



Clarence Arnold Skelton

December 22, 1946 - February 4, 2025

Clarence Arnold Skelton, affectionately known as 'Papa' to those on the mission field, died peacefully on February 4, 2025, at 1:10 pm, surrounded by his loved ones at his youngest daughter's home in Whitestone, Virginia. Born in Atlanta on December 22, 1946, Arnold was a proud graduate of Fulton High School (Class of 1964) and Truett McConnell College (Class of 1967). He later earned an Associate of Arts degree from Immanuel Bible College, further deepening his faith and preparing for a lifetime of missionary work. Arnold is survived by his loving wife of 58 years, Linda Skelton; his children, Jason Skelton, Valerie Hambrick, John Skelton, Grady Skelton and Natalie Gilreath; 11 grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. He is also survived by his brother, Philip Skelton, and sister, Linda Obregon. Arnold was predeceased by his brothers, Billy Skelton and Ricky Skelton. As missionaries to the Ivory Coast of West Africa, Arnold and Linda dedicated 35 years of their lives to spreading the Gospel, starting churches and schools, and establishing Love Your Neighbor Orphanage that continues to thrive to this day. Arnold's unwavering faith and determination inspired countless individuals, and his love for the Lord was evident in every aspect of his life. Those who knew Arnold will remember his unshakeable commitment to his beliefs, even when faced with opposition or disagreement. He stood firmly by his convictions, never wavering or compromising his values. This unfaltering dedication to his faith was a hallmark of his life and a testament to his strong character.

He was a man who could make anyone feel welcome. Even without being told, if there was a need, he would say, 'God has laid it on my heart to give this to you,' and that would be the end of the discussion. His generosity and compassion knew no bounds, and he lived by the principle that no one should go without if he could help.

Arnold's passion for the mission field was contagious and he freely shared the Gospel with everyone he met. Years after returning from Africa, an encounter happened in the most unexpected place. An American woman working at the health department was cleaning the teeth of an African man when she mentioned she knew missionaries from the Ivory Coast, but said, 'You wouldn't know them, their names are Arnold and Linda Skelton'. As tears streamed down his face, she asked if she had hurt him, but he shook his head and said, 'No, you didn't hurt me, Arnold Skelton was the one who led me to Jesus.'

He was full of humor and warmth, often asking with a grin, 'How'd you sleep? Horizontally or vertically?' His sayings became family favorites, from 'That ain't worth a hill of beans!' to his classic, 'What in the same hill!?' Of course, his favorite most used word was calling 'Linda!'

Arnold's interests were as broad as his love for people. He loved to eat, and after every big meal, he'd lean back and say, 'I'm about to pop!' before following it up with, 'Now we need something sweet.' He had a taste for the exotic, declaring, 'I'll eat anything that won't eat me first.' He also had a fascination with history and the unexplained, spending hours watching World War II documentaries, UFO sightings, and Bigfoot specials.

His love for the Lord and desire to spread the Good News inspired countless people, and his witness will continue to bear fruit. Whether in the mission field or in his daily life, Arnold never met a stranger. He greeted everyone with a warm hug and a welcoming invitation to his home. His heart was open to all, and his hospitality was legendary.

Joshua 1:9, a verse Arnold cherished, reads: 'Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the

LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.'

These words embodied Arnold's approach to a life he lived with courage, conviction and unwavering faith.

Arnold's legacy shall endure through the countless lives he touched, the souls he won to Christ, and the orphanage that continues to provide love and care to those in need. His family and friends miss him deeply, but they take comfort knowing he is now at peace, surrounded by the love of his Heavenly Father.

Arnold's life will be celebrated on February 11, 2025, at Scot H. Ward Funeral Services, Green Meadow, 699 American Legion Rd NE, Conyers, GA 30012.

There will be a viewing from 10 am to 1 pm, followed by a service from 1 to 2 pm. Charitable donations may be made in Arnold's honor to support the orphanage he loved and served.

As Arnold would often say, 'I love you this much!', all while opening his arms wide for a hug. His memory will be cherished, and his legacy will continue to inspire generations to come.

Condolences may be submitted online at www.scotward.com. Scot Ward Funeral Services, 699 American Legion Rd., Conyers, GA, 770-483-7216.

Cemetery Details

East View Cemetery

1127 East View Road
Conyers, GA 30012

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 11. 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM (ET)

Scot Ward Funeral Services at Green Meadow Memorial Gardens
699 American Legion Road
Conyers, GA 30012

Service

FEB 11. 1:00 PM (ET)

Scot Ward's Green Meadow Chapel
699 American Legion Road
Conyers, GA 30012

Tribute Wall



“ *Scot Ward Funeral Services created a Webcast in memory of Clarence Arnold Skelton*



Scot Ward Funeral Services - February 11, 2025 at 11:57 AM

DC

“ *Linda & family lam so sorry to hear about Arnold y'all are in my thoughts and prayers.*

Diane Griffin cape - March 01, 2025 at 11:47 AM

CJ

“ My name is Cedric Johnson, and I serve as the Pastor of Calvary Hill Baptist Church in Stonecrest, GA.

"When Coulibaly was seventeen-years old, he lived in a remote village with his uncle. His parents and all of his other relatives had already passed away. He was out in the field one-day planting crops. His uncle was bitten by a poisonous snake and just as Coulibaly ran to him and lifted his head, he died in Coulibaly's arms! Now he was completely alone with no family, no money, and no clothes. Coulibaly took his dead uncle's clothes and shoes off and put them on himself. There was only a little money in his uncle's possession. Coulibaly knew he couldn't make it on his own. He began to make plans to buy a bus ticket to Yamoussoukro (the city of lakes) and drown himself there. Coulibaly had no reason to live.

Arriving in Yamoussoukro, Coulibaly began walking around the town and pondering which lake would be best to drown himself. He was getting more and more despondent and sad as the moments passed. All of a sudden, he heard a voice booming as if it was on a loudspeaker. He began walking toward the sound! Only the Lord knew what was in store for Coulibaly and Arnold that very day. It was the day the Lord called out Coulibaly's name to serve Him throughout all eternity.

As he followed the sound, he began to hear some of the words that Arnold was saying. Arnold had gone to the marketplace to preach that day. We had been praying about starting another church there in the city of Yamoussoukro. Arnold had taken his portable sound system and was standing on the top of our vehicle to be heard from a longer distance. He was right across the street from the largest Muslim Mosque in the town. The voice Coulibaly heard was declaring, "Some of you out there within the sound of my voice, think that no one loves or cares for you and you are alone and have no will to live. So, today let me tell you about Jesus and how very much He loves you and wants to save you. Will you come to my vehicle for prayer and counseling?" Who was this white man

standing on top of his car as if he talking directly to Coulibaly? Coulibaly came up to Arnold, got some information and accepted the Lord as His Saviour. He was transformed immediately! That was many years ago and Coulibaly and his precious wife are serving the Lord faithfully there in Yamoussoukro by taking care of our orphans and widows. He also helps the pastor there by preaching from time to time and conducting Bible studies. Yes, the Lord had a plan that day and we will ever thank the Lord for bringing this faithful servant of God into our lives! He has been Arnold's right-hand man ever since the day of his conversion." (Skelton It Will Be Worth It All page 143-144)

Cedric Johnson - February 12, 2025 at 12:02 PM



“ *Magnificent Life Spray was purchased for the family of Clarence Arnold Skelton.*



February 10, 2025 at 01:56 PM



“ *The Mullins and The Howard families.... planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Clarence Arnold Skelton.*

The Mullins and The Howard families.... - February 09, 2025 at 07:14 PM

TF

“ *The Mullins and The Howard families... purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Clarence Arnold Skelton.*



The Mullins and The Howard families.... - February 09, 2025 at 07:14 PM

RM

“ *Dear Linda.....Words cannot fully express what we have been thinking and praying for during a number of years that Arnold has been fighting his health issues You two are and have been special friends and we have shared a lot of really good times together. Your fun and warmth and hospitality shown to us is truly amazing....and your cooking Linda. Roger and Arnold shared some great times and conversations about their missions and a lot of laughs too. We love you both and will truly miss Arnold but also know how ready he was to go to Heaven, his eternal home. No telling how many he will see there from your ministry for 35 years on The Ivory Coast of Africa. We thank God for our friendship and look forward to meeting him once again in Heaven. Can't wait to watch him feasting around the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. Love and prayers from Roger and Cherie Mullins*

Roger and Cherie Mullins - February 09, 2025 at 07:00 PM

CJ

“ *Charlotte & Josh planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Clarence Arnold Skelton.*

Charlotte & Josh - February 09, 2025 at 04:09 PM

CJ

“ Charlotte & Josh purchased the Divine Light for the family of Clarence Arnold Skelton.



Charlotte & Josh - February 09, 2025 at 04:09 PM

GJ

“ Dear Linda & Skelton Family..

We are so very sorry for your loss of Arnold. While we grieve his passing, we also rejoice in knowing that he is totally well, having the time of his life worshipping his precious Lord & Savior as well as catching up with those who went before him. What a meeting in the air! Arnold has truly left a legacy of a lifetime of service to the Lord. May God comfort each of you as only He can in the days ahead. Sending big hugs, much love & prayers for each of you.

*Gina Johnson
Spencer Johnson
(Linda Keener)
Phil Bullock
Grace Bible Class
Glen Haven Baptist Church*

Gina Johnson - February 09, 2025 at 03:15 PM

TK

“ I had the honor of calling him my uncle may have not been by blood but couldn't love him anymore he will always have a special place in my heart Uncle Arnie I love you and you will be missed I know the Angels were singing as they welcomed you home much love and many prayers to the family during this most difficult time ! Love you always Tracy

Tracy Kilpatrick - February 09, 2025 at 12:07 PM

JF

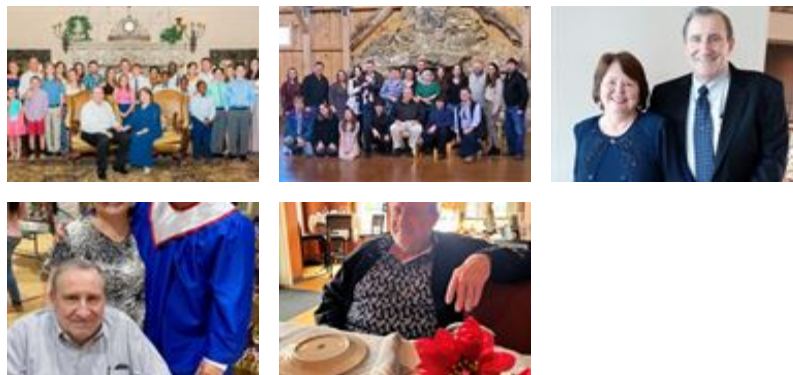
“ Jerry, Jane Hendon and Family purchased the Lavender Reflections Spray for the family of Clarence Arnold Skelton.



Jerry, Jane Hendon and Family - February 09, 2025 at 09:59 AM



“ 174 files added to the album Life Tributes



Scot Ward Funeral Services - February 08, 2025 at 01:28 PM



“ *Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Clarence Arnold Skelton.*



February 07, 2025 at 08:14 PM



“ *Linda, I never stopped praying for ya'll and the ministry in the Ivory Coast. My greatest time was had s we sat with our heads together writing your book. I have given copies to others but the one you signed for me I will always cherish. I learned so much during that time about the ministry, about Arnold and his determination to bringing the Word to the people of the Ivory Coast and the great faithfulness of you both. I have no words here but to say I know God's great big arms surround you and your family at this time. I know he will be greatly missed by all, but heaven is greater today because of his love for the Lord and people! God bless you and your wonderful family, Linda. Wish so much I could be there. Just know you are forever in my prayers and I will always love you! Molly Rose Murphy (formally Molly Gardiner).*

molly rose murphy - February 07, 2025 at 03:59 PM



“ *My family loved Bro Arnold. As a missionary, very few were equal to him and Linda and their love for the Ivory Coast. I am saddened by the news for Linda and his kids but I know two people who were excited to see him enter Heaven. My parents loved him with all their heart and prayed for them always.*

Ruth Barnard Balliew - February 07, 2025 at 08:10 AM

MB

“ So honored to have known this loving and passionate man whose heart belonged to Jesus! A well deserved rest for such a tireless worker who dedicated his life to the Ivory Coast-our loss is heaven's gain- Rest in Peace dear friend!

MARGIE F BURT - February 06, 2025 at 07:15 PM

DC

What a beautiful family. I am so sorry to hear of Arnold's passing. He was a very special man. He will be missed by all who new him. He spent many yr. In the Ivory Coast helping lead many, many others to know Christ. Just think of how many souls he led to our Heavenly Father.

Diane Griffin cape - March 01, 2025 at 12:09 PM