



Phyllis D. Lyons

APR 10, 1926 - MAR 31, 2018



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Phyllis D. Lyons

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Phyllis Dabney Lyons, just days shy of her 92nd birthday passed away

peacefully at home on Saturday, March 31, 2018 into the loving arms of the Lord. Phyllis was born on April 10, 1926 on a farm in South Side, West Virginia delivered by a doctor that arrived on horseback. She was the eldest of three children born to Kenneth W. Dabney and Helen Poffenbarger Dabney. Phyllis was nine when the family moved to the big city of Huntington W Va when the farm was sold and her father accepted a job as a postal carrier.

Phyllis graduated high school at the age of 15 from Huntington East High School in 1941 and then graduated the Wiseman School of Business one year later. She worked as a private secretary for the Smith Tire and Service Co when an older gentleman, a mechanic with the company, approached her and asked if she could write to his son, a soldier in the Pacific during WWII. Phyllis ended up marrying that young man, Lee Malcolm Lyons in 1947.

They moved to Tampa Florida in 1952 when he accepted a position with



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McNeil Pharmaceuticals which was later bought by J & J. They moved to the sleepy little town of Clearwater FL in 1962 with their son Kelly and daughter Beth. Phyllis and Lee were one of the original families of Clearwater Community Church which began in 1969. They were very active in the church as Lee was an elder and Phyllis was a leader in the women's bible study group for many years.

Phyllis was an avid sports fan for the local Rays and Bucs, but also closely followed and rooted for her West Virginia teams, Marshall University's "Thundering Herd" and West Virginia University's "Mountaineers". She was also a member of The Huntington Club as there are so many people here from Huntington in the Tampa Bay Area.

Preceded in death are her kindred spirit sister "Pete", and husband Norman Adkins. Her loving husband, Lee who passed away in 1999 after 52 years of marriage. Basil Hinkle, who was like a brother to her as he and his wife Wanda accompanied them down on their first Florida vacation and then moved here shortly afterward so they could enjoy the good life with them in Florida.

Phyllis is survived by her baby brother I. M. "Jack" Dabney and his wife



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Marilyn of Nitro, W Va. Her son, Kelly Lyons and his wife Denny. Daughter, Beth Zeeb and her husband Steven, who have lovingly cared for her these past 12 years. She is survived by four wonderful grandchildren; granddaughter Jennifer Lyons and husband Christopher, and grandsons Casey Lyons, Matthew Zeeb, and Andrew Zeeb and his wife Nicole who just had the first great grandchild, Adelyn Harper Zeeb. And her life long best friend, Wanda Hinkle as well as many nieces and nephews. And 5 cats.

Memorial Services will be held at Clearwater Community Church on Saturday April 7, 2018 at 11 am. Graveside Services will be private.

In lieu of flowers donations may be made in her name to:

Humane Society of Pinellas Clearwater Community Church
3040 State Road 590 OR 2897 Belcher Road
Clearwater, Florida 33759. Dunedin, Florida 34698

Originally Memories of her sister Julia when she passed but it is such a good description of growing up in West Virginia
Down Memory Lane with my baby sister, Julia Margaret

She had such a beautiful name, but I called her Pete. Perhaps this is because Daddy called her this name. We were only 22 months apart and almost inseparable all our lives. I can't remember having a disagreement over anything at all. I was a little naughty, perhaps, but I was the onery one.

Mother had a cedar chest in her bedroom with pretty curtains over it. Pete loved to climb up on the chest and pull the curtains down. One morning she pulled them down and I went running to



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the kitchen as fast as I could go to tell Mother “the news of the day”. “Muvver, the little bitch has done it again.”

We were born and raised on a 165 acre farm which is now Chief Cornstalk Reservation. The government bought our farm and some surrounding ones providing us for the move to Huntington, August 1937 so we could continue our education. Also, my father went to work full-time for the Post Office. The one room school only went through 8th grade. We were born in the worst of times, as well as the best of times. The depression didn't bother us too much. We had plenty to eat and a fireplace to keep us warm.

While on the farm, Pete and I would make our own paper dolls, cutting figures and so forth out of expired Sears & Roebuck and Montgomery Wards catalogs. This was so much fun. In the summertime the three of us would sit on the big swing on the front porch (Pete, Mother, and me). One of us would name a state and then wait to see who could come up with the capital. We would give out initials of neighbors, relatives, and so forth to guess who it might be. In the winter Mother would put up the card table in the living room with a powerful Alladin lamp in the middle and we would do our homework.

Mother had to renew her teaching certificate on a regular basis. We had three one room school houses. One was close to us, probably one to two city blocks away. Some years it wasn't open due to lack of students. Then we would have to walk close to three miles to the one that would be open. Until we moved to Huntington we always had a relative for a teacher, Mother and two aunts. Aunt Audrey, one of the sweetest persons I've ever known, never raised her voice and at the same time getting a lot of respect. One afternoon it was so quiet when one of the onery boys dared my sister to go to the middle of the room and do a jig dance. She took him up on it and the laughter was unreal. Aunt Audrey said in her very quiet way, “Julia Margaret, what are you doing?” One afternoon coming home from this same school we took a short cut through a neighbors pasture when wild horses came chasing us. Luckily, we were close to a brush pile and we stayed there for a long time until they lost interest. When we got home Mother was really worried and getting ready to go look for us. Needless to say, we forgot about that shortcut.

Now comes the mud puddles in the road after a heavy rain. We wore artics. Pete would look for the deepest one she could find and she would be in the mud almost to her knees. Someone said go get Stanley. She said “no, I moved him. I want Hobert to come pull me out today.” She referred to changing boyfriends as “moving” them. This happened often.



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We wore blue denim overalls in the summertime. In front of our house across the road was a lot of soft dirt which we loved to play in with little cars making roads, bridges and so forth. On the other side was a fence where the ewes would lie down chewing their cud, dozing and keeping an eye on us. When the weather was bad we loved to play in the loft in the barn our paternal grandfather had built. It was full of hay, about 6 feet deep. I really don't know why I did this, but I took the belt off my raincoat and chased Pete all over the loft pretending it was a snake. She never forgot this.

One afternoon at the third schoolhouse it got really dark and we didn't know there was a terrible snow storm coming. My uncle got the horses, hitched them up to a big sleigh with large runners on either side. He came to school and picked mother and all the kids and dropped them off one by one. It was lots of fun except for the kids right behind the horses.

On the farm we had a large grape arbor in our back yard. When the grapes would start to ripen we just couldn't wait and we would partake too soon. Needless to say, we ended up with a tummy ache.

There was a large apple tree in our front yard that we enjoyed taking a plate of food out to have our own picnic under. We were "big" stuff.

Grandpa, mother's father, had a huge strawberry patch. Pete and I would pick strawberries – no bad ones or any green on them. We got 2 cents a box. He then delivered them by the crate to families on his list.

One of our chores growing up was to pick the tobacco worms off the tobacco plants. They were large, ugly, and spit at us. It was the grossest thing ever. It was satisfying dropping them into our little bucket that had some kerosene for them. They stopped spitting! The same fate awaited the beetles off the bean plants.

In the summer, weather permitting, we would get to go to Pt. Pleasant, see two of our cousins, Jean and Helen, eat hot dogs and go to a movie in the afternoon. A few times on the way home there had been a heavy rain and we had to cross a creek. Well, we had to sit in the car and wait until the creek got low enough for us to cross. We passed the time by singing songs. One of our favorite was You Are My Sunshine. The big chunk of ice purchased from town was wrapped in a heavy tarp so it didn't melt on the way home. When we finally got home it was quickly put in my



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Grandmother's cellar for homemade ice cream after dinner the next day. We would then have an afternoon of croquet.

Our baby brother Jack was 6 years younger than me and of course he wanted to follow us around everywhere. We would try to lose him and he would say "dos old gurls". One time he followed us without our knowledge through a field evidently dragging the crank for the car behind him. Well, it got too heavy and he just dropped it in the grass and we couldn't start the car until we backtracked his path and found it.

Once situated in Huntington, both our neighbors living on either side of us attended Baptist Temple and invited us to go. Pete and I would faithfully go each Sunday and eventually Jack came with us. One Sunday both of us were baptized and continued on in adult life. We both were married at Baptist Temple, too. The church was instrumental in our teenage years, although neither one of our parents attended.

Later on after I had started working, Pete would meet me after work and we would go out to eat at Jim's, Bailey's, or the Whirl-a-gig and see a movie. Frequently we would bring our parents home some peanuts or popcorn from near the bus stop. We liked the big city!




Events

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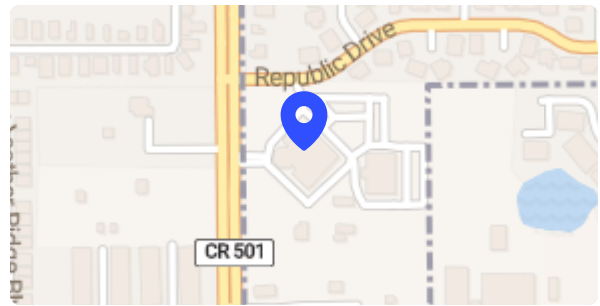
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Memorial Service

 **Saturday**, April 7, 2018

 11:00 AM ET

 **Clearwater Community Church**
2897 Belcher Road, Dunedin FL 34698





Tribute Wall

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Connie Walker posted:

She was a special lady whom I will be forever grateful ! She was like a mother to me and I will never forget all the childhood memories Beth and I share with each other. I was part of the family and that means so much. I will miss her!

April 6 at 5:53 PM



Tom Desneux posted:

Phyllis was a caring mom and grand mom to her family and friends, she will be missed by all.

April 6 at 5:28 AM



Anonymous sent a Sapphire Skies Bouquet to the Lyons family.



April 5 at 5:01 AM



George Allen posted:

Phyllis was very special to me in many ways. She always asked me how I was doing and showed genuine concern. You knew that she cared and I always believed that she was praying for me. I loved spending time with her watching a baseball game or talking about how the Lord was working in our lives. Phyllis had a great gift of hospitality and made sure you were comfortable and had something to eat. I was so blessed to share in large family meals with Phyllis and Lee at their home or at Steve and Beth's. Those were very special times for me. I know that she loved me like her own family and I loved her the same. I will miss her and I am glad that she is in the presence of the Lord and I will see her again! Love you Phyllis!

April 4 at 4:49 AM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Phyllis by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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