

MARY JEAN (MONTGOMERY) DELOZIER OBT

b. 8 December 1926, Christiansburg, VA

d. 27 January 2017, Fresno, CA

Parents: **Cephus Abram Montgomery & Ellie Gibson**

md in 1950 to

Leon Thomas DeLozier (1920-2015)

*See Leon Thomas DeLozier Obt.

CALIFORNIA — Mary Jean DeLozier, Cookeville historian and TTU professor emeritus, died on Friday, Jan. 27, 2017, at the age of 90. After 60 years as a Cookevillian, she and her husband, Leon, moved to Fresno, Calif., in May 2014 to be closer to their children and grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Ellie Gibson Montgomery and Cephus Abram Montgomery; and her husband, Leon, who died on New Year's Day 2015, at the age of 94.



She is survived by her children, Thomas Montgomery DeLozier of Sebastopol, Calif., and Celia Dawn DeLozier of Fresno, Calif.; as well as five grandchildren, Elizabeth, Sandy, Justine, Serge and Raphael. Her sister, Ruth Elizabeth Cole, lives with her husband and three children in Richmond, Va.

Mary Jean Montgomery was born Dec. 8, 1926, in Christiansburg, Va. She grew up in Blacksburg, Virginia, graduating from Blacksburg High in 1944. After obtaining her B.A. from Randolph-Macon Women's College, she moved to Nashville, Tenn., to serve as teen activities director at the YWCA. She met Leon DeLozier in Nashville. They were married in 1950, and had two children, Dawn and Monty.

The family moved to Cookeville in 1961, when Leon had the opportunity to manage, and later own, the Princess Movie Theatre and the Putnam Drive-in Theatre. Mary Jean took advantage of the opportunity to study at Tennessee Tech, earning a Master's Degree in 1966. She then taught history at TTU for 22 years. Mary Jean was the author of Putnam County Tennessee 1850-1970. She was a founder of the Cookeville Depot Museum and served on the Cookeville Historic Zoning Commission. She was a longtime member of Cookeville Methodist and then later became an early member of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Cookeville, and she and Leon were always active in community service. Mary Jean's friendships were varied, long, steadfast and deep. She was liberal in her religious and political beliefs; those convictions, along with her support of the arts, the environment, and the quality of life in Cookeville led to many friends who were as diverse as her interests and causes. She was also grateful and generous to the people who worked for her and cared for her as her health declined. These people joined her large circle of friends and, as so many, became a kind of family. She refused to be defeated by the Parkinson's disease she had for over 20 years; her positive attitude and stoicism were

exemplary. She also had a sense of humor and a lighter side. She would host parties for any occasion, and often surprised by showing up for class, local events or family gatherings in costume.

A Celebration of Life will be held at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Fresno, Calif., in late March.

Donations, in her name, can be made to Planned Parenthood, the American Parkinson's Association, the March of Dimes or a charity of choice.

<http://www.ajlambert.com>



HONORING THE DELOZIER

Joining long-time Cookeville Depot Museum supporters Mary Jean and Leon DeLozier, in front, on April 4 at Heritage Pointe Senior Living in Cookeville are Judy Duke, administrator of Cookeville museums, and Don Prince, Friends of the Depot board president. Friends of Cookeville History Museum honored the couple for both their volunteer and financial support since the mid-1980s. To recognize and thank them for their service, a proclamation by Mayor Matt Swallows was read by Rick Woods, director of Leisure Services and Public Facilities. Photo by Amy Davis.

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