the mission field in 1970, this time to Kenya in East Africa. Lorraine worked in the office with Dunbar, and traveled with him extensively while their children were away at school in Beirut, Lebanon. Dunbar and Lorraine returned to America (Washington, D.C.) in 1973, where Dunbar was called to the General Conference to serve as a general vice president.

Lorraine worked as a secretary, hostess, and tour guide for the General Conference. She enjoyed her job, and loved meeting people from around the world. Lorraine and Dunbar officially retired in 1980, and then returned to work for the South Atlantic Conference.

Lorraine entered Morris Brown College in her 60s, and completed a degree in education. She taught several grades in elementary school; participated in choirs; served as Sabbath School superintendent; led the senior ministry; and enjoyed entertaining, cooking, gardening, and bargain shopping.

Lorraine always had a sense of humor and a beautiful smile, even throughout her illness. She will be missed. She leaves to cherish her memory three children: Burdetta Henri, Atlanta, Ga.; Patricia Henri Simmons, Huntsville, Ala.; C. Dunbar (Deborah) Henri Jr., Beltsville,

Md.; three grandchildren: Cara D. (Brian) Wright, San Antonio, Tex.; Christopher D. Henri, Greenbelt, Md., and Charles H. Simmons, Denver, Colo; two great-grandchildren: Carter Wright, San Antonio, Tex.; and Camryn Wright, San Antonio; five siblings: Charles Davis, Chicago, Ill.; Lovey Verdun, Huntsville; Frank (Alma) Davis, Chicago; Doris Joyner, East St. Louis; and Grace Phipps, New York, N.Y.; a host of nieces; nephews; and friends. 🕊