



## Doris Alverta Sterling

July 16, 2020 - July 16, 2020

Doris “Pat” Aquilla-Carrington Sterling—genealogist, gardener, traveler, techie, and arts enthusiast—entered eternal life on Thursday, July 16, 2020.

Born in 1946, Doris was raised by Amelia and John Combash and educated at St. Peter Claver School, St. Frances Academy, the College of Notre Dame of Maryland (B.A.), and Loyola College (M.A.). These institutions introduced her to her three lifelong sister-friends, Delores Lee (Notre Dame), Selby Long (St. Frances), and Cheryl Ward (St. Peter Claver).

Doris labored hard all her life, up until the very end. After high school she served in the U.S. Navy, and then worked at Johns Hopkins Hospital. Later she became a speech and language pathologist, first in the Baltimore City Public Schools and finally at the Hearing and Speech Agency.

She was a stellar genealogist who traced her lineage as far back as 1808, not bad for an African American (thanks to slavery, many records are incomplete or unavailable). For a time, she managed the website of the Baltimore Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society.

She was also a member of the Scribblers—a writing group—and especially proud of work by her writer friends Jacqueline Crabtree, Frank Long, Merredith Perkins, and Linda Wharton.

Doris found much peace through gardening and was proud of becoming a certified master gardener in her 40s. Each winter found her designing her plot and seeds for the coming spring and summer. Favorites were tomatoes, cucumbers, and Swiss chard.

She was a longtime member of Baltimore's Center Stage and saw many Broadway productions in NYC. She adored *Les Misérables* and *the Phantom of the Opera* (and tolerated *Kinky Boots* and *Rent*—her daughter Leslie's favorites).

Doris always longed to travel, and after Leslie finished high school, she set about exploring the country and the world, from Alaska to Florida and Colombia to Ireland. She tapped her fingers to flamenco in Barcelona (overcoming a longtime fear of air travel to get there), enjoyed high tea in London, saw ships squeeze through the Panama Canal, and touched the Paris gravestones of Edith Piaf and Richard Wright. She always returned home to stock up on red-hot jawbreakers and add extra salt to her potato chips (but somehow had low blood pressure).

She lived for videos and pictures from her grand-kitties, Frodo and Bentley Kowalski.

Doris made a difference in the lives of many. She is survived by cousins Nancy Aquilla, James Briscoe, Sylvia Goodman, and Anita Shelton, and their descendants. Her spirit is carried on by her adopted mother, Willa Turman; her sister-friends; her treasured angel, Claire Barnhill; and her adopted daughter, Stefanie Kowalski.

Most of all, she was devoted to and beloved by her daughter (and favorite traveling partner), Leslie Robinson.

She will be dearly missed.

In her memory, donations may be made to HopeWell Cancer Support (P.O. Box 755, Brooklandville, MD 21022) or the Baltimore Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society (BAAHGS, P.O. Box 9366, Baltimore, MD 21228).

# Tribute Wall

LW

“ *Your unwavering wordsmith encouragement is as formidable as your gardening prowess. Your branches of intertwined connections will live on eternally.*

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**Linda C. Wharton** - August 16, 2020 at 05:36 PM

PA

“ *If You Love Me, Do Not Cry – St. Augustine If You Love Me, Do Not Cry Don't cry if you love me If you know God's grace And what Heaven is like, If you were able to listen To the angel songs And you see me among them, If you were able to think for awhile About the beauty That no other beauty can match, Wipe your tears and do not cry, If you love me. Death is nothing. It is just having moved to the other side. I am still what I am and you are still what you are. What we used to be for each other is still the same. Call me by the name you used to. And talk to me as you have done before. Do not use a different tone. Do not be rigid or sad. Continue to laugh about what used to make us laugh. Pray for me. Smile. Think of me and pray with me. Let my name be mentioned at home as before. Without any exaggeration or distress. Life continues to mean what it always did. And it is still the same The thread did not break. Do you feel I have become outside of your thoughts Because I am far from your sight? No. I am not far from you. I am just on the other side of the road, And everything is fine. You will find my heart and my love pure. Wipe your tears and do not cry. If you love me. Aldo Martinez*

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**Para Aldo** - August 12, 2020 at 02:57 PM

LE

“ *Thinking of you on this another Veterans Day!*

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**Leslie** - August 10, 2020 at 04:46 PM