



Mary Sylvestia Lewis-Allen

June 2, 1917 - August 31, 2002

Mary Sylvestia Lewis-Allen (nee Jeffries) was born in Gladstone, Nelson County, Virginia on June 2, 1917. She departed this life on Saturday, August 31, 2002 at Howard County general Hospital, Columbia, Maryland. She was one of eleven (11) children, five (5) boys and six (6) girls born to the late John Ivory and Hattie Rebecca Megginson-Jeffries. All of her brothers (four in infancy or early childhood) and two sisters preceded her in death. Syl or Reds as she was known to family, was educated in the Nelson County school system. She was baptized at an early age and joined Second Mineral Springs Baptist Church. She married the late John Henry Lewis in 1935 and unto this union was born one son John Henry made their home in Baltimore, Maryland. Their home was a common stop and home for numerous family members, cousins and friends migrating from Gladstone and Appomattox, Virginia during the late 30's and early 40's. Although the marriage ended in divorce, John Henry and Syl remained life-long friends. Syl relocated to Washington, D.C. and was employed as a Federal Government worker with the Bureau of Printing & Engraving, Department of the U. S. Treasury during World War II and until 1950. During this period she provided for her son who was being cared for by her mother in Gladstone. She also assisted in supporting her parents and younger siblings to the best of her ability. Syl married James (Piggy) Allen in the late 40's and again she made Baltimore her home. She continued to work in D.C. and commuted daily by train. She also relocated her son to live with her in 1949, after he had completed elementary school in

Gladstone. Again her home became a focal point for family and for a period the Wedding Chapel for her younger sisters and friends. During this period she was also affiliated with the Order of the Eastern Stars, Prince Hall Affiliate. Her marriage to Piggy ended in 1954. As a single parent, Syl relocated to East Orange, New Jersey and "Junior" was reunited with his father in Baltimore. She entered the restaurant industry and continued to support her son who was just entering college. Even with meager earnings she always found money for tuition, books and visits with her during the summer. Further, she continued to help family members, which now included nieces and nephews. She was a member of Union Baptist Church, Orange, New Jersey. After "Junior's graduation and entry into the military she would laud his accomplishments after each promotion. She cherished each visit from him during the period 1959 through 2000. Her apartment would be filled with the aroma of his favorite foods that always included Hog Maws & Chitterlings and a Lemon Cake. Following his promotion to Colonel and her attendance at the Pentagon Ceremony, "Junior" became the Colonel. Syl also cherished her grandson, Marcus. She could not see enough of him and from infancy until he started school she was continually sending money, bonds and clothes. She also enjoyed taking him on the train to Gladstone to visit family. She was also concerned with his ability to cope with out-door plumbing; therefore an added piece of baggage included a Camp Stool Potty. Once Marcus started school, he had to be brought to Jersey before the start of the school year, so they could go shopping for school clothes. These trips continued until High School. Now that he was too grown to have grandma take him shopping, she would send him money for him to purchase a school outfit. During Syl's later years she became an avid knitter and gave Afghans, sweaters and slippers to family and friends she was also an expert crotcheter. She continued working but preferred to do private duty, live in nursing. She also became active in the Tenant Association of the Arlington House, where she lived for 20 Years and served as secretary. She was also appointed by the Mayor of East Orange to serve on the Seniors Advisory Council. She also volunteered at East Orange

General Hospital. When her health started to fail her niece, Ann Weathersbee and her husband Edison, residents of East Orange, would respond to all of her emergency needs and keep her son informed of her condition. Syl, relocated to Columbia, MD in April 2000 to live with her son. She had a stroke in August 2000 that restricted her movement but she remained alert and was constantly on the go. She became attached to Juniors friend, Vernice Musgrove and family, and enjoyed visiting Vernice's daughters and aunt. They treated her like she was their mother and she glowed in the love they showed her. Several of Vernices friends also became attached to her and would visit her in the hospital, send her flowers, card and call her. She attended Day Care five days a week and would call Vernice after dinner each night and tell about all of those Old Feeble people she had to contend with. The staff at the centers adored her. She leaves to fondly cherish her memory: her son, Colonel John H. Lewis, Jr. (U.S. Army, Retired); grandson, Marcus D. Lewis (wife, Kirsten); three sisters, Alma Frederick, Bertha Jackson and Hattie Gibson; two brothers-in-law, Johns Spencer and Earl Jackson; former daughter-in-law, Christina Lewis. A devoted and caring friend to her son, Vernice Musgrove; and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

Tribute Wall



“ *Mary Sylvestia Lewis-Allen*

October 13, 2022 at 08:33 AM



“ *The richness of the human experience is in what is handed down from one life to the next –not simple things of mortar and stone, but memories of what one said or felt or did. Live with your good memories, as they will add to your comfort, which comes from knowing that your grief is shared and understood.##imported-begin##The March Family and Staff##imported-end##*

July 02, 2010 at 02:21 PM