

Testimonials Are Us

Rosella Yager Cunningham Davis Tribute Testimonial



Thursday, October 2nd, will be the 99th birthday of Rosella Yager Cunningham Davis. Her hometown and county of most of those years is marking the occasion with a dedication of a memorial plaque in the downtown county park. The park is considered the center of town, across the street from her home church, Centenary, and beside the fountain that she helped save. In fact, you could say across the street from the church that she also helped save.

The plaque dedication, sponsored by the Fountain Committee she founded, is at 3:30 pm, and will be followed by an afternoon tea reception in Centenary's Fellowship Hall. Members of the church circles and the life group, Redwoods, will host the tea. A testament to the legacy of Rosella, who passed away

November 25th last year, is the willingness each volunteer accepted the role of hostess. Despite the hard work and investment the tea required of those who were approached, every lady in Centenary, and a few who were not members, but who were available on the date, were happy to accept. As one member said, "She would have done it, and has in the past, for any one of us."

Members of Centenary often called her the church matriarch. Many who knew Rosella and the tireless work she did for church, family, and community including young people, even called her the matriarch of Shelby County. Rosella was the tireless champion of right causes. Her accomplishments could be attributed to her traits that included the four "Ps" Patience, Perseverance, Passion, and Preservationist. Those of you who worked with her might question the attribute of "Patience", but on reflection was there ever anyone that had the stick-to-itiveness of Miss Rosella? It might take her months, even years, for a preservation project she had a passion for to be completed, but she would patiently persevere.

Rosella was a graduate of Science Hill School and she never failed to honor the school and its contributions to young women across the nation, but especially in Shelby County. The last remaining members of the Poynter family who owned the school the last 60 years of its existence, Miss Juliet and Miss Harriet, were her close friends and she was devoted to them. The Poynter sisters, fellow Methodists, were just two of many who benefitted from Rosella's devotion to friends.

Much of the history stored in Centenary's archives were the result of Rosella's passion to preserve the memories and credit for what had been accomplished through the years to those who gave their best to make things better. She was a passionate note writer and thanked people for the smallest task with eloquent sincerity. When her husband, Hardin, suffered a stroke and needed assistance she could not render to do his daily exercise, her pastor, Rev. Edward (Buddy) Coleman helped her find the men from Centenary who could. The volunteers came to love their roles and each one felt the joy of Rosella's appreciation for years to come.

Rosella was an example for each of us. An example we can also see in the ladies, who are hosting her tribute tea. Special thanks to each one: Arlene Yount, Lois Newton, Judy Knowles, Sydney Lawson, Mary Lou Madigan, Charlotte Bond, Annie Gardner, Duanne Puckett, Pauletta Stovall, Barbara Scott, Geri Roberts, Eleanor Shrader, Charlotte Pridmore, Jane Bailey, Charlotte White, Beth Tripp, Linda Ethington, Patty Ethington, Casi Mudd.