



Alliene Rita Keyes Ross

June 1, 1927 - March 17, 2018

Alliene Rita Keyes Ross died in the early morning hours of St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 2018, at her home, surrounded by family and friends. She was 90 years old.

Alliene was a powerful force of love in her family, a proud Mississippian and a loyal friend to many over the years. She will be missed immensely and remembered with love for generations to come, though there is some peace in knowing she was ready to depart.

A devout Catholic, she talked in her final days about growing her wings. She said it with a peaceful smile. There was no question.

Alliene loved singing loudly in church, often to the amusement of her grandsons. She loved Jesus, long-haired dachshunds and LSU football. She loved watermelon with salt, summer rains and peals of laughter from her four great-granddaughters. She loved shopping with her daughter, eating boiled peanuts and meeting new people.

Alliene could talk to anybody and often did. She was a great listener, naturally curious and skilled at asking the right questions.

She was born in Laurel, Miss., on June 1, 1927, the third of five children born

to Robert Howard Keyes Sr. and Mary Louise Lamey Keyes. She spoke wistfully of her childhood there on the family farm and remained close with her siblings – Evelyn, Peggy Ann, Yvonne Mary (Sissy) and Robert Howard Jr. (Buddy) – throughout her life.

As a young woman in her early 20s in Jackson, Alliene noticed a dark and handsome stranger who seemed to keep passing by her desk. Marius Dunkin Ross, known as Dave, eventually worked up the nerve to ask her out. They were married for 65 years, had a daughter, weathered some storms together and loved each other fully to the end.

They also lived for a spell in Dyersburg, Tenn., and Hollywood, Calif., but no place really stacked up to Mississippi in Alliene's estimation.

For 36 years, Alliene worked at Bell South/South Central Bell, rising to a managerial position, which was a rare accomplishment for women in those days. She was proud of working for the phone company. She was smart, hard-working, kind and sometimes mischievous.

Alliene loved her friends dearly. She talked to them daily, even after she and Dave moved to Myrtle Beach, S.C., in 2007 to live with her daughter and son-in-law. She cultivated lifelong friendships like a master gardener tends roses.

As her days dwindled, she spoke often to her loved ones who predeceased her – her husband, Dave; her parents; her older sister, Sissy, and brother, Buddy.

She's survived by a host of family members who will miss her dearly, including her daughter and son-in-law, Mona (Ramona Ross) and Kyle Prufer; her grandsons, Jamey and Greg Trotter, and their wives, Kelsey and Kerry; her great-granddaughters, Savannah, Amelia Alliene, June and Tess; her sisters,

Evelyn and Peggy Keyes (Brandon, Miss.); her niece, Pamela Cheeks, and her great-niece, Laurel Johnson; and her good buddy Jimmy Washington.

In lieu of flowers, please honor her memory by making a new friend or calling an old one. Text messages don't count.

Visitation will be held from 4 to 6 p.m. Thursday, March 22, at McMillan-Small Funeral Home; a short prayer service will be held at 5 p.m. during visitation.

Funeral services will be at 11 a.m. Friday, March 23, at St. Andrew Catholic Church. Interment will follow in Hillcrest Cemetery.

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR **22**. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

McMillian-Small Funeral Home
910-67th Ave. N.
Myrtle Beach, SC 29572
mcmillansmall@msfh.net
<http://www.msfh.net/>

Prayer Service

MAR **22**. 5:00 PM - 5:15 PM (ET)

McMillian-Small Funeral Home
910-67th Ave. N.
Myrtle Beach, SC 29572
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Funeral Service

MAR **23**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

St. Andrew Catholic Church
Myrtle Beach, SC 29577