



Betty Kathryn Patterson

January 11, 2024

Betty Kathryn Hester Patterson, age 87, of Athens, Alabama passed away at her residence on January 11, 2024 following a lengthy battle with Multiple Myeloma. She was the youngest child of Charlie Robert Hester and Emmie Catherine James of Cherokee, Alabama. She was preceded in death by her spouse, Charles Wayne Patterson of Athens.

She is survived by two daughters: Melanie Patterson Bodiford (Joe) of Athens and Kristie Patterson LaHue (Jake) of Birmingham; four grandchildren: Emmie Bodiford Sanders (Jacob) of Northport, Chapman Levi Bodiford of Elkmont, Sophie Grace Bodiford of Birmingham, Molly Hayes LaHue of Birmingham; two nephews: Dwight A. Hester (Ann) of Northport and G. Brian Patterson (Joy) of Athens; and a niece: Nicole Patterson Beasley (Jay) of Athens.

Her parents had seven children (three boys and three girls) between twenty-one and eight years older than Betty with the youngest dying unexpectedly at age two. They were overjoyed with the unexpected arrival of Betty when they were in their 40s. Along with her gaggle of sweet siblings, they lavished extra attention on Betty which drove her to dive headfirst into her passions and to work hard to excel at everything she did. At age 11, she demonstrated her handiness with a needle and pinking shears to win the Colbert County 4-H Dress Review four consecutive years in a row.

Later she went on to be the Valedictorian of the Class of 1953 at Cherokee High School. At Florence State (now UNA), she challenged herself in a male-dominated major and was “Most Outstanding Student in Freshman Chemistry” and also given the “Chemistry Achievement Award”. She graduated with a double major in Math and Chemistry and in 1957, upon graduation received the Keller Key Award for obtaining the highest GPA in her class.

Betty then joined Chemstrand (Monsanto/Solutia) as a Chemist in Decatur before being transferred to Raleigh, NC, where she was one of the first professional females in her field at that time. Her move to Raleigh not only launched her career, but also launched her family when she met Charles Patterson, another Alabama native. He invited her to the company turkey shoot where she won the turkey, and Charles wooed her with a Thanksgiving dinner to ultimately win her hand in marriage. In 1969, she and Charles were offered an opportunity to move back to sweet home Alabama, so they packed up Melanie and moved back to Decatur. Kristie arrived soon after the move, and her family was complete. Betty retired from Solutia in August 1993 after 36 years of service. She and Charles moved to Athens in 1996 to be closer to grandchildren while managing Charles’s family farm in West Limestone.

She was a great Mom, who was known for her delicious food. She never rested until all homework was done and everyone was tucked in. She balanced career and family with grace and wrote many a school note for Melanie and Kristie (when a school project went sideways or when she felt things were generally “unjust”) and defended all to a fault. She slept in the hospital when Kristie got sick and supported Melanie as a young engineer. She prayed fervently for her whole family daily and came into her greatest role as “Momma Betty” in 1994 with the birth of her first grandchild upon which she found new purpose after her technical career had ended. Momma Betty was the epitome of a grandmother. She would indulge virtually any request - she saved dumpling dough on chicken and dumpling nights for little hands to

snack on later, she melted butter to pour over Nutella on breakfast waffles, she prepared a pall for a salamander burial, she saved the Sunday comic strips, and she always had snacks ready to consume while driving the daily “Momma Betty school bus”. Her sewing room was called the “Miracle Room” where she made costumes and last minute alterations. Other non-glamorous duties included caring for sick (despite being afraid of all germs); retrieving forgotten school lunches, and scraping a screaming toddler pancake off the kitchen floor. She even made a mad dash to Texas for the Thanksgiving birth of her fourth grandchild. Although being a grandparent involved none of the certainties she found in chemistry, she embraced it and excelled at it with her usual style and success. Her greatest joy was her family.

Visitation will be held at Limestone Chapel on Saturday, January 20 at 12 pm, with service following at 2pm. Pallbearers are Joe Bodiford, Chapman Bodiford, Jacob Sanders, Jake LaHue, Dwight Hester, and Jay Beasley. The family wishes to express its thanks to Destiny Phillips, her caregiver; and to Dr. Heather Shah and her staff who shepherded the family through her illness with unparalleled grace. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to any of her favorite charities: JDRF; American Cancer Society; St. Jude’s Children’s Hospital or Samaritan’s Purse.

Cemetery Details

Roselawn Cemetery

523 US Hwy 31 South
Athens, AL 35611

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 20. 12:00 PM - 1:45 PM (CT)

Limestone Chapel Funeral Home
322 Hwy. 31 N.
Athens, AL 35611
(256) 232-1051
info@limestonechapel.com
<https://www.limestonechapel.com/>

Funeral

JAN 20. 2:00 PM (CT)

Limestone Chapel Funeral Home
322 Hwy. 31 N.
Athens, AL 35611
(256) 232-1051
info@limestonechapel.com
<https://www.limestonechapel.com/>

Tribute Wall

GU

“ *Gunny planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Betty Kathryn Patterson.*

Gunny - January 19, 2024 at 12:28 PM



“ *Sweet Tranquility Basket was purchased for the family of Betty Kathryn Patterson.*



January 19, 2024 at 12:28 PM

AS

“ *Melanie and Kristie. I am sorry to hear the news of Betty's passing. We used to keep in touch with cards and updates but the last few years we lost touch. Betty and your whole family were so nice to my Dad as he joined your family. Thinking of you all. Annette Moore Smith*

Annette moore smith - January 19, 2024 at 07:46 AM

FW

“ *So sorry to learn of Betty's passing! Betty and Charles were friends through our time in the Cattlemen's Association! We shared some good times together! Love and Blessings to the Patterson Family! In Christian Love Jimmy and Frances Wales*

Frances Wales - January 16, 2024 at 01:50 PM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Betty Kathryn Patterson.*



January 16, 2024 at 01:15 PM



“ *Sean, Turner, Bill, and Billy planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Betty Kathryn Patterson.*

Sean, Turner, Bill, and Billy - January 16, 2024 at 01:15 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Betty Kathryn Patterson.*



January 15, 2024 at 03:26 PM