

NYLEPTHA MATILDA BRYANT SHELL ROBERTS OBT.

SPARTA -- Funeral services for Nyleptha Matilda Bryant Shell Roberts, 112, will be held at 1 p.m. on Saturday, May 15, at Thurman Funeral Home.

There will be a private viewing reception for family and close friends starting at 11 a.m., with public viewing starting at noon. Interment will be at the Old Bon Air Cemetery.

Mrs. Roberts died peacefully, but unexpectedly, in her sleep of natural causes just after midnight on Wednesday, May 5, 2010.



She was born March 12, 1898, in Bon Air to the late John and Mollie Bryant.

Mrs. Roberts was oldest person in Tennessee, ninth oldest in the United States, and 20th oldest in the world. She was nine-years-old when she first saw a car in 1907. During her long life, she lived in Kentucky and Chicago, Ill., worked in a grocery and a clothing store, and managed a laundry service. However, most of her work was as a homemaker for her family. For most of the latter part of her life, she lived by herself in her home in Bon Air until age 107, when she became a resident of Life Care Center of Sparta.

She remained active making her well known soap fish handicrafts up until her death. She was a member of Bon Air Methodist Church.

Her family includes a daughter and son-in-law, Juanita and Gene Harris of Fairview, Mo; three brothers and sisters-in-law Hubert and Martha Mae Bryant of Sparta, Paul and Lois Bryant of Tallahassee, Fla., and Johnny and Gladys (Willene) Bryant of Anderson, Indiana; a daughter-in-law, Ingeburg Shell; a grandson, Dr. Michael Shell of Augusta, Ga; a granddaughter and grandson-in-law, Janet and Tim O'Callaghan of Schaumburg, Ill.; a granddaughter-in-law Anita and husband Jack Cline of Schaumburg; two great-granddaughters, Tracy Collins of Chicago and Heather Collins of Schaumburg; nieces Carolyn and husband Rodger McCann of Sparta, Connie and husband Charles Wood of Walling, Wilma Cope of Sparta, Nina (Geraldine) and husband Gerald Sheets of Anderson, Joyce and husband James Land of Markleville, Ind., Margaret and husband Elbert (Gene) Sparkman of McMinnville, Betty Lawrence and husband Jim Hunley of Murfreesboro, Donna Thomas of Woodbury and Brenda Martin and husband Dennis Waggoner of McMinnville; nephews John (Mike) Bryant and wife Bonnie of Anderson, John Fuqua of McMinnville, Billy Fuqua and wife Carol of Rock Island, Steve Fuqua and wife Donna of Woodbury, Bobbie Bryant and wife Evelyne of Sparta, Stephen Bryant and wife Maureen of Greenville, North Carolina, and Paul (Greg) Bryant and wife Mary of Tallahassee; grandnieces Jamie Wood, Amy and husband Martin Jordan, Jr. and Melody and husband Keith Edmonds, all of Sparta, and Melissa and husband William Hunsicker of Nashville; grandnephews Jeffrey (Todd) Steward and wife Melissa of Elizabeth City, N.C., Fred Nordstrom, Jr. and wife Barbara of Essie of Kentucky and Jeff Bryant and wife Waylena of Champaign-Urbana, Ill; second cousins once removed, Wanda Mahoney of Mount Juliet, Bonnie and husband Jerry Rogers of Quebeck, Curtis Detharidge and wife Wati of Manchester, Glenda and husband Larry Robinson of Palm Harbor, Fla., and Emogene and husband David Rute of Palmerton, Pa; special best friend Estelle Lewis of Cookeville, and friend Judy Shirley of Sparta; Dr. Abhay Kemkar, M.D., and wife Nanda, and Dr. Bronn Rayne, M.D.; nurse Vicki Sims, activities director Debbie Guy, corporate president Beecher Hunter, and others of the supportive staff of the Life Care Center of Sparta; among others of her many friends and relatives.

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In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her first husband Aaron Shell; two sons, Johnny and Columbus (Leon) Shell; her second husband Hubert Roberts; grandsons Stephen Collins and Johnny Shell, Jr.; brothers Earl, Carl, William (Jordon), and Merlin; a half-brother, Oliver; sisters Mary, Eula (Roberta), Lucille and Ruby; and close friend Nova Ramsey.

Memorials donations may be made to Cumberland Presbyterian Church, c/o Nyleptha Roberts Memorial, 500 West Main Street, Watertown, TN, 37184.

Bros. Rodger McCann and Freddie Copeland will officiate at the service.

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