

Lola Mae Evans Obituary



Lola Mae Herbert Evans, beloved daughter of the late Booker T. and Luvonia Herbert, was born on May 7, 1922, in Newberry, South Carolina. From humble beginnings, Lola would go on to build an extraordinary life—one defined by faith, family, creativity, resilience, and an enduring devotion to those she loved.

Lola's earliest years were shaped by a way of life very different from the world we know today. Her childhood home had no running water, electricity, or indoor plumbing. Baths were taken in a tin tub in the kitchen, with water warmed on a wood-burning stove. Though life was modest and often demanding, those early experiences helped instill in Lola the strength, resourcefulness, and appreciation for life's blessings that would remain with her throughout her lifetime.

In 1927, when Lola was five years old, her parents moved their family from South Carolina to Newark, New Jersey, in pursuit of greater opportunities and a better life. That move would open a new world of possibilities for the gifted young girl.

Lola attended school in Newark, where her remarkable artistic ability quickly became evident. Blessed with an exceptional gift for drawing, she was accepted into Newark's prestigious Arts High School. She was an intelligent and gifted student with an extraordinary memory, a quick and creative mind, and an instinctive ability to envision beauty where others might not see it. She loved creating something new and transforming something old into something beautiful.

Her talent as an artist was so impressive that her artwork remained on display at Arts High School for many years.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF
LOLA MAE EVANS

The artistic foundation she developed there would follow her throughout her life, eventually blossoming into extraordinary talents in fashion, sewing, jewelry design, and cake decorating. Lola graduated from Arts High School in 1941, carrying with her not only an education, but a creative spirit that would become one of the hallmarks of her life.

Following graduation, Lola became part of a historic generation of women who stepped forward during World War II to fill essential positions in factories, shipyards, offices, and defense facilities across the country. She worked at Picatinny Arsenal in Morris County, New Jersey, contributing to the nation's wartime efforts. The experience further strengthened the independence, determination, and resilience that characterized her throughout her life.

Lola later moved to Washington, D.C., where she met the man who would become her husband and lifelong companion, Willie Evans. The two married in 1942 and shared 63 years of marriage, building a life and family together until Willie's passing in February 2005.

Their union was blessed with nine children—three sons and six daughters: Laverne Robbins, Sylvia Hoskins, Carolyn Stanley, William Evans Jr., Robin Evans, Randell Evans, Jacqueline Free, Donna Evans, and Patricia Evans. At the center of Lola's life was her family.

She loved them deeply and completely. Though naturally quiet and gentle in spirit, there was never any question about her strength or her devotion. Those who knew Lola knew one thing with certainty: if you needed her, she would be there.

She was a source of strength and support not only to her children, but also to her parents, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren, extended family, friends, and countless others fortunate enough to enter her orbit. Her love was not loud or demanding. It was steady, dependable, and enduring. She showed her love through her presence, her generosity, her talents, and the countless ways she cared for others. And very often, Lola showed her love through food.

Her kitchen was a place of warmth, abundance, and fellowship. Family and friends were the grateful beneficiaries of her exceptional cooking and baking. She became widely known for her fish stew, cakes, banana pudding, lemon meringue pie, and sweet potato pie. There was almost always something delicious waiting in Lola's kitchen—and somehow, always enough to share.

Long before elaborate custom cakes became an industry of their own, Lola was a masterful cake designer. Her cakes were another expression of the artist within her: carefully crafted, beautifully decorated, and created with love.

But Lola's creativity could never be confined to just one medium. She was an extraordinary seamstress whose talent became known far beyond her own family. With fabric, thread, imagination, and remarkably skilled hands, she created beautiful garments and performed custom alterations. Her work included band uniforms for schools in Trinity, North Carolina; original designs supplied to boutiques in New Jersey; and custom creations for her many satisfied private clients.

Her artistic eye also extended to jewelry design, and she created distinctive, one-of-a-kind pieces that reflected her natural sense of style and beauty.

Lola had a special ability to recognize possibility in things others might overlook. Perhaps that was why she loved flea markets and thrift stores so much. She delighted in searching for hidden treasures and enjoyed shopping in New York City's wholesale district, always imagining what something could become in her creative hands.

An entrepreneur as well as an artist, Lola owned and operated shops on Bergen Street and Broad Street in Newark, where her many talents and designs could be shared with the community. Her businesses were another reflection of a woman who was resourceful, industrious, imaginative, and far ahead of her time. Yet for all of Lola's many gifts and accomplishments, the foundation beneath her life was her faith.

Her relationship with God brought her tremendous comfort, strength, and joy. Through life's celebrations and its sorrows, her faith remained steadfast. It carried her through storms, strengthened her during difficult seasons, and deepened her confidence in the faithfulness of God.

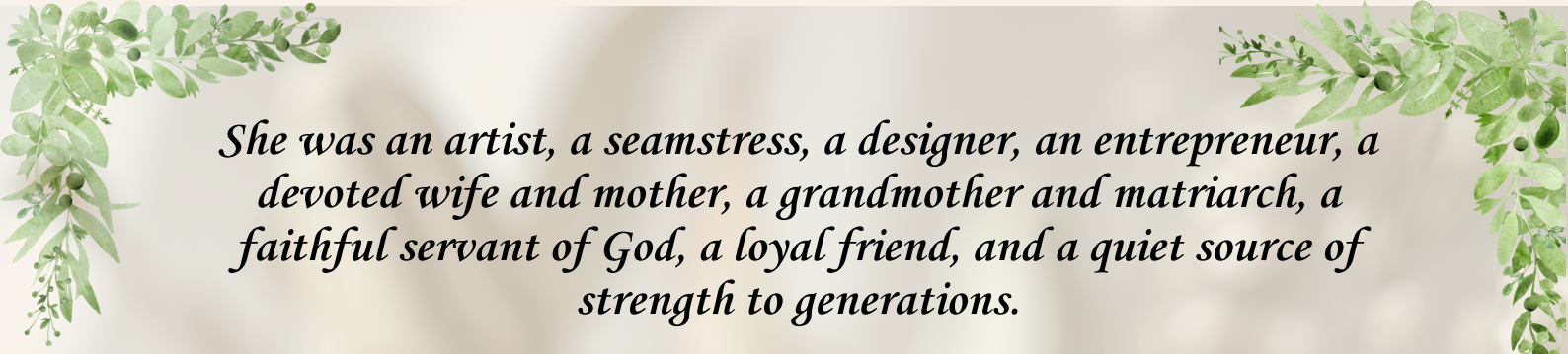
Your paragraph Lola was a devoted member of St. Thomas AME Church under the leadership of Rev. Charles E. Boyer for more than 60 years, faithfully serving as a Steward, Missionary, and Mother of the Church. When Lola and Willie joined St. Thomas, they immersed themselves and their children in the life of the church, creating friendships and relationships that would span generations.

Among those treasured relationships was the family's special bond with the Boyer family. What began as friendship grew into something much deeper—the Boyers became an extension of the Evans family. Although Rev. and Mrs. Charles E. Boyer, along with Lola's beloved husband, preceded her in death, the love planted between the two families endured. Generations later, that bond remains strong, a beautiful testament to the kind of lasting relationships Lola and Willie cultivated throughout their lives.

Lola was preceded in death by her parents, Booker T. and Luvonia Herbert; her beloved husband of 63 years, Willie Evans; and three of her children, William Evans Jr., Randell Evans, and Jacqueline Free.

Left to cherish her memory and carry forward her remarkable legacy are her six children: Laverne Robbins of Greensboro, North Carolina; Sylvia Hoskins of Winston-Salem, North Carolina; Carolyn Stanley (Jimmie) of South Plainfield, New Jersey; Robin Evans (Nancy) of High Point, North Carolina; and Donna Evans and Patricia Evans of Newark, New Jersey.

Her legacy also lives on through 28 grandchildren, 27 great-grandchildren, 17 great-great-grandchildren, and a host of beloved relatives, extended family members, church family, and friends. To measure Lola's life only in years would never adequately tell her story. Her life can be measured in the family she nurtured, the generations she helped shape, the meals prepared with loving hands, the garments carefully sewn, the cakes beautifully decorated, the treasures she transformed, the friendships she sustained, the faith she lived, and the countless people who knew they could depend upon her.



She was an artist, a seamstress, a designer, an entrepreneur, a devoted wife and mother, a grandmother and matriarch, a faithful servant of God, a loyal friend, and a quiet source of strength to generations.

Lola Mae Herbert Evans was deeply loved, and her absence will be profoundly felt. Yet the gentle, quiet, and enduring spirit that characterized her life has not disappeared. It remains woven into the lives of her children and descendants and carried in the hearts of everyone who was blessed to know her.

Her hands created many beautiful things during her lifetime, but perhaps her greatest creation was the legacy she leaves behind—a family strengthened by her love, grounded by her faith, inspired by her resilience, and connected by the memories they share.

*Her story will continue to be told.
Her lessons will continue to be passed down.
And her light will continue to shine through the generations that follow.
A life beautifully lived. A family deeply loved. A legacy that will endure.*



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