

As a girl, she enjoyed singing and had the talent to attend Boston's New England Conservatory of Music to train as a classical singer. She would later lend her gift to the civil rights cause, singing at over 30 Freedom Concerts to raise money for the movement.

It was while in Boston, in February, 1952, that Coretta first met a 23-year-old Martin Luther King, who was pursuing his doctorate in theology at Boston University. As a lonely southerner in a northern town, he asked a mutual friend if she knew any nice young ladies he could meet. She mentioned the name Coretta Scott, and described her as "pretty and intelligent."

The young King persuaded the friend to give him Ms. Scott's number and asked if she'd put in a good word for him. Soon, he called for a date. Displaying a bit of verbal flair, he said, "You know, every Napoleon has his Waterloo. I'm like Napoleon at Waterloo before your charms."

"Why, that's absurd. You haven't seen me yet," Coretta replied.

Undeterred, he finally convinced her to let me take her out for lunch between classes. "I have a green Chevy that usually takes 10 minutes to make the trip from Boston University," he told her. "But tomorrow, I'll do it in 7."

That was 1952. They were married in 1953.

Ms. King once said, "I was married to the man whom I loved, but I was also married to the movement." Her entire life was intertwined with the fight to stamp out the injustices of racism and inequality.

After her husband's life was tragically cut short, Ms. King persevered, raising four young children on her own. It must have been a lonely struggle . . . but her dignity and grace inspired a nation.

A few days ago, Ms. King became the first African-American to lie in honor in the Georgia State Capitol rotunda. Today she will be laid to rest alongside her husband, at the King Center in Atlanta, and for all time they will be reunited.

Martin Luther King once said of his wife, "I think on many points, she educated me." Now, at the end of her celebrated life, many of us feel the same way. Dr. and Mrs. King helped educate America by forcing it to look itself in the mirror, face up to its failings, and recommit itself to its founding ideals.

So today, Coretta Scott King will be laid to rest in her beloved Georgia, next to the husband she lost 38 years ago. As the whole Nation reflects today on her incalculable contributions to human progress, I am reminded of Dr. King's own simple wish:

I don't know how long I'll live, and I'm not concerned about that—but I hope I can live so well that the preacher can get up and say, "He was faithful." That's all, that's enough. That's the sermon I'd like to hear: "Well done my good and faithful servant."

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise to salute the life and legacy of Coretta

Scott King. She earned a place not just in our history but in our hearts. She was a true trailblazer for women, for the African-American community. She was an inspiration for all Americans. I feel privileged to have known Mrs. King throughout much of my political career. Her family is in my thoughts and prayers.

Mrs. King's courage and faith were remarkable. She insisted that she had her own voice in the civil rights movement at a time when women were often not recognized for their own talents and merit. Not only was she resolute, but she was feisty—someone after my own heart.

Mrs. King's life story was remarkable—even before she met Dr. King. She was born into rural poverty in Alabama and grew up in a two-room house that her father built. She came from a hard-working family. Her father hauled timber, owned a country store, and worked as a barber. Her mother drove a schoolbus. Growing up in the segregated South, Coretta Scott King saw the injustices of racial discrimination. Yet she saw the value in working hard and fighting for her dreams. She attended college and the New England Conservatory, where she trained as a classical musician.

It was while studying music in Boston that she met Martin Luther King, Jr. From the beginning of their marriage, Coretta Scott King maintained her own identity and voice. She was Dr. King's true partner marching by his side and speaking out on her own. At the same time, she was a mother, raising four children. The entire family lived with threats and intimidation.

We all remember those tragic days after the assassination of Martin Luther King. She comforted a nation that was torn apart. She is the reason we have a national holiday that honors Dr. King.

She fought for equality before the law, for economic justice, and for lifting people out of poverty. Her vision was put to action when she founded the King Center for Nonviolent Social Change and saw to it that the center became deeply involved with the issues that she believed breed violence—hunger, unemployment, voting right, and racism.

Coretta Scott King took her message of nonviolence to every corner of this country and to almost every corner of the world. She led missions to Africa, Latin America, Europe, and Asia. She was the first woman to give a class-day address at Harvard and the first woman to preach at the statutory service at St. Paul's Cathedral in London, England.

Coretta Scott King will be remembered throughout American history for her grace, strength, and belief that all people should be treated with dignity and equality. We must honor her legacy not just with words but with actions. We must recommit ourselves to the principles she stood for—opportunity, equality, and empowerment.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the life and contributions of an American civil rights icon, Mrs. Coretta Scott King.

Many people know Mrs. King as the wife of one of America's greatest citizens, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. King's enduring legacy of nonviolence and his quest for racial equality permanently altered the social fabric of America. Mrs. King will always be remembered as a part of Dr. King's life and legacy that are rightfully celebrated across our great land and throughout the world. However, Dr. King's towering accomplishments should not obscure the fact that Mrs. King held her own historic place in our Nation's struggle for equal opportunity.

I am reminded of the time some 20 years ago when Mrs. King came to see me when I was Governor of Tennessee. We were working to establish a holiday in honor of her late husband. It was harder work than it should have been, and I am reminded of how far we have come even since that time.

Mrs. King was the founding president of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change which continued to promote the noble philosophies of Dr. King. In addition to promoting the memory of her husband and his great work, Mrs. King created her own legacy as she traveled throughout America and across the globe to champion racial equality, women's rights, religious freedom, health care, and education.

We all know that Mrs. King was born in a time when America was very different than it is today. Little Black boys and girls could not go to school with little White boys and girls. *Plessy v. Ferguson* had not yet been overruled, so "separate but equal" was the law of the land. Lynchings were common and in many places the Ku Klux Klan terrorized Black communities, often operating with near impunity. As we look back on the amazing progress we have made since then, we remember those who were responsible for helping America turn away from the sins of injustice and inequality.

As a wife, a mother, and a leader of the civil rights movement, Mrs. King showed strength and dignity. With quiet determination, she preserved her husband's legacy and created her own place in the history of our Nation's struggle for equal opportunity.

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

#### FAIRNESS IN ASBESTOS INJURY RESOLUTION ACT OF 2005—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 852, which the clerk will report.