



Acknowledgements

The family of Alice Thompson humbly submits expressions of gratitude for the calls, cards, generous financial support, and gestures received from family, friends, and the New Orleans community during our time of loss.

Memorial Arrangements Entrusted to

D.W. Rhodes Funeral Home
3933 Washington Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70125

Celebrating the life of



Alice Marie Thompson

September 25, 1939 - August 24, 2015

Friday, September 25, 2015 at 1:30pm

DW Rhodes Funeral Home
3933 Washington Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70125

Rev. Brandon Boutin, Officiating

ALICE MARIE THOMPSON



Civil Rights Icon and Freedom Rider *Alice Marie Thompson* passed on Monday, August 24, 2015 at Tulane University Hospital in New Orleans, LA. She was born September 25, 1939 in Lake Providence, East Carroll, Louisiana. She was the sixth of eight children born to Cora Mae (Atlas) and John Henry Thompson, Sr. and was the granddaughter of Susie Lee and Louis Balfour Atlas, Sr. and Alice Piercey and Norah Thompson.

In 1944, Alice and her family moved from Lake Providence to New Orleans' Ninth Ward. Alice attended Lockett, V.C. Jones, McCarthy, and Joseph S. Clark schools and was a 1959 graduate of George Washington Carver High School. She later graduated from Southern University in New Orleans with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Liberal Arts and Sciences. Alice worked for many years as a social worker and retired in 2002.

Between 1959-1960, Alice, and her sisters Jean and Shirley, became members of the Youth Council of the New Orleans branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The Thompson Sisters, as they are famously known, soon sought more direct action and in 1960 joined the New Orleans chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) under the leadership by Rudy Lombard and later Oretha Castle Haley. Alice was active in many pickets, sit-ins, and sit downs and integrated a number of public places in the city such as the McCrory's, Woolworths, the Loews Theater, and the City Hall Cafeteria.

After the passage of the Interstate Commerce Commission's (ICC) ruling outlawing segregation on buses, terminals, restrooms, restaurants, etc. on November 1, 1961, Alice and fellow New Orleans CORE members began testing throughout Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Beaumont, TX. Their first test was in New Orleans at the Trailways bus terminal on Tulane Avenue. On November 14, 1961, the group tested in Hattiesburg, MS and Poplarville, MS following a trip to Mobile, AL. In Poplarville, Alice, Patricia Smith, and Frank Nelson were arrested and charged with breach of peace.



SEP 25, 1939 - AUG 24, 2015

Alice and Patricia were placed in the same cell as Mack Charles Parker. Parker had been beaten, hanged, and his body thrown in a river two years previous. On November 29, 1961, Alice, Jerome Smith, George Raymond, Doratha Smith, and Thomas Valentine were viciously beaten while testing in McComb, MS.

Alice also volunteered for numerous projects during the U.S. Civil Rights Movement such as Mississippi and Louisiana Freedom Summer, and was present at the historic March on Washington on August 28, 1963. Alice was honored her for her work by the state of Mississippi, the City of New Orleans, by Oprah Winfrey during her show commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Freedom Rides, and also by her family during their 2015 Reunion in Jackson, MS.

Alice was one of the founding members of the Southern Organization for the Unified Leadership (SOUL), a founding member of the Lower 9th Ward Development Association, an organizer of the New Orleans Health Corporation, and an organizer of the Copeland-Sanchez-Thompson Center in the Lower Ninth Ward.

Alice loved to have a good time and was always a centerpiece of family gatherings, in particular, those during Mardi Gras. With her signature beer in hand, she could always be seen recounting hilarious stories of her life and times, especially things that happened while she was in the Movement.

Alice was predeceased by her siblings Louis James Thompson, Annie Mae Thompson, John Henry Thompson, Jr., Grace Vella (Thompson) Parker, Pierce Calvin Thompson (her twin brother), and Shirley Ann Thompson.

Alice leaves behind her daughter, Alicia Sherrel Cora Thompson, sister, Jean Denton-Thompson, aunt, Annie Ruth Atlas, nephews Pierce Baker, Gregory Thompson, Christopher Baker, Jason Banks, Cheong-Tseng Eng, Dante Baker, Daniel Denton-Thompson, Kayn Ramirez, Nykolas Ramirez-Baker, Aaron Baker, Frederick George, Jr., Brian Parker, Jr., nieces Sonfre Roberson, Arlene Baker, Alisa Baker, Jazmyne Thompson, and Marissa Parker, along with a host of relatives and friends.



Order of Service

Processional

Prayer

Scripture Reading

2 Timothy 4:7
2 Corinthians 5:8-9
2 Corinthians 5:17

Musical Selection

Rev. Lois Dejean

Reflections

Alicia Thompson
Cheong-Tseng Eng
John D. Johnson
Judge Edwin A. Lombard
Doratha Smith-Simmons
Jerome Smith

Musical Selection

Rev. Lois Dejean

Announcements

Recessional

