



Ruth Purser

September 1, 1908 - March 25, 2008

Ruth Nicholson Purser passed away on Tuesday, March 25th, 2008 at the age of 99 at the home of her niece, Sue Boyd Travis. She was born September 1, 1908, to William Robert and Martha Emmaline Riggs Nicholson in Morristown, TN.

Ruth came to Dayton at the age of 16 after receiving her teaching certificate from Maryville College. She taught second and seventh grades for 17 years at Dayton City School. Following her teaching career, she worked as a clerk with the Rhea County Health Department. During World War II, she was appointed Home Service Chairman for the American Red Cross and acted as a liaison officer between the armed forces and soldiers' families. Among her many duties were delivering "killed in action" notices to the families of fallen soldiers. In 1948 Ruth and her husband Wallace opened Hi-Way Gardens, a floral and gift shop in Dayton which they owned and operated until 1987. She was a born designer and had an eye for excellence. She continued her career at Rhea Floral designing floral arrangements and directing weddings until she was 90 years old.

Being an active member of the Dayton Garden Club, which she helped to organize, she served as historian for many years. She was a long time member of the First United Methodist Church.

Ruth was preceded in death by her parents, her husband Wallace, sisters Jessie Hefner, Gladys Purkey, Lois Boyd and Mildred Berry, brothers French Nicholson and William Nicholson. Remembering her with love are nieces and nephews, great nieces and nephews, and great-great nieces and nephews.

Funeral services will be held Friday, March 28 at 2:00 pm at Vanderwall Funeral Home in Dayton, TN with the Reverend John Anderson officiating. Burial will follow at Buttram Cemetery.

Visitation will be Thursday, March 27 after 5:00 pm.

Please share your memories at Ruth's on-line guest register at www.vanderwallfh.com.

Previous Events

Service
MAR 28 . 2:00 PM.
Chapel

Tribute Wall



“ I have so many fond memories of Miss Ruth. Riding on the Hy-Way Gardens floats in the Strawberry Festival, corsages for piano recitals, Easter and Mother's Day, helping me pick out china and crystal, getting everyone down the aisle at the correct time for my wedding and others that I was a part of, and spending time out on the mountain when my parents would visit with she and Wallace there. She was a JEWEL. My thoughts and prayers are with you at this time.##imported-begin##Judy Dilday Meyer##imported-end##

April 01, 2008 at 10:12 AM



“ I learned more about Weddings from Ruth than I did in Seminary. May she rest in peace, Louis Ketron, Knoxville##imported-begin##Louis Ketron##imported-end##

March 31, 2008 at 06:29 PM



“ Sorry I could not be there tonight. Miss Ruth was very to me and my family--we had many fond memories of her and the many talents she exhibited. She was one exceptional person.##imported-begin##Pat Hawkins Guffey##imported-end##

March 27, 2008 at 07:41 PM



“ My deepest sympathy to her family. I know she will be dearly missed.

Mrs. Purser was my 7th grade teacher in either 1932 or 1933. I remember her as a tall, pretty woman.

She also rescued me when during WW II, I had to bring my sick wife home from training camp to Dayton but was out without leave. She was the liasion between me and my commanding officer. Her help enabled me to get my wife settled in before returning to duty and avoid going to jail. I will always thank her for that help.##imported-begin##James Walker##imported-end##

March 27, 2008 at 01:48 PM



“ I am so sorry that I didn't get to see you but you will be truly missed. You did so much for my mom years and years ago that we will never forget. And I sure didn't know that my daughter (Martha) had the same name of your mother. You will be missed.

Annalee##imported-begin##Annalee Pitts Cook and Richard Cook##imported-end##

March 27, 2008 at 01:25 PM