



Ruth P. Woolfrey

April 19, 1921 - April 5, 2020

Ruth Paterson Woolfrey of Summerville, widow of Frederick Wilson Woolfrey, died Sunday, April 5, two weeks before her 99th birthday.

Funeral arrangements will be announced later. Inurnment will be in St. Luke's Lutheran Church columbarium. Arrangements are by James A. Dyal Funeral Home.

Mrs. Woolfrey was born April 19, 1921, in Brooklyn, N.Y., a daughter of Edith Hobley Paterson and Charles Alexander Paterson. Following the death of her mother from tuberculosis, she was raised by her grandparents, Thomas Lothian Paterson and Jennie Price Paterson. At the age of eight, she returned to live with her father and stepmother, Flora Webb Paterson.

She graduated from East Side High School, Paterson, N.J., and began a career as a dental assistant. In 1943, she enlisted in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, which later became the Women's Army Corps. She joined as a dental assistant, however, her stenographic skills prompted her transfer to assistant to the chief of dental prosthetics. She described her military career as making sure soldiers had a full set of teeth before they were sent overseas and before discharge.

She served with the 4th Army Service Command in Alabama and Florida. Her awards and medals included the American Service Medal, World War II Victory Medal, Good Conduct Medal, WAAC Service Ribbon and the Honorable Discharge pin.

On the Fourth of July 1943, she met Sgt. Woolfrey on a blind date. They

corresponded by letter and telephone and married on Nov. 21, 1945, at the Lutheran Church of the Ascension, Savannah, Ga. She received an honorable discharge because she was “making a home for a serviceman.”

He transferred from the Army Air Corps to the newly formed U.S. Air Force and together they traveled and raised their family. The family, including two children, traveled from South Carolina to Texas to Alaska to Florida to Maine. Mrs. Woolfrey led Cub Scouts and Girl Scouts, raised African violets for sale and developed expert needlepoint skills.

The family settled in Summerville in November 1963 and joined St. Luke's Church on Easter 1964. Mrs. Woolfrey taught Sunday School, led WELCA (Evelyn Segelken Circle) and other women's groups, was editor of the church newsletter and participated in every-member visitation. She volunteered at Lutheran Social Services in North Charleston and Meals on Wheels of Summerville. Following construction of a new sanctuary, she used her needlepoint skills in stitching kneelers for around the altar. She dedicated hers to Mr. Woolfrey, who died in 1983.

Following her husband's death, she continued to travel with friends and with her children. She visited England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, France and the Bahamas. She cruised through the Panama Canal. Challenged by a heart attack in her late 70s, she decided to do the walking division of the Cooper River Bridge Run when she was 80.

Mrs. Woolfrey enjoyed reading, with subscriptions to The Post and Courier and The New York Times, large print edition. She received large-print books from the S.C. State Library's Talking Book Services. She requested that in lieu of flowers that donations be made to Talking Book Services, S.C. Carolina State Library, 1500 Senate St., Columbia, SC 29201. Make checks payable to SCSL, Talking Book Services.

She was predeceased by her husband; brother, Frank Paterson; sister, Edith P. Higgins; and many dear friends, including Evelyn Segelken of Summerville, Barbara Smith of Summerville and Liz Paulson of Summerville and the Isle of Palms.

Surviving are a son, F.W. Woolfrey II and wife, Nathalie, of Rockport, Texas; daughter, Dora Ann, and husband, James J. Reaves Jr., of Summerville; grandson, J.J. Reaves III and wife, Samantha, of Summerville; great-grandson, Elias Arthur Winston Reaves of Summerville; sister-in-law, Rose Paterson of Florida; former exchange student, Thales M. Cardoso of Brazil; and many beloved nieces and nephews.

Tribute Wall



“ *Ruth P. Woolfrey*

September 29, 2022 at 10:11 AM



“ *Fred and Dora,*

I am sorry to read of the death of your mother. We lived down the street from your parents in the early 80s. Your Mother was a warm and welcoming neighbor. God's peace be with you.

Randy Charpia

Randy Charpia - April 08, 2020 at 11:11 AM