



Donald Dewitt Simmons

SEP 11, 1929 - MAR 2, 2023



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Donald Dewitt Simmons

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Our beloved Donald D. Simmons died peacefully in his sleep in Dallas, Texas on March 2, 2023. He was 93 years old. Donald was born in Covington, Alabama on September 11, 1929, to William Erza Simmons and Maggie Bell Shehan. He attended Laurel Hill High School in Laurel Hill, Florida where he played varsity basketball. Most, if not all, of his brothers served in one of the military branches during World War II, Korea and Vietnam. He was raised a Baptist but later converted to Catholicism.

He enlisted in the Army Air Corps on September 17, 1946, at the age of 17 (which later split into the US Army and US Air Force. He choose the US Air Force. On August 31, 1949, he married the love of his life, Katherine Clara Tesnareski, at St. Mary's Church in San Antonio, Texas. They were married for 73 years.

Donald trained at Kessler Air Force base in Biloxi, Mississippi. He would go on to serve 21 years in the US Air Force. He was a Korean War veteran. He was stationed at Lackland AFB (In 1955, he attended Officers Candidate School (OCS) there and became an officer), Texas, Korea, and Northern Japan. He went on to be stationed at Keesler AFB, Mississippi, Griffin AFB, New York, Guam, Clark AFB, Philippines, Mariana Islands, Okinawa, Japan, Warner Robbins AFB, Georgia and finally Wiesbaden, Germany. He was proud to serve his country and valued the opportunity to be involved in many sensitive and classified missions for the U. S. Government. While in the service, he attended undergraduate school at the University of Maryland. He retired in 1967. He went on to work for Rockwell International and Boeing for over 20 years. He was a great role model demonstrating a legacy of strong work ethic and integrity. He had a strong sense of compassion, which he instilled in his children. His children have shared that with their children cementing a legacy of empathy.

Donald loved his siblings (12), their children and grandchildren; family was of utmost importance to him. Constant trips to Florida and Alabama were always a regular annual event. Additionally, he loved his own children and grandchildren. This was demonstrated by an annual family reunion in New Braunfels, Texas. The reunions went on for more than 45 years. He also had the most



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incredible sense of humor. This was evident with constant letters and emails with jokes and stories that would just make you laugh aloud. We all looked forward to those stories all the time. He passed on this gift of humor to all his children.

Donald took great care of his family and stayed in touch with his extended family. Aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, and nephews would get a call from to say hello. He was not shy about speaking up when he saw any kind of injustice. From writing the mayor, the CEO of AT&T, or the President, he would let them know about it. Moreover, most often, he would get a response because of his excellent communication skills.

Donald loved to travel and take road trips, including annual trips to Colorado. He took his family to many places including East Berlin, Italy, and Switzerland while stationed in Germany. He was an avid Dallas Cowboy fan and had season tickets since the late sixties. Donald loved square dancing and walking. He wrote the newsletter for the Texas Reelers. He knew everyone in the city of Richardson while he had a part time job driving people home from the Ford dealership. He also worked part time at O'Reilly car parts until well into his eighties. When he quit O'Reilly, they begged him to stay on telling him he had a future with the company despite his age.

He loved staying in contact with all his veteran organizations, and prided himself with all the emails and letters he would send out each year. The reunions were his favorite and he had so many veterans that he stayed in contract with. He also loved ham radio and even passed on his call sign to one of his great grandchildren.

Most recently, he worked with fellow veterans to establish a monument to recognize those veterans who worked on radar sites throughout the world. The Radar Station Veterans Association completed the monument in 2019 and it was dedicated on November 7, 2019, at the National Museum of the United States Air Force in Dayton, Ohio. Donald was extremely proud of this accomplishment.

He is survived by his wife Katherine, and five children: Daniel P. Simmons and Deborah Ryle - Simmons of Austin, Texas; Dennis W. Simmons, Wayne, New Jersey, Karen A. Simmons – Dyer and Dan Green, Ranchos De Taos, New Mexico, Donald Joseph Simmons of, Leonard, Texas, and David M. Simmons of Castle Rock, Colorado. Eleven grandchildren and seven great grandchildren also survive him.

A Celebration of Life and Legacy mass with military honors will be held at Saint Joseph Catholic Church in Richardson, Texas day and time of service will be updated once set. His ashes will be



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laid to rest in their Columbarium. During Lent, flowers are not encouraged. Please check back to the Restland Funeral Home website at a later date for full-service information.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Veteran Resource Center in Dallas, Texas. Their website is <https://veteransresourcecenter.org/>.

Funeral arrangements for Donald Dewitt Simmons have been faithfully entrusted to Restland Funeral Home and Memorial Park - 13005 Greenville Ave., Dallas, Texas 75243.




Events


Donald Dewitt Simmons

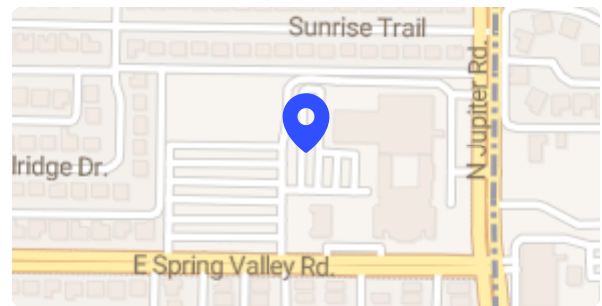
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Funeral Mass

 **Tuesday**, March 14, 2023


 1:30 PM CT

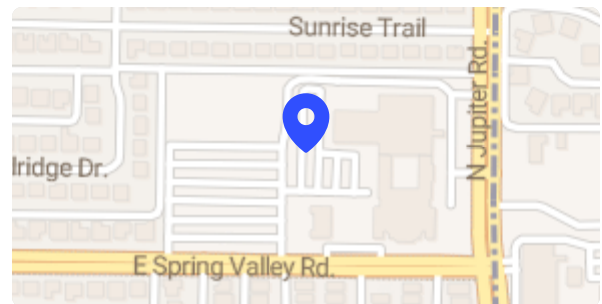
 **St. Joseph's Catholic Church**
600 South Jupiter Road, Richardson TX 75081



Reception to Follow Services

 **Tuesday**, March 14, 2023

 **St. Joseph's Catholic Church**
600 South Jupiter Road, Richardson TX 75081





Tribute Wall

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Anonymous sent a Beautiful in Blue to the Simmons family.



March 11 at 12:09 PM



Barbara Seagren posted:

We have fond memories of Don and Kitty on our trip to Italy with Msgr Don in 2006 and at many reunions up through 2022. We remember Don for his sense of humor and was a great guy to be around. We will miss him. Love and blessings from Barbara and Harlan Seagren

March 9 at 7:25 AM



Nita Braun March 13 at 5:49 PM

Special memories of Don & Kitty from our time with Texas Reelers Square Dance. Don did the newsletter for the club for many years. Rest in Peace Don and God's Blessings to Kitty and the family. Nita Braun



Dan Simmons shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

This is from Geoffrey's fiance's family. We are very thankful.



March 9 at 4:10 AM



Joyce Sellers posted:

Dave & I loved Don and Kitty. Don always had a joke or two (with a number)! There would usually be a groan and he would tell it anyway and everyone would always laugh. I will miss you my friend. Kitty and family you are in my thoughts and prayers. Joyce Sellers

March 7 at 6:51 PM



Donna Henderson posted:

We know and love Don and Kitty from our Northern Japan Radar Club. They were wonderful leaders and friends. Larry and Donna Henderson. May God rest your soul, Don and comfort you Kitty.

March 7 at 7:57 AM



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Vivian Smith posted:

Uncle Donald loved peas, not just any pea, pink eyed purple hull peas. I always made sure to cook him a batch with my pone corn bread when he could come for a visit. He, Daddy and Uncle Danny kept us laughing around the table. Even growing up I remember our Granny Simmons making peas for him. Those were wonderful times we had together. You were well loved Uncle and I will miss you greatly. Aunt Kitty and Family, you are in my prayers and have my deepest sympathy. Love you, Vivian.

March 6 at 6:34 AM



Sara Smith posted:

Don and Kitty were instrumental in my joining the Texas Reeler square dance club. I will always remember their friendship. Don kept us going by publishing our newsletter once a month for many years. Sara Smith

March 6 at 4:34 AM



Terry Reisinger posted:

So sorry to hear of Don's passing. Loved dancing with him in a square at Texas Reelers.

March 6 at 4:31 AM



Bernice Caruso-Donato lit a candle in honor of Donald.

I did not know Donald, but I do know his son Dennis. He is an amazing neighbor and friend. Donald must've been quite a chivalrous man.

March 6 at 3:13 AM





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EC

Eva And Bob Clark posted:

We walked with Don on Saturday mornings and it was always wonderful to hear his jokes and all of us to share our memories of the military. He will be sorely missed. Our deepest sympathy to Kitty and the family. Sincerely Eva and Bob

March 4 at 5:27 AM

MG

Mareta And Roy Glover July 12 at 8:32 AM

Kitty - We have only recently learned of Don's passing. It was my pleasure to get to know Don while serving together on the Board of the Highland Terrace Neighborhood Association. We thank him for his many, many years of service on the Board. Roy will forever be grateful for Don's encouragement to sign up for the Honor Flight - what a memorable trip. Without Don's help I am not sure it would have happened. We send our deepest sympathy to you and your entire family.



Nita Braun March 9 at 3:14 PM

Enjoyed knowing Don at Texas Reelers & the stories the told. He will be missed. Love & prayers to Kitty & the family. Nita Braun

RR

Robert R Ritter March 8 at 11:24 AM

Dee and I share your admiration for Don. His commitment to his fellow man was outstanding, and I was proud to call him a friend, albeit very late in life, as we worked together to bring the Radar Veterans Monument to life along with many others. Don was a person many should attempt to emulate!

LG

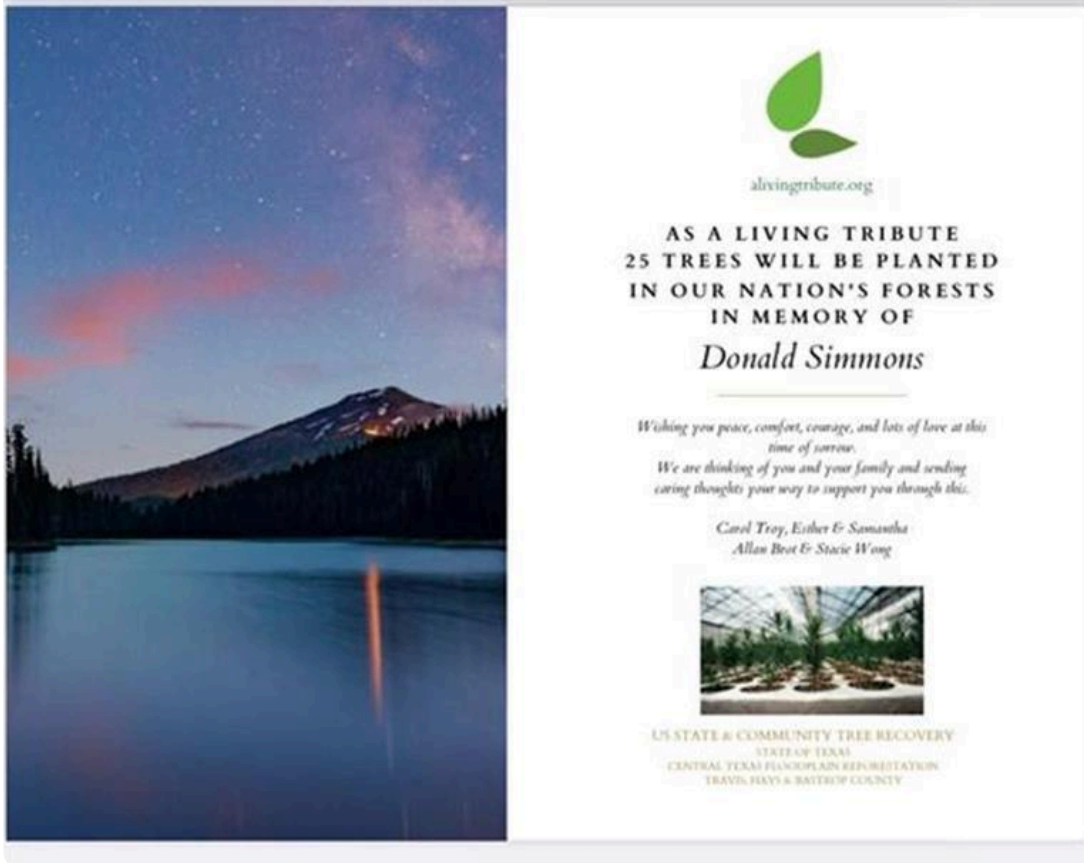
Lori Greyshock March 6 at 4:40 AM

Dennis and Family...What an amazing human being your Dad must have been. Such dedication to his family and outstanding service to our great country. There is no doubt that the apple does not fall far from the tree and that is proof in you, Dennis, and your siblings as well, i am sure. Thanking him for his remarkable service and praying that he rests in eternal peace. May you and yours hold these memories in your hearts forever and may they comfort you at this terribly difficult time. Family is everything. With much love and deepest sympathy...Lori Greyshock



Dan Simmons shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

March 9 at 4:10 AM





Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Donald by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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