



Mabel Elizabeth Cole Barnes

June 17, 1915 - August 20, 2013

Mabel Elizabeth Cole Barnes of Sutherlin died Tuesday, August 20, 2013 in Woodview nursing home in South Boston. She was 98.

Born June 17, 1915, “the fifth child of the fifth child,” as she often would say, she was the daughter of Elizabeth Barksdale Lovelace Cole and John Lovelace Cole.

She married Robert Fielder Barnes on June 28, 1935, and a year later came with him to the Barnes home place on Brooklyn Road, where she lived out almost all of the next 77 years.

Invariably a sunny soul who claimed never to have so much as a headache, Mabel also harbored a fiercely competitive streak. Into her mid-90s she relished a good game, be it bridge with friends or Scrabble with her children, and she was known to be a really bad loser – perhaps because she so seldom lost.

She loved to travel and had visited 49 of the 50 states, Hawaii being the exception; she didn’t like to fly, though she’d done it (“It’s a great way to travel if you get by with it,” she’d say). Most of her touring of the country was done by automobile, a mode of transportation she dearly loved.

She was a self-proclaimed “Democrat born and Democrat bred,” and served on the Halifax County Democratic Committee and as a poll worker for numerous elections.

But her life’s work was caring for her family: Robert, whom she saw through till his death in 1995 at the home place; their three children, Billie, Bob and Sam;

and her mother-in-law, Ruby Williams Barnes, whom she cared for through her 100th birthday in 1986 at the home place.

She also was a faithful member of Mercy Seat Presbyterian Church, where she helped lead the Women of the Church and numerous other activities, and which she attended every Sunday until her health was failing.

In addition to her parents, she is predeceased by two brothers, John L. Cole and Joel Cole, and five sisters: Bill Powell, Lelia Moorefield, Virginia Gebhart, Mary Morton Butler and Hallie Jackson Cole, who died as a child.

She is survived by her three children, Elizabeth (Billie) Barnes Isenberg of Raleigh, Dr. Robert Fielder Barnes Jr. of Richmond, and Samuel Cole Barnes of Minneapolis; eight grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. The children wish to thank Dorraine Hogue and Celeste Carrington for their gentle care of Mabel, which made it possible for her to live out most of her final days at the home place.

The family will receive friends at the home place on Brooklyn Road, Friday evening.

Funeral services will be held at 2:00 P. M. Saturday, August 24, 2013, at Mercy Seat Presbyterian Church in Sutherlin with interment in the church's cemetery. In lieu of flowers please consider memorials to Mercy Seat Presbyterian Church, c/o John Barksdale, 7010 Melon Road, Sutherlin, VA 24594.

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Tribute Wall

JS

“ I went to school with her son, Bob, and remember well all of her energetic participation in our school activities. She always made it special and fun. My deepest sympathy to Bob and the rest of the family.

Janice Hughes Setney

Janice Hughes Setney - September 25, 2013 at 12:00 AM

SS

“ Dear Sam,
Your mother was such a delightful lady!! I have had the pleasure of seeing her several times in recent years as my church 1st Presbyterian and Mercy Seat had activities together. I visited Judy Wooding last week and we talked about the wonderful example your mother has given all of us.
Blessings to you and your family during this time of saying goodbye to your mom.
sincerely,
Sally

Sally Boyd Slaff - September 02, 2013 at 12:00 AM

HO

“ Dear Billie, I have never sent a sympathy email but since I don't have addresses or phone numbers for you or Bob and Sam, I send this. Mabel was a favorite of Mama's. Her visits to Mama at The Seasons were always joyful occasions, full of remembrances and laughter. I never saw Mabel show anything but good humor. I won't be at her funeral due to recent surgery. I will always remember Mabel and Mama having a good time!

Love to you all,
Hallie T. Owen

Hallie Torian Owen - August 24, 2013 at 12:00 AM

JD

“ What a wonderful lady she was with a great sense of humor. I will miss her very much.

Jinny Downing - August 23, 2013 at 12:00 AM

RS

“ Aunt Mable lived a long, wonderful life with a large family who loved her and her zest for life. She was always upbeat, a pleasure to be around, and made the world's best sweet tea.

Rob Squatriglia - August 23, 2013 at 12:00 AM

RS

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with each of you. Mrs. Barnes will be missed but I know she is with the lord and smiling down on Sutherlin.

Robert and Sheri Stevens - August 23, 2013 at 12:00 AM

WP

“ *She lived a long life and a good life, touching so many people with her love, kindness, gentleness and sense of humour. And, oh my, how she could cook! I have such good memories of many fabulous meals over the years. Each one was an occasion and something to look forward to. In more recent years, she liked to tell me that I looked like a "man of the world" - something I found amusing and flattering. We will miss you, dearest Mabel, but we know you are now in a much better place. My heartfelt sympathy to Billie, Bob and Sam. How blessed and privileged you were to have had such a wonderful mother! I join you and all those who loved Mabel in celebrating her life. All my love, Wyley*

Wyley Powell - August 22, 2013 at 12:00 AM

BO

“ *Bille, Bob, and Sam,
Dear Cousins - I was so sorry to hear about Aunt Mabel's death and I wish I could be there Saturday to attend the service. Please know that I am thinking of you and of Mabel. I will always remember her smile, laugh and love. She was a treasure. Playing scrabble with her was always fun and keen competition. I hope she is playing in heaven with Mom and Dad! - Love, Bonnie*

Bonnie - August 22, 2013 at 12:00 AM

JH

“ *We've just heard the sad news and offer our heartfelt condolences. Mabel was a wonderful neighbor and friend, and will be terribly missed. She was quite a lady!*

Jill & Butch Hiner - August 21, 2013 at 12:00 AM

JL

“ My many memories of Aunt Mabel are circling in my head with an echo of laughter. All of us benefitted from her ready smile and joyful spirit. She was devoted to her family and to those who needed her capable, loving care.

Many loved ones have welcomed her to her heavenly home. Didn't she always love reunions? We are blessed to know that we will be reunited with all of those dear people some day.

Marc and I join Billie, Bob, and Sam, and all of their families in a grateful celebration of Aunt Mabel's beautiful life. Much love, Jan

Jan Langholz - August 21, 2013 at 12:00 AM

NC

“ Billie...what a wonderful life your mother had! And you were such a devoted daughter. My deepest sympathies...Sallye

Nancy Chestek - August 21, 2013 at 12:00 AM

CC

“ Mabel was so courageous and strong. I was amazed with her positive outlook. Mabel never complained. Mabel always put others needs before her own, smiling, so lovely and gracious. I love ,respect and will miss her Rest in peace.

Celeste Carrington - August 21, 2013 at 12:00 AM

CC

“ Celeste Carrington has sent this Expressions of Sympathy card.

Celeste Carrington - August 21, 2013 at 12:00 AM

RL

“ Billie, Bob and Sam,
I'm so sad to hear that our Barnes matriarch has passed, but I know that she's rejoicing to be reunited with Robert, Jake, Granny Ruby, and many others. I have so many warm memories of your mom: of her letting Betsy & me play dress up with her scarf collection during my Sunday afternoon visits, of her telling me stories of her days as a newlywed on Brooklyn Road when my dad was still living there, and most of all, of her happily sharing updates on the lives of each of you. She was so very proud of you and loved you immeasurably. You are in my thoughts and prayers.

Ruby Barnes Larson - August 21, 2013 at 12:00 AM

LG

“ Our deepest sympathy goes out to all of you. It seems like only yesterday that we were having one of those competitive bridge games up in our parlor with anyone Tee, Mice, and Mable could get to come. I know some of Tee's best days were spent with these ladies. So were mine.

Lawson and Jerry Greenwood - August 21, 2013 at 12:00 AM

KW

“ Mabel was a joy for each of us. I enjoyed bridge each month with Mabel for at least 58 years. She did miss a few games when Robert was ill and needed her. At our June 2011 game, our bridge club celebrated her 96th birthday with a surprise party. She loved it. We miss her. My sympathy to you, Billie, who was always there at our joint church meetings, to you, Bob, my ex fellow teacher and to you, Sam, my joy as a student. How wonderful that she lived such a great life.

Kathryn & Baxter Wilson - August 21, 2013 at 12:00 AM

BS

“ *she lived a good, long life and now she is enjoying a wonderful reunion with her loved ones. we will miss her so much. she was the lucky fifth child, of the fifth child. Boo[pie and Bob*

Betty and Bob Squatriglia - August 20, 2013 at 12:00 AM