



Katie Higginbotham

December 5, 1929 - April 6, 2012

Katie Murl Stewart Sowell Higginbotham, 82, of Laurel, died Friday, April 6, 2012 at the Baptist Medical Center in Montgomery, Alabama.

Funeral services will be held at 10 am Wednesday, April 11, 2012 at First Baptist Church Pecan Grove, Ellisville, MS. Rev. Chris Wheeler will officiate. Burial will follow at Memorial Gardens Cemetery in Jones County. The body will be placed in the church at 9 am prior to the service.

KATIE MURL, as known, began playing piano at the early age of 8. She taught singing school in Jones County along with her father, Lavelle Stewart, and brother, Lawrence Stewart. As the Masonite Quartet, along with Estelle Wright and Scott Stewart, they sung at every Southern Gospel convention in Mississippi and adjoining states. Katie Murl also played piano for other quartets, including J. D. Sumner and the Stamps Quartet. Her influence for music and teaching was established by J. B. Coats, the writer of "Where could I go but to the Lord," and was given an accordion by him of which she traveled playing the accordion at churches and conventions. She eventually gave that accordion to missionaries in the Philippines, who needed some way to play music at their church. She was also a candidate for the Juilliard School of Music in New York City. In 1941, at the age of 12, she was the first pianist of First Baptist of Pecan Grove, Ellisville. She was also charter member, pianist, organist and Sunday School teacher of Houston Road Baptist Church. Katie Murl was a former graduate of Ellisville High School/ Jones County Junior College and was active in the community service for many years. She has

served as past commander of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary, member of American League of Women Voters, Order of the Eastern Star, National Association of Federal Employees, and member of the Order of Medical Assistants and Secretaries. She was a candidate for State Representative for District 82 and business owner. And in 1979-1980, she received the Personalities of the South Award. She was a beloved Christian mother, grandmother, great grandmother and aunt, and will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

She was preceded in death by her first husband, Rev. Narvel A. "Pete" Sowell; parents, Lavelle Stewart and Mamie Hester Stewart; daughter, Joan Michelle Sowell; brothers, Buford L. Stewart, Lawrence Stewart, and Charles Stewart; grandchild, George Walters, Jr.; and step child, Gerald Higginbotham.

Survivors include husband, Sam Higginbotham; two daughters, Janet Sowell Holmes and husband Guy Holmes of Deatsville and Jeana Sowell Boggs and husband Lemuel Boggs, Jr. of Deatsville; son, Joby Sowell and wife Belinda Burt Sowell of Tuscaloosa, AL; brother, Stephen Stewart of Laurel; grandchildren, Kristy Sowell Perry and husband Derrick Perry, Keira Sowell Brown and husband Gerald Brown; Kayla Sowell, Selena Sowell, Lemuel Andrew Boggs and Leighton Aaron Boggs; and great grandchildren, Morgan Sowell, Jackson Perry, Aubrey Perry, Montae Brown, Kadence Brown, and Colton Andrew Boggs. She is also survived by her step-children and their wives, Randy Higginbotham and his wife Regina Higginbotham and Greg Higginbotham and his wife Tanya Higginbotham; step grandchildren, Shannon Higginbotham English, Joshua Higginbotham, Chelsea Higginbotham and Andrew Higginbotham; and step great-grandchildren, Felicity English, Krysten English, Isabella English, Connor Higginbotham, Greysen Higginbotham, Jaxon Higginbotham, and Deacon Higginbotham.

Pallbearers are Brian Stewart, Thomas Stewart, Wayne Stewart, Landry Boggs, Doug Stewart and Wendell Stewart. Honorary Pallbearers are Tim Stewart, Leighton Boggs, Ricky Stewart, Stephen Stewart and Josh Higginbotham.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to First Baptist Church Pecan Grove Ministries, 699 Pecan Grove Road, Ellisville, MS 39437.

Visitation will be held from 5 until 9 pm Tuesday, April 10 at Memory Chapel of Laurel which is in charge of the arrangements. Proverbs 31:10 – 31 – We love you and will see you at the feet of Jesus.

Tribute Wall

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“ Hey there Janet, Jena and Joby - Jim & Dianne, Jeanette & Jim and Larry and Myself are so sorry to hear of Aunt Kate's home going. We know you will miss her but can be comforted in knowing that you will see her again. She has now been reunited with Uncle Pete and all her other family members whom she loved so much. Her smiling face and laugh will certainly be missed. Wish we could be there for I know you will have a wonderful service but all have prior committments and are just unable to come. They all wanted me to convey our sympathies to each of you. We have a God who gives His peace in our hours of grief. Our prayers and thoughts are with you during this time. Love to you all. Stay in touch. Cousins Ann, Jim and Jeanette Sowell.

Ann Sowell Brock - April 09, 2012 at 03:12 PM