



## Donald Howard Simmons

June 15, 1935 - January 4, 2023

Donald H. Simmons, 87, of Lenexa, KS. died January 4, 2023 at the Lakeview Village. Don fought the good fight, he has finished the race, he has kept the faith. Don was born June 15, 1935 in Argentine, KS., the second son of Howard and Anna (Miller) Simmons. Don was raised in the Argentine community of Kansas City, KS and went to Stanley Grade School. Unfortunately, he suffered serious 2nd and 3rd degree burns on the back of both legs in a gasoline explosion while playing with gasoline and matches at the age of 8. He was kept back one year in school for his recovery. The burn scars had a profound impact on his growing up years and beyond.

Don graduated from Argentine High School in 1954 where he played basketball in his freshman, sophomore and junior years. Although he wasn't able to make the final cut his senior year, he was the team's manager, the shot-chart shooting statistics keeper, sitting next to the scorer's table and travelled with the team on out-of-town trips.

He attended the University of Kansas for two years before finishing his college education at the Worsham College of Mortuary Science, a private institute in Chicago with an Associate Degree in 1958. Don was also was a graduate of the Foundation of Funeral Service, Evanston, IL. After graduating he joined his father at the funeral home. Don married Sandra Henderson in 1956 and they had three children, Gary, Juli and Stacey. Their marriage ended in

divorce in 1970.

Don's great-great uncle and great-great grandfather were among the first settlers in the small town of Argentine in Wyandotte County. Simmons Funeral Home was a neighborhood institution for over 130 years and the 5-generation family was part of the fabric of the community. Don was a 4th generation in the family owned funeral home. Don held both a funeral director's license and an embalmer's license in the states of Kansas and Missouri for 50 years until he retired and sold the funeral home in 2008. Don and his father were instrumental in the acquisition and collection on hundreds of old black/white vintage photographs of the early Argentine community, its people and businesses dating back to the early 1880s. Don was an avowed history buff and was keenly interested in family genealogy since his father Howard and brother Ron had a passion in tracing the family's lineage back to the 16th century (the 1500s) to England. Don was the great-great-nephew of Geddes Simmons, one of the founders of the small town of Argentine in 1882. Don's great-grandfather, George Simmons's brother Geddes Simmons was also one of the earliest settlers in Argentine, Kansas in 1880. Don's heritage was both English and German.

He took great pride in his Argentine heritage as well as his roots in the Argentine community and was dedicated to the greater good of the Argentine community. Don co-authored a book entitled the "Centennial History of Argentine with the assistance of Ed Shutt, another local historian in 1982, commemorating 100 years of the community. Being a history buff, Don was a former member of the Wyandotte County Historical Society as well as the Kansas State Historical Society.

Don was very active in the Argentine community of Kansas City, KS, serving in leadership roles of many local organizations. He was a past president of the Argentine Activities Association, past president of both the Argentine Optimist

Club and later the Turner Lions Club. Don also served as secretary on the Cross-Lines Retirement Center's Board of Directors for many years. He was co-chairman on the Kansas City, KS Mayor Joseph Steinager's Anti-Crime Task Force Committee. Other previous affiliations were Ben Hur Masonic Lodge #322, a 32-degree mason in the KCKs Scottish Rite Bodies, Abdallah Shrine Oriental Band, and a past patron of Tirazah Chapter #85, Order of the Eastern Star. Don served in the 42nd Army Band of the Kansas National Guard for nine years in Kansas City, KS. He also was a member of the Kansas Funeral Director's Ass'n, past president of the Ottawa District #2, KFDA, and of the Greater Kansas City Funeral Directors Association, and member of the National Funeral Directors Association. Don's hobbies included collecting fine old English flow blue china, collecting antique wooden duck decoys and collecting Christmas nutcrackers. Other hobbies he liked were working jigsaw puzzles, collecting and reading books on old mining camps and ghost towns in Colorado. Additional interest included family genealogy, playing chess, photography and the movies. Above all, Don loved celebrating his birthdays at Manny's Mexican Restaurant with his family.

He was a life-long avid fan of collegiate basketball attending six NCAA Final Fours in the old Municipal Auditorium in Kansas City, MO. but he was especially passionate of KU basketball and a devoted fan an dating back to 1949 in the old Hoch Auditorium. Don became a long time fan of the K.U. basketball after attending his first game in Hoch Auditorium in 1949 with his older brother Ronald who was a student there. As a student there, Don attended the very first game played in Allen Fieldhouse in March 1955. As a fervent fan of KU's Jayhawk basketball, Don had a fanatical passion for personally obtaining an extensive collection of over 350 autographs of former and the current KU basketball coach and coaches, ass't coaches, players and KU sport announcers through the years. He enjoyed endless conversations about KU basketball with Jayhawk players, particularly the older players who

would share their stories of their playing times with Dr. Phog, Coach Dick Harp, and Coach Ted Owens rather than most of the younger and newer players. Don remained an avid, dedicated and loyal fan throughout sixty years of his life and was truly a true and livid KU basketball fan and a zealous supporter, go ROCK CHALK JAYHAWK, KU. Don was the loudest in the any room during any game when he could not be there in-person at Allen Fieldhouse. Having a life-long passion for basketball, he was also a season ticket holder of the very short lived 1961-1963 ABL Kansas City Steers, as well as a original season ticket holder of the NBA Kansas City Kings, 1975-1983.

Don loved camping long hikes and backpacking in the high backcountry in the Rocky Mountains National Park, the Tetons National Park, and Glacier National Park. Don was delighted to accomplish climbing up to the summit of Long's Peak (14,230 ft.) on three different adventures with family members. Don loved finding, exploring and tramping around in the backcountry of various Colorado old mining camps and ghost towns in the family motor home, and the sometimes frightening and terrifying 4X4 jeep rental adventures on very rugged and terrifying trails. He also appreciated canoeing on the white waters of the Buffalo River in northwestern Arkansas with his son and friends.

He enjoyed serving on many committees and being a movie fan, Don was the "movie man" for 8 1/2 years by showing movies on the first Friday evening of the month at Southridge, Lakeview Village. He enjoyed documenting the history of Southridge building, running the annual Final Four basketball bracket board and the camaraderie of his special group at Southridge's social hour. He was a long-time member of the Village Presbyterian Church. He joined Southridge's Yacht. Don also took delight in playing at the Westport Chess Club. Don got a kick out of going skydiving, once with L.V. employees and then with four of his family members. Throughout the following years, Don

always treasured seeing old classmates at his annual all-class high school reunions.

On January 1974, a charming and beautiful lady, Carri Terrill, caught Don's eye at a singles group meeting. They started seeing each other and were married on June 7, 1975 in the Chapel at Village Presbyterian Church. Don and Carri lived in Overland Park for almost 30 years.

Don was preceded in death by his parents, Howard and Anna, a brother, Ronald, Don's wife, Carri, daughter Stacey and a daughter-in-law Anita, a nephew, Bill Simmons. Survivors include a son, Gary H. Simmons, of K.C.KS., daughter, Juli D. Simmons and her husband, Gary Mace, Topeka, KS., two stepsons, Daniel Terrill and his wife Kathy, Leawood, KS. and Ben Terrill and his wife, Sally, Shawnee, KS.; six grandchildren, Jason Simmons and his wife, Sarah, Louisburg, KS., Dan Simmons and his wife, Wendy, of K.C.KS., Ryan Griffin of Independence, MO, Jeff Griffin of Overland Park, KS., Kayla Lehman and husband Evan and Christopher Coffman and wife Anna, both of Topeka, KS., twelve great-grandchildren, Nola, George, Faye, Anthony, Trent, Zoey, Cora, Hailey, Sydney, Collin, Kaylie; Sophia and Liam. Five step-grandchildren, Brian, Connor, Kevin and his wife Allison, Matt and his wife Lynnae, and Melissa and her husband Rusty. Besides his immediate family, Don is survived by an extended family of two nieces, Ann Simmons and Sharon Carpenter, and seven cousins, Gary Curtin, Carol Manis, Mary Ann Hugunin, Sonny Anderson, Geraldine Walker, Richard Miller and Charlene Ross, many professional colleagues and associates and numerous dear friends. Other included members of Carri's family, Ed Mathews and his family, Mark (Linda), Mike (Christine), Kent (Jodi), Stuart (Susie) Ed's sister, Liz (Bert) and their children, Kevin (Phyllis) and Theresa. Also, Susan Terrill.

Funeral services will be held 1:00 PM Wednesday at the Village Presbyterian Church, 6700 Mission Rd. Visitation will be 5 – 7 PM Tuesday at the Maple Hill Funeral Home. Final resting at Maple Hill Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, his

family suggest memorials contributions be made to the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research, Grand Central Station, P.O. Box 4777 New York, NY 10163-4777; the Village Presbyterian Church, 6641 Mission Rd., Prairie Village, KS. or to the Lakeview Village Foundation with "Good Samaritan Fund" on the memo line, 9100 Park Street, Lenexa, KS 66215-3431.

Don's family wishes to give their sincere gratitude to Dr. John May, St. Luke's Plaza Internal Medicine for his many, many years of excellent care of their father. They also want to express their heart-felt appreciation to the L.V. Care Center's staff for their exemplary care they gave to Don that went far above and beyond than just a job, but a true calling of care.

# Cemetery Details

## Maple Hill Cemetery

2301 S 34th St  
Kansas City, KS 66106  
(913) 262-6610  
info@maplehillfuneralhome.com

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JAN 10. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Maple Hill Funeral Home  
3300 Shawnee Dr  
Kansas City, KS 66106  
(913) 831-3345  
info@maplehillfuneralhome.com  
<https://maplehillfuneralhome.com>

## Funeral Service

JAN 11. 1:00 PM (CT)

Village Presbyterian Church  
6641 Mission Rd  
Prairie Village, KS 66208

# Tribute Wall



“ *Donald Howard Simmons*

October 08, 2023 at 10:59 AM



“ *Don, I'll always remember walking the Parkinson's Walk with you. It was so hot out, but you were determined to walk as far as you could in honor of your wife. You were always cheerful and I loved chatting with you. Rest in peace, friend*

**linda** - January 26, 2023 at 10:39 PM



“ *Gary, I have such fond memories of your father. He was so friendly and treated people with respect. He was very helpful to me on the occasions when I substituted for your regular organist, and could find copies of absolutely any music the families requested, if I didn't already have it. A true gentleman. Julia Magana*

**Julia Magana** - January 09, 2023 at 09:37 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Donald Howard Simmons.*



January 09, 2023 at 07:40 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Donald Howard Simmons.*



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January 09, 2023 at 03:37 PM



“ *Juli and family, Don will always burn brightly in the hearts, in the minds, in the lives, and in the souls of everyone who knew him. Know, all of you are in my thoughts and that I weep with you.*



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**Laddie** - January 08, 2023 at 07:24 PM



“ *Nancy Miller Harrah and Husband purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Donald Howard Simmons.*



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**Nancy Miller Harrah and Husband** - January 07, 2023 at 04:44 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Donald Howard Simmons.*



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January 06, 2023 at 07:30 PM



“ 126 files added to the album *LifeTributes*



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**Maple Hill Funeral Home and Cemetery** - January 06, 2023 at 03:54 PM

SH

“ *Gary, Jason & Danny,*

*We're sorry to hear about the loss of your father and grandfather.*

*Our thoughts and prayers are with you.*

*Love,  
Shelly & Will*

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**Shelly** - January 06, 2023 at 03:24 PM

SF

“ *Susan Layton and family purchased the A Full Life for the family of Donald Howard Simmons.*



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**Susan Layton and family** - January 05, 2023 at 04:10 PM

MH

“ *My cousin Don helped me so much when my mother passed away, my mother was Howard Simmons sister. Marjorie Simmons Wilson, my prayers are with you all ☐ I loved his posts, and always felt very close to him. Go KU !!*

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**mary Ann Wilson Hugunin** - January 04, 2023 at 09:50 PM

NJ

*Growing up with you gave me very fond memories that shaped my life. Our families were very close, allowing us to travel together to many places, including rabbit hunting in Lake of the Ozarks. Now may you rest in peace. Nancy Jo.*

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**Nancy Jo** - January 07, 2023 at 05:44 PM