



Dr. Eleanor Duff

December 19, 1934 - December 31, 2023

IN MEMORY OF:

Ruth Eleanor Duff PhD

Serving Location:

CRAIN FUNERAL HOME – TAMMS

420 Front Street, Tamms, Illinois

Dr. Ruth Eleanor Duff, 89, of Olive Branch, died Sunday, December 31, 2023 at St. Francis Medical Center.

Eleanor was born on December 19, 1934 at the family home near Thebes, Illinois to Richard Ernest and Ruth Ethel (Dickerson) Duff. She was a member of the Olive Branch United Methodist Church in Olive Branch. Eleanor attended Olive Branch Elementary School and graduated from Thebes Township High School. She earned a Bachelor's of Science in Education Degree from Southeast Missouri State College; a Master's of Science in Education Degree and a Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Elementary/Early Childhood Education from Southern Illinois University. She began her teaching career at Twente School near Olive Branch, one of the last two-room schools in Alexander County at that time. She taught at Freeburg Elementary School in Freeburg for five years. She always, however, described the two years at Twente School, along with the families in that community, as one of

the most valuable and enjoyable times of her teaching career.

Following the completion of her doctorate in 1973, Eleanor joined the faculty as an Associate Professor, Early Childhood Education, College of Education at the University of South Carolina in Columbia, South Carolina. She was awarded a full professorship in 1982. Eleanor served in a number of capacities: Graduate faculty, Early Childhood Education; Director, Children's Center (demonstration and research center); Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs; and later, Associate Dean of the College. In 1991, she was named to the John Swearingen Professorship in Education. Dr. Duff retired in 1995 as Distinguished Professor Emeritus.

Her international experiences included serving as a member of a Fulbright Study Seminar in Pakistan (1983); from 1984 through 1991 she served as an early childhood consultant to the Noor Hussein Foundation in the Kingdom of Jordan.

Dr. Duff took service to the teaching profession seriously as manifest in her work with the major national and international organizations supporting the care and education of young children and the preparation of teachers. She worked extensively with the following: Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI); National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC); Southern Early Childhood Association (SECA); American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE).

Following her return to Southern Illinois in 1996, Dr. Duff was appointed Professor and Chair, Department of Elementary, Early, and Special Education at Southeast Missouri State University. She served in this role until her retirement in 2005.

In her community, she served as member of the Olive Branch United

Methodist Church Council; the Dodge Memorial Library; and the Thebes Historical Society. She served as Secretary, Olive Branch Cemetery Association.

She is survived by numerous nieces and nephews about whom she often said how she “loved being an Aunt!” While she tended to be a little bossy...she always felt it was her role to “share perspectives on things”...never advice... just pointing out different ways of looking at situations.

She was preceded in death by her parents; three sisters, Geneva Mae Watson (Ralph), Gladys Marie Clark (Roffie), and Delphia Jane Schauwecker (Anton); three brothers, Herman Leslie Duff, Lawrence Edgar Duff (Grace), and Elvis Ernest Duff.

Visitation will be held on Friday, January 12, 2024 from 4:00 PM until 8:00 PM at Crain Funeral Home in Tamms and on Saturday, January 13 from 10:00 AM until 11:00 AM at the Olive Branch United Methodist Church.

Funeral services will follow at 11:00 AM with Rev. Brent Gordon officiating.

Burial will follow at Rose Hill Cemetery in Thebes.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Olive Branch United Methodist Church, the Dodge Memorial Library, the Thebes Historical Society, or the Rose Hill Cemetery Fund and will be accepted at the funeral home.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Crain Funeral Home.

Cemetery Details

Rose Hill Cemetery

Thebes, IL

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 12. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Crain Funeral Home - Tamms
420 Front St.
Tamms, IL 62988
(618) 833-2176
crain@crainsonline.com

Funeral Service

JAN 13. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM.

Olive Branch Methodist Church
Olive Branch, IL

Visitation

JAN 13. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Olive Branch Methodist Church
Olive Branch, IL

Tribute Wall

CG

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with the family.

Carol & Randy George - January 03, 2024 at 03:14 PM

Jl

“ Eleanor and have been best friends and classmates for well over 70 years. I lived and worked with the Duff family in my mid teens. Eleanor was two months younger. We spent hours together in the orchards picking peaches for drive up customers. In our later years she referred to me as her other brother. I liked that! I am so proud of her accomplishments. I bragged to many about her work in education especially her work in Jordan for the Queen to establish a Elementary program for that Nation. I always looked forward to seeing her at the Cozy Corner each time I would visit Olive Branch. I will miss that. Olive Branch lost a solid citizen who I am sure lent sound advise to anyone needing it. We love you and will miss you Eleanor.

Jack Isom - January 03, 2024 at 09:30 AM

BR

Eleanor & I became friends when we .over to Olive Branch. She was a lovely person & I will always miss her.

Bernadine Roberts - January 03, 2024 at 10:43 AM

RT

“ I always enjoyed talking to Eleanor . We would get into deep discussions and she loved it. If we needed an answer to a question we would go to her. She was very interesting to listen to. She told me a few months ago to bring a picture of my uncle Billy Joe Parks down for her to see. She said you know he was my boyfriend when we were young and he was so good looking. That was nice to know because he was such a sweet uncle . You will be missed. RIP



Rosa Marie Tatum - January 02, 2024 at 11:47 PM

EB

I remember Eleanor very well from my teenage years. I became acquainted with Eleanor during peach picking time. She was always warm down to earth friendly. The Duff family were close hard working people. I knew Delphi, Geneva and Lawrence/Grace. Thoughts of the Duff family have always warmed my heart. Eleanor will be missed.

Edwin Baine - January 03, 2024 at 11:22 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Dr. Eleanor Duff.



January 02, 2024 at 07:25 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Dr. Eleanor Duff.



January 02, 2024 at 07:18 PM