



Martha Louise Chaffer

January 28, 1916 - October 29, 2017

Martha Louise Chaffer age 101 of Athens, passed away Sunday, October 29, 2017 at Limestone Health Facility. Mrs. Chaffer was born in KY January 28, 1916 to William Russell and Nancy Bailey Russell.

Services will be Friday, November 3, 2017 11:00 a.m., at St. Timothy's Episcopal Church with Rev. Jeffery K Evans officiating. The family will receive friends from 10:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. prior to the service. Burial will be in Athens City Cemetery. Limestone Chapel Funeral Home assisting the family.

Preceded in death by her husband, Robert E. Chaffer; grandson, Mark David Hollingsworth and John Harry Hoffman II.

Survived by three children, Brenda Hollingsworth and husband, Rabon of Sandersville, GA, Peggy Hoffman and husband, John of Gilford, In and Ben Hicks and wife, Marty of SC; grandchildren, Robert Craig Hollingsworth, Scott Rabon Hollingsworth and wife, Julie, Edward Lloyd Hoffman and wife, Beckie, Kendra DeRegules and husband, Alex, Jay Benjamin Hicks and wife, Terra and Stephanie Smith and husband, Nick; seven great-grandchildren; several nieces, nephews, family and friends.

Martha's life like a patchwork quilt —different pieces stitched together to form an elaborate pattern of self-reliance, wit and love.

Her father worked for the railroad and her two brothers protected her from harm and heartbreak.

As she grew up, Martha developed a practical way of doing things not commonly found today. She discovered a knack for business and bookkeeping and got a job with a credit union as investigator for loans and credit applications. During World War II, while her first husband was serving overseas, Martha invested in an apartment building and earned money as a landlord.

“I did a lot of things,” “I was smart and I was willing to work hard and refused to let myself lose money.

Martha's best known around Athens as half the namesake of the “Bob-Martha” — or Bomar — Inn, located at the U.S. 31 and U.S. 72 interchange in Athens. The Motel's name was Welcome Inn for 25 years and later changed to Bomar Inn.

Martha and husband Bob, were married in 1965, a driving economic force in Athens during the mid-1970s and beyond. Members of the Chamber of Commerce, and ran the Bomar, they added rooms and built a restaurant that soon became a community staple. Bob was elected president of the state's hotel/motel owners' association and like every good man, there was a good woman Martha behind him, acting as his right hand until his death “If I did anything, I always researched it,” she said.

Martha was also a mother. She sewed clothes and costumes for school plays for her son, Ben and two daughters, Peggy and Brenda, while balancing her business ambitions.

For 38 years, Martha often went to bed with a copy of The Wall Street Journal. She's worked with investing giants like Merrill Lynch and said she “usually knew what was hot” on the market.

Martha enjoyed a well-deserved retirement. She read almost any book she could and watched the birds swarm around feeders outside her window.

Vandora Anderson, a close family friend, took care of Martha over the past 17 years and her family worked at the motel in its heyday. Anderson helped Martha keep a beauty regimen she had no plans of abandoning in light of her turning 100.

Martha's family gathered at Limestone Health Facility for the first of Martha's two parties. Anderson opened and organized more than 100 greeting cards sent by well-wishers as she, Martha, Peggy and Brenda gathered around to share memories of Martha's life. The first person in her family to reach 100, Martha said she could credit her long life to her ability to work hard. "It's built into you," she said. "You'd be surprised at some of the things I did."

In lieu of flowers make memorials to St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, 207 East Washington St. Athens, AL 35611.

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