



Mary Margaret Watts Burris

October 6, 1920 - June 21, 2020

Mary Margaret Watts Burris of Franklinton, Louisiana, passed away peacefully at the age of 99 on June 20, 2020 at her home. Born to the late W. L. and Gladys Saint Watts on October 6, 1920, Mary Margaret spent her childhood years in Hammond, LA, then moved to Summit, Mississippi, during her high school years and graduated in 1937 from Summit High School. She attended Southwest Mississippi Junior College in Summit for two years and graduated in 1941 from Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond, LA, later returning to Southeastern to earn her Masters Plus 30 degree. She married James W. Burris in 1947, had two sons, and they lived a full and wonderful life until his sudden and unexpected passing in 1964. Family was very important to her. After retiring from her teaching career, she worked for 20 years with her two sons in the retail jewelry business. She was also fortunate to live between her two sons and their families in rural Franklinton. Hers was a life guided by faith and trust in the Lord. She was a devoted mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and friend to many. She was truly selfless in her service to others and one had simply to be in her presence to feel loved. She had a gift for offering encouragement and praise, as evidenced by the multitude of handwritten notes she sent through the years.

In 1941, she became a member of Centenary United Methodist Church of

Franklinton, and continued her life-long service to her Lord. She truly saw herself as the hands and feet of Christ in her service to others. She was a long-time teacher of the Searchers/Hallie Love Sunday School Class of which she always said they taught her far more than she taught them. She was also a devoted member of the United Methodist Women.

Mary Margaret Burris began and ended her teaching career at Franklinton High School, spending 32+ years teaching bookkeeping, typing, and business administration. As a teacher she touched many lives. She loved her students, and her students loved her. In the school setting, as in all areas of her life, she was a champion of those who were less fortunate or in need of a little TLC (tender loving care). In her professional life, she was a member of the Beta Rho Chapter of the Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, having served as past-president and numerous other offices and committees.

She is survived by her two children and spouses, Jimmy and Debbie Burris; Jesse and Renee Burris; four grandchildren, Ellen Burris DeCuir, Emily Burris Hester (Chris), Darrell Burris, and Katie Burris; great grandsons, Fletcher DeCuir and Hayden Hester; and great-granddaughters, Lillie Grace DeCuir and Avery Hester. She is also survived by one brother, C. A. Watts of Decatur, IL, and two sisters-in-law, Dolores Watts of Bogalusa, LA and Edie Watts of Decatur, IL, as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

Other than her parents and husband James, she was preceded in death by her grandson, Kyle Burris for whom she often served as personal chauffeur;

brothers, Walt Watts (Frances), James M. Watts, and Charles Howard Watts; sisters, Jane Bollinger (Joe), and Marion Hancock (Stanley); and sister-in-law, Rose Watts.

Services will be held at Centenary United Methodist Church on Friday, June 26, 2020, with visitation beginning at 9:00 a.m., followed by a funeral service at 11:00 a.m. conducted by Rev. Brian Ridgedell. Should friends wish to make memorial contributions they may be sent to Centenary United Methodist Church, P.O. Box 306, Franklinton, LA 70438.

Tribute Wall

CM

“ To the family I express my sincere condolences. My heart was truly saddened when I read of your loss. As a past student of Ms Mary Margaret, as I referred to her, at Franklinton High School, I am very proud to express how grateful I am to have had her light shine in my life. I will never forget the Business Enterprise course I had under her tutorship. She provided a package that guided us to set up make believe businesses. We did exercises that directed us to operate that business while learning to be successful at it. That class made the greatest impact on my life. I used that motivation to go on to be an entrepreneur. She provided me advice that even in that time (1970s) held true and beneficial years to come.

To the family, be proud. Not missing her is impossible. Hold on to the beautiful memories as I will. Thanks for sharing her!

—CYNTHIA MAGEE—

cynthia magee - July 05, 2020 at 01:17 PM

RS

“ Sad to hear of Mrs. Mary Margaret’s passing...she was one of the pillars of Centenary during my youth and thru my young adult life. What a wonderful example she set for the many countless lives she touched over the years. With deepest sympathies,
Ron Simmons

Ron Simmons - June 28, 2020 at 10:34 AM

DM

“ Just reading this today. I loved "Ms" Mary Margaret. She inspired my love of financial interests in all of her classes. I was in her room November 22, 1963. Her calm demeanor maintained order that day She was good friends with my parents and I ate more than a few good meals from her kitchen! Accept my condolences, but know that I celebrate her life and am rejoicing that she's with Jesus.

David Murray - June 26, 2020 at 06:00 PM

KS

“ Maw “M” to my Katie an Darrel , loved her dearly she always had a way with lifting ones spirit , she was a precious lady and a wonderful grandmother. Will be truly missed .
MawMaw Kerry ❤️



Kerry Sawyer - June 25, 2020 at 07:27 PM

DF

“ So sorry for your loss.
Don Ferguson

DON FERGUSON - June 25, 2020 at 10:07 AM

SB

“ Susan Barber lit a candle in memory of Mary Margaret Watts Burris



Susan Barber - June 24, 2020 at 08:29 AM

BT

“ *Such a kind and caring lady. She will be missed by many.*

Barbara Todd - June 24, 2020 at 08:28 AM

MC

“ *A true teacher!*

Michael Calmes - June 24, 2020 at 08:19 AM

TC

“ *Terri Tucker Calhoun lit a candle in memory of Mary Margaret Watts Burris*



Terri Tucker Calhoun - June 24, 2020 at 02:57 AM

MT

“ *Mike Tucker lit a candle in memory of Mary Margaret Watts Burris*



Mike Tucker - June 23, 2020 at 10:36 PM

S(

“ *Remembering a wonderful Lady who always had a smile and encouraging words for all who knew her. I will always remember her as a good friend to Mama, and our years at the Methodist Church . God Blessed her mightily, and she will be always reminder of Christian love.*



Sylvia LaPointe (Moak) - June 23, 2020 at 03:44 PM

JL

“ *Mrs. Mary Margaret was truly an inspiration to her students. We learned so much from her that has helped us achieve our goals. She had a way of making learning an easy task. She made the best lemonade for our 4-H club. We will always remember her as one of our favorites.*

Julia Bickham LeBlanc - June 23, 2020 at 02:43 PM

LD

“ *Ms. Mary Margaret was one of my favorite teachers. What I learned about bookkeeping in her classes stayed with me my entire life and helped me throughout my career. Her and one other teacher at FHS will always be remembered as having a major impact on my life. My sympathy to the family.*

Linda Stringfield Day - June 23, 2020 at 10:53 AM

LF

“ *Leonard Family lit a candle in memory of Mary Margaret Watts Burris*



Leonard Family - June 23, 2020 at 10:22 AM

SB

“ I don't remember many of my teachers but “Miss” Mary Margaret was one that I always will. She lighted our paths. She was the dearest and sweetest teacher I ever had at FHS. It's funny how some things stick with you. She would daily scrub the water fountain in the downstairs hall with Comet. I loved that she did it, but never thought of doing it myself. She always just did things that needed to be done; usually before anyone else thought to.

Thank you Miss Mary Margaret. You will live in my fond memories.

Sarah Knott Burris

Sarah Burris - June 23, 2020 at 10:21 AM

RW

She was loved by everyone , have fond memories of her kin my school days. God bless her family they are good people

Robert Dale Walters - June 23, 2020 at 01:02 PM

DI

She had a heart of gold, and spent her life caring for others. After my mother lost her sight, Mrs. Mary Margaret added her to the list of ladies that she picked up for church functions. I was blessed to have her in school and church, and her son Jessie was a good friend of my brother Mike.

diane byrd irwin - June 23, 2020 at 09:00 PM

DV

“ Deborah Varnado lit a candle in memory of Mary Margaret Watts Burris



Deborah Varnado - June 23, 2020 at 09:51 AM

NA

“ she was a wonderful lady, a beautiful soul, and the truest meaning of a Christian. i have many good memories of her--always a smile no matter who you were. she was a good friend to my mother and that i was thankful for that. when you met her, you stepped from the darkness into the sunshine. words fail to describe such a great woman--you had to experience her warmth. she was a mother to us all.

nowhere man

natn - June 23, 2020 at 09:25 AM

JF

“ To Jimmy and Debbie and all extended Burriss family:
So sorry for your loss. We will not be able to attend services, but we will be thinking and praying for you all. Her long life full of service to family, community, and her Church says it all! What a great long life always willing to serve! While there will be sadness and mourning on earth, there will also be glorious reunions in heaven! GOD BLESS you all! We will be thinking of you!

Janie Fletcher

Bobby Fletcher

Family in Hammond, Louisiana

Janie and Bobby Fletcher - Family - June 23, 2020 at 01:53 AM

CJ

“ Jessie, Jimmy and families, I am sorry for the loss of your lovely mother. Enjoyed her as my teacher and seeing her at Clays. Please accept my deepest condolences. Cathy Johnston

Cathy Johnston - June 22, 2020 at 09:15 PM

GH

“ Jimmy, Jessie and families I am so sorry to hear of the passing of your mother. She was such a sweet person and one of my few favorite teachers in high school. I know you will miss her dearly. May God Bless you all during this difficult time.

Gail Hayes - June 22, 2020 at 05:59 PM

EN

“ Eve Bickham Nations lit a candle in memory of Mary Margaret Watts Burris



Eve Bickham Nations - June 22, 2020 at 05:47 PM