

## Verlon Lloyd Stone

March 18, 1944 - May 30, 2023

Verlon Lloyd Stone was born in Viola Township in Audubon, Iowa, on March 18, 1944, to Melva and Sievert Stone. He was the oldest of five boys. On August 22, 1965, he married his high school sweetheart, Ruth Marie (Spehr) Stone, while they were both pursuing bachelor's degrees in education at State College of Iowa (now University of Northern Iowa).

In 1968, they moved to New York City, where he taught 4th and 5th grade in Harlem and, on the weekends, took the students on field trips to offer experiences outside the neighborhood. Verlon got on the plane "kicking and screaming" in 1970 to go to Liberia for the first time, because Ruth was doing fieldwork for her master's degree, a trip that would transform the trajectory of his life and begin a love for international travel. In 1972, they moved to Bloomington, Indiana, where Ruth began her doctoral work at Indiana University. After a year, Verlon began Ph.D. in Instruction Systems Technology at IU. Verlon and Ruth conducted their dissertation research in Liberia in 1975-1976. On December 22, 1976, their daughter Angela was born, but not without many health challenges in the first few years, including a lot of time spent at Riley Hospital in Indianapolis.

He graduated in December 1979 with his Ph.D. and started his first job in IST for a map-making company in Chicago. He worked in Saudi Arabia from 1982-1986 on health education materials for Saudi Aramco, and the family moved

there, while Ruth continued to share time in Bloomington where she was a professor at Indiana University in the Folklore and Ethnomusicology department. In 1986, Verlon started a religious publishing business, Meyer Stone Publishing, with two friends from college. Verlon was able to return to Saudi Arabia from 1990-2001 to work on executive presentations. In 1989, Verlon was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, but after chemotherapy, he remained in remission for the rest of his life.

Verlon retired in December 2001 and came back to Indiana to pursue his passion, starting the Liberian Collections Project, an archive to preserve the history of Liberia through historical documents, the writings, and recordings of former government officials, cultural leaders, and many other Liberian people. He worked with LCP until the end of his life, transitioning it to be an archive within the IU libraries where he hoped it would continue beyond his life.

Verlon loved talking to people, learning their stories and sharing his own life story, which included everything from growing up on a farm to parasailing and scuba diving in his 70s. He worked until the day he died ensuring that the passion he had developed for Liberia and its people lived on.

He passed away at home in Bloomington, Indiana, unexpectedly on May 30, 2023. Verlon is survived by: his wife, Ruth, IU Professor Emerita, daughter Angela Stone-MacDonald, and her husband Keith MacDonald; his brothers Lyle Stone, Gary Stone, Dale Stone, and Roger Stone and their families, as well as in-laws Paul Spehr and Jeanette Childress and their families.

A funeral service will be held at Trinity Episcopal Church in Bloomington, Indiana on July 1 at 11:00 am. Memorial donations can be made to:

1. Trinity Episcopal Second Century Fund, 111 S. Grant Street, Bloomington, IN 47408.

2. Amos C. Sawyer Educational Foundation, 3880 Greenhouse Rd. Suite 405, Houston, TX 77084.

3. Riley Children's Hospital, Indianapolis, Indiana. <https://give.rileykids.org/give/312756/#!/donation/checkout>

Allen Funeral Home and Crematory, 4155 South Old State Road 37, Bloomington have been entrusted with arrangements. Online condolences, photos and memories may be shared with family and friends at [www.allencare.com](http://www.allencare.com)

# Previous Events

## Funeral Service

JUL 1. 11:00 AM (ET)

Trinity Episcopal Church  
111 S Grant St  
Bloomington, IN 47408-4031  
(812) 336-4466

# Tribute Wall

BE

“ Dear Ruth, I was so sorry to belatedly hear of Verlon's passing. He was such a thoughtful person, reaching out with updates years after I had visited the archives in Indiana, and happily being connected with new grad students I sent his way. He will be missed. - Bronwen Everill, Cambridge

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**Bronwen Everill** - October 05, 2023 at 05:34 AM

PF

“ I was fortunate enough to meet Verlon when he and I were both graduate students at I.U. (That's when we both had a lot of hair.) We quickly became good friends and shared many learning experiences together as we practically lived at Mitchell Hall. Verlon had a keen intelligence and sharp wit to match; consequently, it was a real pleasure to work with Verlon on several projects. I will forever fondly remember Verlon and will always be grateful for his friendship and many talents. Rest in peace my friend. ----Paul Fry

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**Paul Fry** - July 19, 2023 at 05:09 PM

FB


“ Dear Ruth, you and Verlon very kindly hosted me in 2013 when i visited IU-Bloomington to research the Liberia collection meticulously put together by Verlon. I will forever be grateful for Verlon's extensive and generous insights, and his vast knowledge of the scholarship on Liberia. He knew exactly where to find every published and unpublished work on Liberia. Rest well, Verlon! You did a marvelous job. Generations of Africanist scholars will be indebted to you for your invaluable contributions to academia and humanity in general! Be comforted Ruth, and family. Verlon's dear memory will be a blessing to the entire Stone family! Fodei Batty, Quinnipiac University

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**Fodei B** - July 01, 2023 at 02:02 PM

ES

“ Dear Ruth,  
On behalf of the Siblings and Sons of Dr.  
Amos C. Sawyer, I want to extend our  
sincerest condolences on the sudden and sad  
passing of your beloved husband, Verlon. We  
also want to extend this sympathy to your family in this time of your  
grief. To paraphrase a famous pastor, Life is a preparation for  
eternity. God wants us to practice on earth what we will do forever in  
heaven. We were made by God and for God; and although our  
hearts may stop, we will live always be with God. Verlon lived a  
wonderful life of caring and kindness. May his Soul rest in perpetual  
peace.



With deepest sympathy,  
Eugene Sawyer, MD  
(in his memory, we will make a donation to one of his favorite  
charities)

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**EUGENE K SAWYER** - June 30, 2023 at 01:21 PM

FF

“ Though I have not interacted with Verlon in 60 years, I have fond  
memories of the time spent with him in Audubon High. Verlon was  
funny, and loved to laugh. We used to joke with each other on a  
higher scale; never anything demeaning or socially negative. His  
superior intelligence and reasoning was always subtlety on display,  
and I enjoyed it. Ruth, I am sorry to learn of his passing. I am sure  
you will miss him terribly. Blessings and peace. Francis Franck.

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**Francis Franck** - June 29, 2023 at 09:27 PM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Verlon Lloyd Stone.*



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June 29, 2023 at 11:24 AM



“ *Dear Ruth, Angela, and the extended Stone family, Verlon was, for me, the epitome of a committed scholar/activist on behalf of Liberia and the Liberian Studies Association. We were partners in managing the LSA's finances and the logistics of disseminating the journal for many years. I so valued his advice, calm demeanor, and wise counsel! My deepest condolences to you and the larger community of Liberians and Liberianists.*  
*Mary Moran, Colgate University*

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**Mary Moran** - June 29, 2023 at 11:20 AM



“ *A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Verlon Lloyd Stone.*

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June 24, 2023 at 11:43 PM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Verlon Lloyd Stone.*



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June 24, 2023 at 11:43 PM

WL

“ Throughout my acquaintance with Verlon over the decades, he was always ready to help with my research. When I couldn't find sources, Verlon did and sent the links. When I was given permission to digitize documents for a manuscript, I turned to Verlon. He digitized and forwarded them. Verlon was truly a friend: unhesitant in his support. May the Lord bless his soul.

William “Bill” Allen (University of Liberia)

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William E. Allen, University of Liberia - June 24, 2023 at 02:23 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Verlon Lloyd Stone.



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June 22, 2023 at 06:58 PM

PM

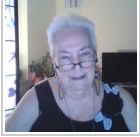
“ Sincere condolences to Ruth, Angela and the rest of Verlon's family and friends. I learned the basics of photography in Verlon's instructional technology class that Barbara Seitz and I took together several decades ago. I appreciate what I learned from him and continue to rely on those skills as I further my research. May he rest in peace and may the family find comfort in their cherished memories of him.

Sincerely,  
Phyllis May-Machunda, PhD.



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Phyllis May-Machunda - June 19, 2023 at 01:46 AM



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



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**Nancy Machin** - June 11, 2023 at 01:54 PM

NM

*Friends of Daniel will always be grateful to the service and kindness and generosity of Dr Stone. From Colorado, we shall miss him greatly and send deep condolences to the family.*

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**nancy vorkink machin** - June 24, 2023 at 11:58 PM

RR

“ *Dear Ruth*

*I am sorry to learn of Verlon's passing. You and he are in my top five of nicest,smartest clients.*

*Bob Ralston*

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**Robert Ralston** - June 10, 2023 at 11:30 AM

JJ

“ I'm so sorry to hear that Verlon has passed. Back in 2008, when I was a young journalist interested in Firestone in Liberia, Verlon spoke with me at length, helped me navigate the Liberian collections project with such insights, and gave me lots of contacts that were invaluable. He didn't have to do that, and I think it speaks to his kind and generous spirit -- Ruth as well. I've just been going through our old correspondence, and needless to say he always responded no matter how busy he was (and he was sometimes very busy). Verlon, you were a light to this world and will be missed! - Jonathan Jones

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**Jonathan Jones** - June 08, 2023 at 05:32 PM

KP

“ Verlon was a gentle soul. If he had a comment for you, he gave it one-on-one. Both of you chatted momentarily and the chat ended. I too will miss him.

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**K-Moses Nagbe, PhD** - June 08, 2023 at 04:40 PM

ER

Dear Mrs Stone, on behalf of the many friends of Dr Vernon Stone in Liberia and Liberians all over the world, we express our sincere condolences to you and the family for the passing of your dear husband. He was a great light to Liberia and we are so proud to call him our friend and Brother. May his soul rest in perfect peace and light perpetual shine on him. Rest well Dr Stone. 💜

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**Esther K Richards** - June 11, 2023 at 07:13 PM

DR

“ I'm so sorry to hear that Verlon is no longer with us. It is with great fondness that I remember my times working at Meyer Stone and how much I learned from him. We did laugh and awful lot and that is my greatest memory of him. XOXO --Deborah

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**Deborah L Rush** - June 08, 2023 at 12:44 PM

SH

“ Ruth, I was shocked and terribly saddened to learn of Verlon's passing. He was always so kind and generous to me, both in our professional and personal interactions. I will miss him greatly.

Steve Hinnefeld - June 07, 2023 at 04:14 PM

JC

“ 63 years ago Verlon came by our home to see his girlfriend, my sister, Ruth. He married her and has been part of our family ever since. As a fourth grader I was subjected to his teasing, a sure sign of affection. We are so grateful for his life and everything he brought to our family.

Jeanette Cole Childress - June 05, 2023 at 01:26 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Verlon Lloyd Stone.



June 04, 2023 at 11:30 PM



“ 3 files added to the album Verlon Stone



Angi Stone-Macdonald - June 04, 2023 at 10:27 PM