

*Museum Collection
Marie's old ledger for hotel.
Dates back to 1913
when hydro electric dam erected*

Fairfield County Has Lost One of Its Treasures

Sunday, September 18, 2016 Fairfield County lost one of its most loved, revered and valuable members with the recent passing of Anna Marie Stevenson Burley. Anna Marie Stevenson was born minutes after her twin sister to parents Annie Amanda Stone and Edward Lee Stevenson, Sr. of Lebanon Presbyterian Community on March 15, 1918. There were eight Stevenson children who grew up in the Lebanon community and who later moved to Winnsboro where the children attended Mt Zion Institute. Marie eventually graduated from Monticello High School where she learned her life love and skill of sewing. After high school, Marie managed Roses 5 & 10 Cent Store before attending Lander College in Greenwood, SC for two years where she studied secretarial arts. Following Lander College, she attended a Business School in Columbia where she received a business diploma. She and her twin sister later went on to complete a course in Cosmetology in Columbia.

It was in high school where she met Marion Heyward Burley, her one and only true love, whom she married September 14, 1940. Marion called her Marie with a French pronunciation and she was called "Aunt Twin" by nieces and nephews. Marie and Marion set up house in Monticello, where she cared for his Papa, Charlie Burley, until his death in 1951 when they moved to Parr Shoals. At Parr Shoals Marie ran the South Carolina Electric & Gas Company Hotel in the small community until the experimental Carolina Virginia Nuclear Plant came to Fairfield County and the village had to evacuate. You may have been a lucky neighbor, grateful boarder or dinner guest at the hotel in Parr Shoals on the Broad River where Marie showered guests with remarkable hospitality and cuisine. She was the Hotel Manager from 1951 to 1961. Marion died October 5, 1961. In 1962 Marie moved back to Monticello to the home Marion had built for them. At the age of 43 Marie was a widow and devoted mother to their three children – Rita (Joe), Mary Jo (Lindsey) and Heyward (Nancy). At her passing she was grandmother to seven grandchildren and fifteen great-grandchildren. Marie continued her career working at Fairfield Manufacturing Company where she was head supervisor from 1955 to 1966. Perhaps you know someone who was under her supervision where she ran the "sewing room" with expert precision and firm commitment. Marie received her certification to teach industrial sewing from Clemson. She opened the Charm Manufacturing Company in Ridgeway, SC as the sewing "super" and ran Randy Apparel in Camden, SC.

Known as one of the best seamstresses in the area, Marie made and designed clothing for herself, daughters and grand-daughters. With precision, love and pride she designed and made the wedding dress which her daughters and several family members wore. And she was always altering clothes for area residents.

Marie taught kindergarten in Winnsboro as well as sewing to many high school young ladies. She was the first industrial sewing class instructor at the Fairfield Vocation School where she taught from 1971 to 1983. In 1979 she was named Teacher of the Year by the Trade and Industrial Conference at Clemson University and again in 1981 she received the statewide Trades and Industrial Teacher of the Year. Former students would see her on the streets in Winnsboro, run up to her and give her a big hug. Marie invested much in her teaching and because she cared about her students' success in life, she made sure that she incorporated lessons on making good choices in life and the things that are necessary to build a successful life.

You might have known Marie as “the cake lady”. Her cakes – whether a wedding, a birthday, a doll, an anniversary, any occasion – were hand-crafted, creative and gorgeous! She was the master chef of the 100% pound cake and “her rolls” were another of her culinary masterpieces.

Maybe you worshiped and served with Marie, a pillar of the Little River Baptist Church where she planned and hosted dinners, sang, taught Sunday School and tithed. She was a faithful and active member of Little River for 75 years. Marie will be remembered by her family and her friends for her strong faith and commitment to her Lord's principles which defined her life and which she openly and joyfully passed on to others. Marie was known for saying “I'm blessed and I hope you are too”. She was known for praising God out loud and singing love songs to Him, especially “Jesus Loves Me”, “Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus”, “Into My Heart” and “Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Sweetest Name I Know”.

She was a proud member of many groups in Fairfield County including the Home Demonstration Club sponsored by Clemson University. Marie was gifted and used those gifts in so many ways, including being a crafty business woman in all areas. In addition to her numerous occupations, Marie was Post Mistress of the Monticello Post Office for a brief period of time.

There are four words that may best sum up Marie's life – Ambitious. Determined. Creative. Devoted. She was a true example of the scripture Galatians 5: 22 – “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control”. Marie followed Christ's example in whatever endeavor she was called to participate by being a true servant to others.

In addition to her children and grandchildren, Marie is survived by three sisters, her twin Marguerite Kelly, Erleen Bankhead, and Ann Dixon; and many loving nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Marie is predeceased by her daughter, Mary Jo Leviner; and siblings, Minnie Lee Montgomery, Marion Stevenson, Ed Stevenson, and Coleman Stevenson.

After a light stroke four and a half years ago, Marie moved to J F Hawkins Nursing Facility in Newberry, South Carolina. Tri County Hospice ministered to her for the last 2 ½ years but they will quickly tell you that she was the one who ministered to them and those around her as she spread the joy of her spirit and as she blessed them over and over each day.

Memorials may be made in Marie's memory to Little River Baptist Church or Hospice Care of Tri-County.