

Betty Close

Alton | Friday, November 29 2013

Mrs. Betty Jane (Sanders) Close, age 91, of Alton, passed away Friday, November 29, 2013, at 4:59 am, at Alton Memorial Hospital.

She was born on St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 1922, in Alton, the daughter of Harold Bailey "Doc" and Sarah Annette "Sis" (Clark) Sanders, the owners of Sanders Drug Store at Broadway and Market for over 50 years. She and her brother grew up as the Sanders' kids, waiting tables and jerking sodas as their part of the family business.



She was the scholar and took a lot of kidding about her daily briefcase of books and homework. This was long before backpacks.

A high school teacher, Ruby Reeves, coached her in horse back riding and arranged for her to be one of a contingent of Illinois riders in the St. Louis Arena's Horse Show. It wasn't the Veiled Prophet Fair, but her twelve year old brother was impressed by the flawless performance in a sharp bowler hat, boots, and jodhpurs. This is important, because in many ways it epitomizes the many unique facets of her life.

During the '40's, she was a chemist and metallurgist for Laclede Steel before taking a degree in floriculture at Illinois University. With her chemist background in soil and plant propagation, she worked in plant nurseries and florists' shops before returning to school for teaching certification. Hundreds of students fondly remember Mrs. Close as their hospital or homebound teacher who brought the school curriculum to their bedside.

Betty was a vibrant outgoing personality that enlivened her world and those fortunate enough to share in it. Her memory is her memorial. She will be sorely missed by all who knew her.

She was affiliated with First Methodist Church, Grace Methodist Church, and First Congregational Church, as well as King's Clowns, the Daughters of the American Revolution, for over 50 years, the Order of the Eastern Star for over 50 years, the Tree House Wildlife Center, the Alton Area Historical Society, Stroke Club of Alton and Make-Today-Count.

She is survived by two daughters and a son-in-law, Sarah Lee and Richard McCreary of East Alton, and Julie Keffer of Alton; one brother and sister-in-law; William and Jo Sanders, eleven grandchildren and their spouses; Richard and Kelly McCreary, Matthew and Mandy McCreary, Betty Christine Scott, Patricia McCreary, William Webster and Ashley Davis, Heather and Eric Bowman, John Webster, Wesley McCreary, Jeffery Keffer and Shari Thurna, Jamie and J.D. Welch, and Janet Keffer and Mike Weller, ten great-grandchildren, Ashlyn, Calli, Adie, Parker, London, Jaden, Ian, Mallorin, Jacob, and Emily; one niece; Rachel and Randy Lawson and their son Daniel; and her dog "Jaws" whom she loved.

According to her wishes, her remains were donated to Washington University School of Medicine.

There will be a "Dutch Treat" gathering at Riviera Maya on Saturday, December 21, 2013 between 3 and 5 pm, 1702 Homer Adams Parkway, Alton, Illinois. Family Friends and Students are welcome to join us.

Elias Kallal and Schaaf Funeral Home of Alton has been entrusted with the arrangements.

Memorials may be made to Tree House Wildlife Center or Charity of One's Choice.

Online condolences and guest book may be found at www.eliaskallalandschaaf.com