



Obituary

Born: Tuesday, December 23, 1919

Died: Sunday, September 19, 2010

Ellen Jane Martin Smith, 90, of Lafayette died Sunday, Sept. 19, 2010, at Heritage Healthcare in West Lafayette.

Born Dec. 23, 1919, in Rush County, she was the daughter of Orville and Ruth (Laughlin) Martin. She married Claude B. Smith on Dec. 31, 1942, and he preceded her in death in 1989.

Survivors include her son, Rodney C. "RC" Smith of Lafayette.

Service Summary

- Service details not available -

Mrs. Smith continued to live in Shelbyville after her husband died until moving to West Lafayette in October of 2005.

She was a homemaker and teacher. She began teaching first grade from 1940 to 1941 for Union Township School at Gings, where she attended elementary school. Her next teaching position was at Rushville City Schools from 1941 to 1943, where she met her future husband, another teacher at Belle Gregg Elementary School. After World War II, she taught at Columbus City School, Indiana Soldiers and Sailors Children's Home in Knightstown, Rush County School, Rushville City Schools, Marion Community Schools and Shelby Eastern Schools. She was selected as Outstanding Elementary Teacher of America in 1974. She and her husband retired in 1980.

During World War II, she became a camp follower of her husband, including in Fort Wheeler, Macon, Ga., and later Fort Benning, Ga. While in Macon, she contributed to the war effort while working for U.S. Engineers and Warner Robins Air Service at Robins Field, Ga. They relocated to Columbus, working in the Civil Service, helping returning and disabled veterans find jobs.

She attended Gings School in Rush County during the Great Depression, regularly sharing the lunches that her mother prepared on their family farm with schoolmates that were less fortunate. She graduated from Rushville High School in 1937. That fall, she enrolled in Indiana University, where she played piano for the dance band and was a member of Sigma Kappa, and graduated in 1940 with a degree in elementary education.

Mrs. Smith was baptized at First Christian Church of Bloomington in 1937 and was a member of Rushville chapter of Order of the Eastern Star from 1939 to 1961.

She was proficient at sewing and playing the piano.

Visitation will be from 4 to 8 p.m. Thursday at Murphy-Parks Funeral Service and Crematory, 703 S. Harrison St.

Graveside services will be at 11 a.m. Friday in East Hill Cemetery in Rushville.

An online guest book can be signed at www.murphy-parks.com.