



Dorothy Piron Hunt Woods

December 24, 2019

On September 7, 1923, a very special spirit was born in New Orleans, to the union of Milford Piron and Eulalie Fortune Piron; Dorothy Regina Piron.

Raised a devout Catholic, Dorothy was baptized and christened at Corpus Christie Catholic Church. Dorothy attended Valena C. Jones Elementary School and graduated from McDonogh 35 High School.

Dorothy was the 5th of 5 sisters; Jeanne Cook (owner of Joe and Jean's Night Club in the 7th Ward), Clara Hart, Mildred Fleury, and Augusta DuFour. From childhood to adulthood, Dorothy always cherished the love of her older sisters. Deeply embedded in the Creole culture of the 7th Ward, Dorothy's father was one of the founding members of the Autocrat Club where she experienced the love and friendship of the extended community. Throughout her early years, she frequently shopped at the Circle Food Store and her cousin's Bachemin's Meat Market on St. Bernard Avenue. With both parents strong support of education, Dorothy ambitiously continued her studies at Straight Business School and worked as a secretary for Adam Haydell Sr., at Majestic Life Insurance Company as one of her first jobs after graduation from high school. One of her dear friends included the iconic New Orleans photographer Arthur P. Bedou, who traveled with Booker T. Washington. Bedou captured many precious memories of Dorothy's early childhood including family portraits. In 1945, Dorothy became the apple of Clarence Alphonse Hunt, Sr.'s eye. To this union two children were born; Clarence A. Hunt, Jr. and Jacquelyn Hunt Shiloh (preceded in death). Together Dorothy and Clarence were quite a duo

as entrepreneurs operating their very own Hunt's Varsity Restaurant and Lounge serving New Orleans' Uptown local community and frequented by celebrities such as Aaron Neville and his family, Fats Domino, Etta James, James Brown, Louis Armstrong, and Irma Thomas, among others. Hunt's Varsity Restaurant was a meeting place for social justice advocates during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s fighting for voting rights, racial justice, desegregation of public schools and facilities organized by many notable civil rights leaders such as Reverend Avery Alexander, and A.P. Tureaud.

As a socialite, with a beautiful and radiant personality, Dorothy captured the hearts of many and experienced the best of two cultures, "Uptown" at Hunt's Varsity Restaurant and "Downtown" in the 7th Ward. In her presence, people were welcomed by her big friendly hug and contagious smile that lit up any room she entered. Dorothy brought that same quality to her students as a school teacher and retired after nearly ten years from the Orleans Parish School District.

Dorothy had a love of cooking and made fabulous NOLA staples such as gumbo, chicken fricassee, red beans and rice, and shrimp creole. Her passion for music included Louis Armstrong, Nat King Cole, Aaron Neville, Michael Jackson and her famous uncle, violinist A.J. Piron. As an avid fan of Johnny Mathis, she even traveled to the Beau Rivage Resort and Casino in Biloxi, Mississippi for his concert. Reading and keeping up with current events on CNN daily were also her favorite pastimes.

After a 32 year union, Dorothy's husband passed away. In 1980, Dorothy had a second chance at love and married Louis Woods, Sr. During this marriage, Dorothy's love of dancing blossomed and carried her to many Mardi Gras balls where she truly enjoyed dancing the night away at the L & C Ball, Bunch Ball, and Young Men of Illinois Ball, wearing her favorite red ball gowns and fur coats. Louis Woods, Sr., passed in 1997.

Dorothy never lost her passion for travel and took her first flight in 1968 to visit

Clarence, Jr. at school in Poughkeepsie, New York. Through the years Dorothy traveled the world with her son Clarence, Jr. by her side on Carnival cruises to Jamaica, the Cayman Islands, and Cancun. Her love of nature and beautiful things brought her peace during frequent road trips along Highway 1 visiting Napa, Lake Tahoe, Mission Bay, Monterey, and the Spanish Bay Resort.

In spite of the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, Dorothy maintained her resilience and continued to embrace life with an appreciation for everyone. In 2005, Dorothy relocated to Oakland to live with her beloved son Clarence. In 2011, her namesake and grandchild Piron was born. Their loving bond grew even stronger as Piron, from the tender age of 5 to his current age of 8, learned how to help care for "grandma."

Family meant everything to Dorothy and Christmas time was always a very special time of year for her. It was a time when the family was reunited especially when she sent her children, particularly Clarence, away to private educational institutions. She and her husband, Clarence Hunt, Sr., would always tell him "Come home for Christmas." Clarence, so appreciative of his education and love from his parents, always kept his promises. Fittingly, during his mother's illness, Clarence, Jr. solicited Christmas carolers to sing at Dorothy's bedside on Christmas Eve at their home in Oakland. For one last time, at 4:12 pm Dorothy opened her bright eyes wide, looked up at her loving son and went home for Christmas, joined with her Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Adored by many, Dorothy's legacy lives on through her best friend and devoted son Clarence Hunt, Jr., her grandchildren; Piron Hunt (Oakland, CA), Jessica Shiloh (New Orleans, LA), Ronald Shiloh, Jr. New Orleans, LA) and Millesande Randle (St. Paul, MN) and family members; Theo Cook, Pat Cook, Susana Evangelista, Mark Cook, Gwen Fleury, Mike Fleury, Connie Hart, Bridgette Masters, Rev. Leon Jackson, Joseph Jackson, Angela Cryer, multiple great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews, cousins, Dr. Reginald Woods,

Brian Woods, and a long list of extended family including Larry Woods, State Senator Dr. Joe Bouie, Melvyn Beck, Robert Brackins, Maxie Juzang and the Juzang family.

Relatives and friends of the family, also priest and parishioners of Corpus Christi Catholic Church, 2022 St. Bernard Avenue are invited to attend a Funeral Mass of Christian Burial at Corpus Christi Catholic Church on Saturday, February 1, 2020; Visitation, Expressions, Eulogy: 9am-11am, Rosary: 9:15am, Mass: 11am. Father Henry Davis, Celebrant. Interment, Mt. Olivet Cemetery; Repast after services at Corpus Church Resource Center. Arrangements by D.W. Rhodes Funeral Home, 3933 Washington Ave, New Orleans, LA 70125.

Cemetery Details

Mt. Olive Cemetery

Woodville, MS

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 1. 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Corpus Christi Catholic Church
2022 St. Bernard Ave
New Orleans, LA 70117

Service

FEB 1. 11:00 AM (CT)

Corpus Christi Catholic Church
2022 St. Bernard Ave
New Orleans, LA 70117

Tribute Wall



“ *SM lit a candle in memory of Dorothy Piron
Hunt Woods* ”



SM - January 25, 2020 at 12:39 AM