



Virgimai Abel

November 18, 1925 - May 24, 2011

JONESBORO – Virgimai Porter Abel, 85, longtime resident of Forrest City, went to be with her Lord on Tuesday, May 24, 2011, at her home in Jonesboro. Virgimai was born November 18, 1925 in Forrest City, AR to former Forrest City Mayor John Rosamond (Jack) Porter and Virgie Belle (Moore) Porter. She was a 1943 graduate of Forrest City High School. On February 19, 1944, she married her childhood sweetheart, James Henry (Jim) Abel also of Forrest City while Jim was in flight school in Decatur, IL. After their stint in the Air Force, the couple settled back in Forrest City where Jim went into business with his father at J. H. Abel and Son Wells and Pumps. Shortly after, Virgimai became the secretary/bookkeeper in the firm. In 1962, Jim and Virgimai went into partnership with Virgimai's sister, Helen Teeter and her husband Bob, forming A & T Stores, Inc. The stores were located in West Helena, Forrest City, and Marianna. Virgimai did the bookkeeping for the three stores and managed the Forrest City store until the business was resolved in 1994. At that time, Jim and Virgimai moved to Jonesboro to be near their children and grandchildren.

Virgimai was an active member of the Forrest City First Baptist Church where she served as a Sunday School teacher and Department Leader. Since moving to Jonesboro, she was an active member of Central Baptist Church. She was preceded in death by her loving husband, James Henry (Jim) Abel, Jr. of Forrest City and Jonesboro; her father, John Rosamond (Jack) Porter and mother, Virgie Belle (Moore) Porter of Forrest City and West Helena AR;

and one sister, Rose Marie (Porter) Lofton of Hughes, AR.

She is survived by two daughters, Donna Karen (Abel) Shoemaker and husband Ron Shoemaker, Linda Rosamond (Abel) Crawley and husband Dr. Michael E. Crawley, one son James Henry Abel, III (Jim) and wife Kathy (Waltman) Abel, and one adopted son, Samuel Lucas and wife Ruthie all of Jonesboro. She is also survived by five grandsons, Michael Edward Crawley, Jr., Steven Bradley Crawley, Carter Harrison Abel, all of Jonesboro, Robert Craig Crawley of Ocean Springs, MS, and Christopher Blake Abel of Fayetteville, AR.; and eight great-grandchildren; Bethany Crawley, Braden Crawley, James Henry Crawley (children of Brad), Alexandra Crawley, Lilly Crawley, and Madeline Crawley (children of Michael) and Isabella and Olivia Crawley (children of Craig); two sisters, Francis Louise Hurt of Indianola, MS, and Helen Lucille Slayton and husband Emmett Slayton of Jonesboro.

· A celebration of Virgimai's life will be held Friday, May 27, 2011, at 12:30 p.m. in Forrest Park Cemetery at Forrest City. Visitation will be held at Steven's Funeral Home in Forrest City from 10:30 to 12:00 noon prior to the graveside service. Brother Mike Martin, Senior Adult Pastor of Central Baptist Church of Jonesboro will officiate the service assisted by Dr. Gene Crawley, Pastor of First Baptist Church of Forrest City.

Pallbearers will include Michael Crawley, Craig Crawley, Brad Crawley, Christopher Abel, Carter Abel, Ron Shoemaker, Mike Crawley, and Emmett Slayton. Honorary pallbearers will include the Wisdom Seekers class of Central Baptist Church, nephews Harry Chism, Pat Chism, and Jack Lofton, and caregivers Tracey Drace, Beth Evans, Pam Longmire, Patricia McDaniel, and Donna Wood.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that memorials be sent to Gideons International (P. O. Box 19231, Jonesboro, AR 72403) or Central Baptist Church Faith Fund (3707 Harrisburg Rd. Jonesboro, AR 72404).

Tribute Wall

RW

“ *Our sympathies are with you at this time of sadness mixed with the joy of knowing that your loved one is now with the Lord and free of pain.*

Rodd & Charlotte Wilcoxson - April 12, 2013 at 08:29 AM

BE

“ *It has been a joy to know Mrs. Abel and assist with her care in her final months. My sympathies go out to her loving family who gave her their undivided attention during this difficult time. You are all in my prayers.*

Beth Evans - April 12, 2013 at 08:29 AM

SG

“ *Dear Donna and Family
So sorry to hear about the loss of your Mother, she was a wonderful person and she will be missed.
Our prayers and thoughts will be with you. May God Bless you and hold you in his loving arms in this time of need.*

*Susie James Goins and Family
Martin James and Family*

Susie James Goins - April 12, 2013 at 08:29 AM

CS

“ *May the Lord give each of you strength during this difficult time.*

I was a customer of Mrs. Abel at A&T Fashions for many years. A lovely woman.

Cathy J. Scott - April 12, 2013 at 08:29 AM