



Lafaye C. Jackson

Co-Founder

Memorial Funeral Home, Inc.

Memorial Life Insurance Company, Inc.

On February 13, 1923, a beautiful baby girl named Lafaye was born to the proud parents of Enos and Ocie Johnson Carter. She was affectionately given the nickname of "Babe" by her father because she mirrored the image of a baby doll. She was the youngest of four girls Rosa Lee, Gayzelle, and Avrist. The Carter household provided a foundation of love, respect and empowerment for the girls as they began their journeys to greatness.

In March 1929, Lafaye began her primary education at Salem Elementary School and later graduated from Homer Colored High School in 1941. Her commitment to education was demonstrated by her undeniable resiliency. She attended school during an era which predated transportation provided by the school district. Instead, Lafaye walked 6 miles a day round trip to obtain her education.

Lafaye was raised in a faith-based home where God was the center of her life. She and her sisters learned the importance of having a strong commitment to excellence through hard work and dedication from their parents. She leveraged many of her skills to support her evolution into adulthood with various careers as a housecleaner, educator, and ultimately a successful business leader and entrepreneur. Yet, her greatest accomplishment was her transition to wife and mother. She was an adoring wife to late husband Rogers C. Jackson, Sr. for 57 years. Together, they raised four children, Stewart, Rogers Jr., Gwendolyn, and Carolyn in a loving home while instilling the importance of education. As the head of the household, Rogers empowered his family by promoting the motto "You Can Make It If You Try". Lafaye continues to embrace that mindset and shares the message with her family and legion of friends, mentees, and leaders as her banner of hope for the future.

As Rogers and Lafaye grew in their marriage, their business aspirations grew as well. Together, they founded Memorial Funeral Home and Memorial Life Insurance Company in Cotton Valley, LA through the investments of several individuals and supporters. The list of supporters encompassed key people in their lives including Collie Webb, Josephine Miller, Ocie Carter, Rev.

C. Boyd, Jasper Thomas, and Hardy Harris. The couple was resilient and resourceful with the growth and management of their businesses. At the start of the funeral home, they managed the business without the means of a telephone to support their service calls. Rogers drove a school bus to financially support his family plus it provided a means of transportation to his burgeoning funeral home business. The sole family car served double-duty as a service car for the business. The couple's dedication during the early years of the business yielded future expansions and great success. Over 70 years later, Memorial Funeral Home and Memorial Insurance Company operates through its 6 locations in Northwest Louisiana including Homer, Plain Dealing, Ringgold, Arcadia, Cullen, and Farmerville.

In addition to her business acumen, Lafaye was a trailblazer throughout her career advocating for many underrepresented in the Northwest Louisiana communities. As a civil rights activist and participant in the early grassroots voting rights movement, she led impactful and sustainable change for many disenfranchised groups. She channeled her efforts in supporting her community as a founding member of NAACP Homer, Louisiana Chapter. She served as president of the chapter for over 15 years. Understanding the importance of education, she became the first black woman elected to the Claiborne Parish School Board in the 1973. She served as a voice for her community, advocating for equitable education for students across all demographics. In addition, she was instrumental in the desegregation of Homer High School through organized boycotts and protests. Her confidence to confront social and economic injustices led to many personal threats and dangers in a racially charged environment. However, she was surrounded by a coalition of leaders who rallied for change including A.D. Williams, Oubin Ramey, S.T. Evans, Fred Lewis, Murray Powell, Ruth Rhodes, Dump Hatter, and many others.

Lafaye's compassion for children coupled with her devotion to ensuring there was equitable education provided to the communities, led to the opening of the first day care center in Homer, LA. Homer Childhood Learning Center, was an early education school which fostered a familial environment for children to learn, grow and prepare for the classroom setting. She and Annie Grant enrolled their first class of students in 1975 after both ladies completed college courses to prepare for their teachings. The school was a beacon of light in the community for over 40 years at its closure in 2018. To date, many former students attribute Homer Childhood Learning Center as the foundation of their early education and professional success. In 2022, former students of the learning center, honored Lafaye and the staff with an appreciation program and dinner to recognize their value and impact on the community.

With over 70 years of service, Lafaye is viewed by many as a mentor, trusted advisor, counselor and pillar in the community. Lafaye's list of accomplishments and awards is extensive and indicative of her commitment to her community. She served as a Board Member of the Boys and Girls Club and continues to serve as a Board Member of Memorial Enterprises. Now, she channels her efforts in philanthropic work through the Rogers and Lafaye C. Jackson Scholarship Foundation as an active board member. The 501c3 foundation focuses on community engagement and investment in Northwest Louisiana. To date, the foundation has awarded over 400 scholarships to deserving students in pursuit of higher education.

At the age of 100, Lafaye continues to live a full life of servant leadership. Lafaye is a matriarch, mother, grandmother, aunt, and cousin to a large family. She's also an influencer, trailblazer, and trusted advisor to many which expands beyond her family to a vast community of friends and associates. Yet, most importantly, she is a child of God who has been blessed to experience life through many seasons. She is a role model for all.

"I am what I am by God's grace, and God's grace hasn't been for nothing. In fact, I have worked harder than all the others- that is, it wasn't me but the grace of God that is with me"
1 Corinthians 15:10