

# *“Our Dear Mother”*

*“To One Who bears the Sweetest Name...and adds a Luster to the Same”...*

*“Who shares Our Joys...Who Cheers when Sad...the Greatest Friend I Ever had”...*

*“Long Life to Her...for there’s No Other...Can Take the Place... of Our Dear MOTHER!”*

*Author Unknown*

*(One of Mom’s Favorite Poems)*



## **“WELL DONE!”**

*Thou Good and Faithful Servant!*

*“Enter into the Joy of Your LORD!”*

*(Matthew 25:21)*

*Celebrating the Love, Life, & Legacy of a Legend:  
Mother Erma Lee Davis-Cole*

*(February 24, 1930 - February 9, 2020)*



**Saturday, February 15, 2020**

**Burke-Tubbs Funeral Home**

*(504 N. Walnut Avenue, Freeport, IL 61032)*

**Homegoing Service @ 2PM!**

**Apostle Dr. Bill Bowers, Officiating**

# Obituary for Mother Erma L. Cole

Erma Lee Davis was born on February 24, 1930 at 622 E. Winneshiek Street in Freeport, IL, to McKinley “Daddy Boom” and Josephine “Big” Davis. She was the 3<sup>rd</sup> Eldest of “Seven” Wonderful Children. It wasn’t long before it was evident that GOD had His Hands on her Life, which she accepted and “Let Her Light Shine” as a Girl. Erma (with an “E”) attended the Freeport School District, beginning at John W. Henney School (3<sup>rd</sup> Ward where the King Campus Boys & Girls Club now stands), and continuing through High School. As a Freeport Pretzel, Erma displayed her God-given Talents in Art, Drama, Poetry, and Music, which continued to Blossom into her Adulthood.

With her Rich Tenor Voice, she decided to secretly enter a Talent Contest at a Local Club, where she competed with a Handsome Contestant Crooner who was identified as a Part of the Legendary “Cole” Brothers, Mason Brick Layers and Construction Experts from Southern Illinois (Carrier Mills). This Man, James Alfred Cole, did Win 1<sup>st</sup> Place (singing Nat King Cole’s “Sweet Lorraine”), while Erma Davis Won 2<sup>nd</sup> Place (singing her arrangement of “He’s Tall, He’s Brown, He’s Fine, and He’s Mine”). That Night, the Divine Connection and Union was made; and after a “Scolding and Whoppin”, a “COLE-lossal” Family History was established!

As GOD orchestrated, Erma also bore “Seven” Talented Children: Linda, James “Butch”, Clyde, Steven, Michael, Brenda, and Carl. Using her Poetic and Songwriting Gifts and Skills, she navigated her Motherly task to raise a “House Full of Kids” by creating a Vocal Ensemble, later known in the Region as “The Singing Coles”. She taught them Original Compositions and Arrangements of Tunes to Celebrate every Holiday and Occasion, even writing Programs (sometimes “on the Spot”) that featured her Wonderful Crew! Incidentally, her Extraordinary labor of Love and Community Service warranted State-level recognition and honorable mentions in the “Illinois History” Magazine (1963 & 65 Editions). After the passing of their Father, the “Cole” Siblings grew to become Professionals in various Fields, while continuing in their Musical Gifts and Ministries (occasionally reuniting to share Performances)!

Through the Years, Erma was quite renowned for her work with the PTA, the Public Library Story Hours, Etiquette Classes, and her Historic presence as the Beautiful Receptionist at the Freeport Journal Standard, dressed “Sharp” Each Day, even walking Downtown in “Slick” High Heel Shoes!

Her Life took a New Turn when she chose to take care of her own Mother and eventually two of her Sisters until their passing, Erma continued to be her “Phenomenal Self” by Inspiring and Empowering not only her Children, but her Grands and Great Grands, thus expanding her Motherly “AKAs” of “Momma” and “Mom” Cole to “Gram”, “Granny”, “Miss Erma” and “Mother Cole” at Church, with Decades of increasing manifestations of her Wit, Humor, Brilliance, Resilience, and Ageless Beauty!

On Sunday, February 9, 2020, after the LORD carried her beyond her “Four Score” Years (Psalm 90:10), plus another “9”, she transitioned from “Life to Eternity” (only fifteen Days before her “90<sup>th</sup>” Birthday), leaving quite a “COLE-lossal” LEGACY!

Erma was preceded in Death by her Parents (McKinley and Josephine Davis), her Husband, James A. Cole; “5” Siblings (Sisters: Margaret Broom, Gwendolyn “Sister Joseph Mary” Davis, and Melva Lyn Davis; and Brothers: Hosea Davis, and McKinley “Deacon” Davis), her Eldest Son, James LeRoy Cole “Sheft-hat Khnemu Ra”, and Daughter-in-law, Geraldine Cole. She leaves to Cherish her Memory: her Brother and last living Sibling, Joseph Davis, and Sister-in-law, Lilly (“Deacon”) Davis; her Children: Linda Cole, Clyde (Patti) Cole, Steven (Candace) Cole, Michael (Geraldine) Cole, Dr. Brenda (Bill) Bowers, and Carl (Dianna) Cole; and a Host of Grand-Children, Great Grand-Children, Great-Great Grand-Children, Cousins, Relatives, and Friends!

## ~ The Order of Service ~

*Celebrating the Love, Life, and Legacy of a “Legend”:*

### *Mother Erma Lee Davis-Cole*

**Memorial Service Officiant: Reverend Dr. Bill J. Bowers**

(Vessels of Honour Church, Inc., Wauwatosa, WI)

*Musical Celebration Prelude by Sounds Of Good News Productions*

*Official Processional of the “Cole” Family*

*Welcome and Opening Prayer by Officiant, Rev. Dr. Bill Bowers*

*Official Scripture Readings*

*(Old Testament: Psalm 27:1-6; and 90:10; New Testament: John 14:1-6)*

*Opening Music Ministry Tributes by “The Singing Coles”*

*Acknowledgements of Clergy and Condolences, with the Reading of the Obituary*

*“Celebration of Love, Life, and Legacy” Expressions by Grand-Children*

*“A Way With Words” Poetry Tributes, with Final Expressions by Grand-Children*

*“Eulogy” Expressions and Final Musical Tributes by the Cole Children*

**Linda G. Cole, Clyde A. Cole, Steven A. Cole, Bishop Michael F. Cole,  
Dr. Brenda J. Bowers, and Carl A. Cole**

*Closing Remarks and Benediction by Officiant, Rev. Dr. Bill Bowers*

*Closing Prayer and Recessional of Family and Friends*

*“Thank You” to the “Burke Boys” for their Lifetime of Excellence in Funeral Care!*

(Interment at Chapel Hill Memorial Gardens)



