



## Rhea Butler Lucien

December 2, 2021

Rhea Butler Lucien, loving daughter, sister, widow, retired registered nurse and school teacher, aunt, godmother, AKA soror, neighbor, friend and centenarian, passed away peacefully on Thursday, December 2, 2021, at 9:02 PM, at Ochsner Hospital in Jefferson, LA, following a brief hospital stay and illness. Having recently celebrated her 100th birthday, the daughter of the late Samuel Butler and Sarah Irving Butler, was the baby of ten siblings, who was born in New Orleans, LA on October 3, 1921. Although she grew up during the great depression, Mrs. Lucien recalled in a recent interview that she didn't even know that they (her family) were poor. Despite a caste system that would separate her by skin color, race and gender, she was a world traveler who traveled five continents and lived in Cleveland, Ohio, Washington, DC, Chicago, Illinois, Montreal Canada and New Orleans, LA. Her formative years were spent in New Orleans, where she was educated in the New Orleans Public Schools, having attended and graduated from Valena

C. Jones

Elementary, Albert Wicker Junior High and McDonogh 35 High School. She and her husband-to-be studied at Dillard University and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing in May of 1945. Although her aspirations at the time were to become a medical doctor, the Jim Crow laws of the South and costs were prohibitive for her and her family to afford. Mrs. Lucien nonetheless, enrolled in and graduated with a Master of Science degree in nursing from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, and received 30 "+" graduate hours beyond the Master's degree from Catholic University, in Washington, D.C. Following her nursing studies, Mrs. Lucien worked as a registered nurse in Flint-Goodridge Hospital, the New Orleans Public Health Hospital, the Calliope Project in New Orleans, the Cook County Projects in Chicago, Illinois, the Veterans' Administration Hospital in Tuskegee, Alabama, New Orleans and the Victorian Order of Nurses and the Jewish General Hospital in Montreal, Canada. A true "Bleu Devil", Mrs. Lucien also taught courses in the nursing program at her alma mater, Dillard University. The consummate lover of education, Mrs. Lucien, feeling burnout from the drain of bedside nursing, decided to use her God-given gifts to teach. It was then that she re-enrolled in school and became a certified school teacher. She taught as a classroom teacher at Harney School and

served as a teacher to homebound school-aged children throughout the city.

Mrs. Lucien

stopped short of declaring just how many years she worked. Although for those of us who

knew her, the truth is she never really stopped working!

A quiet, gentle and humble woman, Mrs. Lucien treated all with dignity and respect. She is

survived by four nieces, Juliet Tinson Robertson, Fabiola Butler Taylor, Asha B. Shereem, and

Denise B. Collier, one nephew, Harold Butler, Jr., as well as host of great and great-great nieces,

nephews, relatives and friends. She was preceded in death by her husband, the late Dr. Harold

Lucien, her parents, the late Samuel and Sarah Irving Butler, three sisters, the late Felicia B.

Shelly and husband, Alonzo, the late Eloise B. Marrero and husband, Lawrence, and the late

Selina B. Tinson and husband, August; four brothers: the late Samuel Butler, the late Alton and

his wife, Emily Butler, the late Oscar and Frances Butler and the late Harold and Martha Butler.

The family cordially invites relatives and friends of the family, pastors, officers and members of

all neighboring churches, Graduate chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., the New

Orleans Council on Aging, also President, Board of Trustees, Faculty, staff and student body of

Dillard University, along with the Dillard University Professional Organization of Nurses

(DUPON) to attend the Church visitation from 10:00 A.M. until 10:50 A.M.,

Saturday, December

18 at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 1625 Annette Street, New Orleans.

Memorial service will

begin promptly at 11:00 A.M., with entombment of cremains in the St. Louis Cemetery #2. In

view of the large number of older relatives and friends expected, the family cordially requests

that attendees have COVID-19 vaccinations and wear masks covering both nose and mouth

throughout the services. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation in honor of Rhea Butler

Lucien to Dillard University to DUPON or Natural Sciences programs.

Arrangements by D. W. Rhodes Funeral Home 3933 Washington Ave. Please visit [www.rhodesfuneral.com](http://www.rhodesfuneral.com) to sign the online guestbook.

# Cemetery Details

## St. Louis Cemetery # 2

New Orleans, LA

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC 18. 10:00 AM - 10:50 AM (CT)

St. Paul Lutheran Church  
1625 Annette St.  
New Orleans, LA

## Memorial Service

DEC 18. 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Paul Lutheran Church  
1625 Annette St.  
New Orleans, LA

## Entombment

DEC 18. 12:45 PM (CT)

St. Louis Cemetery # 2  
New Orleans, LA

# Tribute Wall

AC

“ My entire family would like to extend our deepest sympathy to the family of Mrs. Lucien.  
An extraordinary and loving person. As my children grew up in Saint Paul's she and Mrs. Tinson mentored them. Two great black women, who we will be forever grateful to.  
Dr. and Mrs. Lucien's contributions to Saint Paul's Lutheran Church helped to keep our church moving forward. My brother truly loved to bring her to and from church, she was someone who you respected and just enjoyed doing things for.  
She has now transitioned into the arms of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Rest in peace Mrs. Lucien

*The Coco Family*

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**Alvin Raymond Coco** - December 18, 2021 at 08:37 PM

EA

“ To Juliet and family... The life of the dead is place in the memory of the living. May the memory of your love one and God's love give you comfort and mend your broken heart.  
God's peace,  
Eugenia

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**Eugenia Foster Adams** - December 18, 2021 at 04:30 AM

RJ

“ *My sincerest condolences, prayers and love to Mrs. Lucien's family. She is now resting in the Arms of Jesus Christ and Perfectly Healed. My mother, the late Naomi Watson-Williams, while attending McDonogh 35 would often hear the name Rhea Butler and if she was blessed with a daughter that would be her name. After meeting Mrs. Lucien, several years ago at an RTA advisory meeting, I was humbled and honored to be named Rhea. Thanks Mrs. Lucien for an exemplary life of loving, caring and sharing. May God continue to bless her family. I am unable to pay my respects, as I have another funeral.*

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**Rhea Lois Joseph-Dokes** - December 17, 2021 at 10:30 PM

BM

“ *Earth has no sorrow that heaven can not heal. May she Rest In Peace. Ms Lucien will be truly missed.*  
*Barbara McClue (DUPON)*

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**Barbara McClue** - December 16, 2021 at 04:49 PM

SM

“ *My deepest sympathy for your loss. What an accomplished and vibrant woman!*  
*Sincerely,*  
*Sabrina A. McCarthy*

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**Sabrina A. McCarthy** - December 15, 2021 at 10:40 PM