



Mr. Robert Simmons

January 12, 1930 - May 6, 2018

Robert Simmons mortal soul transitioned this earth Sunday May 6, 2018 at Covenant Hospital, Saginaw, Michigan. For some time he suffered from End Stage Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and finally succumbed to this illness. He was born January 12, 1930 in Hale County Alabama to Fred “Val” Simmons and Henrietta (Moore) Simmons. He was preceded in death by his parents.

Robert was one of five children: Mose Simmons, Mamie (Simmons) Wilson, Will Moore and his identical twin brother Jim Simmons. He was acknowledged as the leader in the family although he was the baby. All of his siblings proceeded him in death.

Robert married the love of his life, Rosie Lee (Beard) Simmons who also preceded him in death. To this union one daughter Brenda Joyce Simmons (Jacksonville, Florida) was born. Robert was also parent to Essie Pearl King and Grady Lewis of Tuscaloosa Alabama. He was very fond and proud of his grandchildren, Brian Allen (Rachel) Whitmore of Madison Wisconsin Gregory Xavier (Tiffani Natalini) Whitmore, of Irvine California, Kimberly Hardin, Cynthia King, Alexander King, all of Tuscaloosa Alabama and a very special great-grandson, Calvin Robert (Whitmore); great-grands Eric (Lewis) Nixon, LaDonna (Lewis) Pope, Darnell (Lewis) Nevels, Tremica (Lewis) Nevels; Rakel King, and Michael King. He was a man of conviction, a solid provider

and a loyal and fierce protector of his family.

Robert was an avid hunter and greatly enjoyed fishing and other hunting trips with his twin brother Jim and buddies, James Bond, Joseph Brooks and Eugene Henderson. These men loved hunting, especially deer season and going north to Idle Wild, Michigan. They were competitive fishermen, and staged a show down with their grandchildren to see which grandfather team could catch the most fish. Robert boasted how many fish he and Brian caught, and further embellished his rendition of the fishing contest, by telling a long tail about how he had to quickly catch Brian from running out of the boat into deep water when he caught and landed his first fish! Upon cleaning his home, it was discovered that Robert had an impressive collection of 13 various rifles and three distinct hand guns as well as an assortment of hunting knives. The family did not know “Rambo” had such a large arsenal of weapons and was prepared to stage his own war on the world right in the city of Saginaw!

Mr. Simmons was an ever present and strong member of the 13th street community, as many neighbors enjoyed his company and wisdom. Robert had a bountiful garden and freely shared the abundant produce with the community. He was a “giver” of his time and himself to assist and meet the needs of others. Many family and friends looked to him for a listening ear and sage advice. If you wanted to bounce something off Mr. Simmons, you best be ready for some peppered and unsolicited opinions as well, because he would tell you “the God heaven truth!”

He was known for taking care of the feral cats of the neighborhood and was noted for preparing collard greens and cornbread along with breakfast for the cats. The family often joked about the cats having cat language conversations amongst themselves, saying something like: “Hey, man have you been to that new café on 13th street? Man, this dude can throw down!” The cats preferred Roberts’s home cooking which included fish, chicken and eggs to their cat

food. These cats knew they had a good thing, and vehemently ran off any new cat who dared to invade their territory, who heard of, and came to dine at Robert's café on 13th street.

Mr. Simmons was a longstanding and faithful contributing member of Tabernacle Baptist church. When his health began to fade, he would drive to church on Sunday to give his tithes and offerings but was too winded to walk into service. He personally knew the Lord and came to accept Christ as his Savior at an early age. Upon taking his final steps along his life journey, with the help of his daughter Brenda and his niece Carolyn at his bed side, he was able to coherently recite the 23rd Psalms, the Lord's Prayer and offer his own words to acknowledge a living God before slipping into a coma.

Robert and his wife Rosie were strong believers in education as they both were limited in their educational accomplishments. Robert held a fourth grade education and Rosie a tenth grade education, despite this, Robert was a very successful provider, landowner and owed no one anything. His wife Rosie was known for being a gracious lady who required her daughter to follow suit in character and integrity. Both parents demanded academic excellence and fully expected her to attend college. While both parents did not achieve a high school diploma, they both guided Brenda to do so. Rosie often remarked she felt frustrated when she could not help Brenda with homework, and was resourceful to secure assistance from those in the educational community. Rosie worked for the Saginaw Board of Education at Jones Elementary School where she was the Librarian. That same library was named in her honor at the time of her death.

Robert on the other hand was a laborer, working 31 years at the General Motors Chevrolet Grey Iron Central Foundry in the area where he, along with other laborers poured hot molten iron ore into molds to cast auto parts. This

was a job that was physically taxing, very hot, dirty and hazardous to the hearing and physical well-being of those working there. Robert often spoke of this job with much disdain, telling Brenda he would never allow her to work in such an unsafe environment, because she was “going to go to college to make something of herself, get a good education, and job and was never to depend on no man”. Robert and Rosie were adamant about her educational success and drilled this requirement into her head. Because of their strong educational conviction and drive, Brenda achieved and exceeded their expectations.

At this time she is working to complete her Doctorate of Nursing Practice in Educational Leadership at Case Western Reserve, Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing Cleveland Ohio and is the Associate Dean of Academic Operations for Chamberlain University, Chamberlain School of Nursing, in Jacksonville Florida.

In their honor, Brenda established the Rosie and Robert Simmons Educational Scholarship Fund and will provide the first of two well-endowed scholarships May 13, 2018 in Jacksonville Florida.

Mr. Simmons legacy will continue to thrive and live on through his grand and great- grandchildren.

Robert loved his brothers and sisters. Mamie his sister (the eldest and only girl), was his heart. He held her in high regard and affectionately spoke of her significance in his life. His brother Jim was his lifelong friend and soul mate, being they began their life together as identical twins in their mother’s womb. Jim and Robert were virtually inseparable. When you saw one, you saw the other. They would playfully trick people who could not identify one from the other. Robert heavily grieved their passing. However, he was quick to affectionately recognize the vast number of nieces and nephews born of his brothers and sister who cared and love him.

He loved them all, but held a special place in his heart for James Wilson

“Sonn” and Azalene (Wilson) Wanzer, Paris Dozier, and most significantly Betty Jean Simmons whom he considered a daughter.

For those friends as well as family who have been by Brenda’s side throughout this difficult time, who have held her up mentally and spiritually, Robert Simmons and Rosie Simmons will forever bless you.

This great man will be truly missed by all who knew and loved him. Those zany phrases, mispronounced words, and jokes he played on many friend, niece, nephew, daughter, son, and grandchild will be within the heart and mind of all who were blessed to have met him.

He, was the Best!

Funeral service will take place at 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, May 16, 2018 at Tabernacle Baptist Church, 810 Cathay Street, Saginaw, MI 48601. Pastor Blake D. Strozier, Host Pastor and Rev. James Wilson will officiate with interment in Forest Lawn Cemetery, 3210 South Washington Avenue, Saginaw, MI 48601. Friends may call at the Evans & Browne's Funeral Home, 441 North Jefferson Avenue, Saginaw, MI 48607 on Tuesday from 2:00 until 8:00 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, the family has designated the Rosie and Robert Simmons Educational Scholarship Fund for memorial contributions. Please direct contributions to PRIDE, 824 First Avenue South, Jacksonville, FL 32250.

Cemetery Details

Forest Lawn Cemetery

3210 S. Washington Avenue
Saginaw, MI

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 15. 2:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Evans & Browne's Funeral Home
441 N. Jefferson Avenue
Saginaw, MI 48607
(989) 754-0481
evansbrownes@gmail.com
<https://www.evansbrownesfuneralhome.com>

Funeral Service

MAY 16. 11:00 AM (ET)

Tabernacle Baptist Church
810 Cathay Street
Saginaw, MI 48601

Tribute Wall



“ *Evans & Browne's Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Mr. Robert Simmons*



Browne's Mortuary - May 17, 2018 at 01:03 PM

TA

I'm loaded for words right now. I'll really miss my cousin Robert my prayers r with u Brenda and the entire family as u go through this difficult time. Tracey anderson

Tracey anderson - May 17, 2018 at 11:50 PM

TA

I'm lossed for words right now. I'll really miss my cousin Robert. My thoughts, and prayers r with u Brenda, and the entire family ad u go through this difficult time. Tracey anderson

Tracey anderson - May 17, 2018 at 11:54 PM

VB

“ *Vicki Bradley lit a candle in memory of Mr. Robert Simmons*



Vicki Bradley - November 07, 2021 at 09:27 PM

DM

“ *DIANA MIREE sent a virtual gift in memory of Mr. Robert Simmons*



DIANA MIREE - May 18, 2018 at 06:22 AM

TA

“ *Tracey anderson and John Jones lit a candle In loving memory of Mr. Robert simmons.*

Tracey anderson - May 18, 2018 at 12:02 AM

TA

“ *Tracey Anderson lit a candle in memory of Mr. Robert Simmons*



Tracey anderson - May 17, 2018 at 11:59 PM

DM

“ *Derrell Martin lit a candle in memory of Mr. Robert Simmons*



Derrell Martin - May 17, 2018 at 04:01 PM



“ To Brenda and family:

What words can I say, my heart is so heavy with the memory of my mom not being here on earth anymore. But also knowing that now one of her best friends husband has joined her, Mrs. Rose up in heaven. Brenda you have always been like an big sister to me and our mothers were the best of friends. My prayer for you and the family comes from the heart when I say that God has seen Mr. Robert's pain and wanted him home. I know that God will be a mother and a father for you cause as he has been there for me 20+ years and he has not failed me yet. Please know that I pray your continued strength as I know you have with out a doubt. Please know that you are in my thoughts and prayers. I pray you have safe travels back to Florida and that God continue to bless your life abundantly.



*Humbly Submitted
Your Lil Sis
Sylvia George (Olivia's daughter)
1811 Golfview Drive Apt. 11
Essexville, MI 48732*

Sylvia George - May 15, 2018 at 02:12 PM

JS

“ To Brenda and family, you are in my thoughts and prayers as I send my deepest condolences during this difficult time. May the Lord bless and keep you.



Janie Surles-Cork - May 15, 2018 at 11:45 AM

SS

“ Sue Surles-McDole lit a candle in memory of Mr. Robert Simmons



Sue Surles-McDole - May 15, 2018 at 09:13 AM

GL

“ Grady Liddell lit a candle in memory of Mr. Robert Simmons



grady liddell - May 15, 2018 at 08:49 AM

SW

“ I am sorry for the lost of your dad. Hope you find comfort in the weeks and months ahead by looking unto to God who is the author and finisher of your faith. Ps 62:2 From the end of the earth I will cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I. My prayers are with you and family. Sharon White

Sharon White - May 15, 2018 at 06:43 AM

RB

“ Mr. Simmons you will be missed, not forgotten! So many memories of you, Mr. Joe Brooks and my father, James Bond, going fishing, hunting, putting together family outings. The three of you made life fun and taught your children a lot about life! I am truly blessed to have grown up to know you as an adult, your guidance was appreciated. So glad we stayed in touch over the years. Renae Bond

Renae Bond - May 14, 2018 at 06:17 PM

EL

“ Erica Hall Wealth Advisors, LLC purchased the Lovely One Spathiphyllum Plant for the family of Mr. Robert Simmons.



Erica Hall Wealth Advisors, LLC - May 14, 2018 at 03:08 PM

KG

“ Mr. Robert you will be Missed Truly. You always pulling on the side of my car about to hit me and I always say man you to close. You always telling me How glad you are to see me coming taking care of my Mom. And I Thank You for keeping in Touch with Mom making sure she ok. Cause you know what she dealing with. Rest on Mr. Robert 13th Street has Loss a Good Neighbor, But you will be watching over 13th Street. Praying for Your Family . WE Love You Mr. Robert. The Griffin Family on 13 th Street

Kimberly Griffin - May 11, 2018 at 10:41 PM

RH

“ More like a father than an uncle. Gonna miss u so much. Love u!
R.I.H.

Ricky Harris - May 11, 2018 at 09:09 PM

SB

“ May many years of wonderful memories give you comfort at this difficult time. Love, Sheri

Sheri Barnett - May 11, 2018 at 10:31 AM

PA

“ Sending love and comfort to you and your family during this time of great loss.



Pamela - May 11, 2018 at 08:44 AM

EL

“ Professor Simmons:

With most sincere condolences extended to you and the family in the loss of your father.

Grateful student for his extension of grace (you) to Chamberlain University for allowing us to share in the awesome testimony he has left us! We mourn and celebrate his life with you all the way from Jacksonville, FL.

Eloyce Forrest, Student

Eloyce - May 10, 2018 at 09:38 PM

CE

“ Brenda, So very sorry for the loss of your father. Praying for the entire family.RIP Mr.Robert Simmons. Celia!!



CeliaM - May 10, 2018 at 09:13 PM

CP

“ Cheryl Payton lit a candle in memory of Mr. Robert Simmons



Cheryl Payton - May 10, 2018 at 03:34 PM

SW

“ Shantell Walden lit a candle in memory of Mr. Robert Simmons



Shantell Walden - May 10, 2018 at 07:26 AM

ML

“ Mary Lawrence lit a candle in memory of Mr. Robert Simmons



Mary Lawrence - May 10, 2018 at 05:30 AM

ML

“ Brenda
So very sorry for your loss. Mr. Simmons always made me feel special. RIP Mr. Simmons.

Mary

Mary Lawrence - May 10, 2018 at 05:20 AM

PQ

“ *My deepest condolences for your loss. My prayers for the family.*
Pat Qualls
Dallas, TX

Pat Qualls - May 09, 2018 at 05:44 PM

ML

“ *Brenda*
So very sorry for your loss. Mr. Simmons
always made me feel special. RIP Mr.
Simmons.



Mary Lawrence - May 09, 2018 at 01:19 PM

TG

“ *Pray for the family.*



Theresa Gibbs - May 08, 2018 at 02:10 PM

IC

“ *IRMA CHISM lit a candle in memory of Mr.*
Robert Simmons



IRMA CHISM - May 08, 2018 at 01:05 PM

EC

“ *Evon Chism lit a candle in memory of Mr. Robert Simmons*



Evon Chism - May 08, 2018 at 12:30 PM

PG

“ *Pam Gibbs lit a candle in memory of Mr. Robert Simmons*



Pam Gibbs - May 08, 2018 at 09:14 AM

JB

“ *JAMES BROWN lit a candle in memory of Mr. Robert Simmons*



JAMES BROWN - May 07, 2018 at 07:18 PM