Sossoman
Funeral Home & Crematory Center
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Josie Little Cooper Speas

June 1, 1921 - Dec. 4, 2019

Mrs. Josie Little Cooper Speas, of the Grace Ridge Community, passed away Wednesday, December 4, 2019 after a brief illness. She was born June 1, 1921 to the late Grover Cleveland Little and the late Lucy Hamilton Little of Newton, North Carolina. She was graduated from Newton High School in 1938 and Appalachian State Teachers College in 1942. She taught school in Atlantic, North Carolina, Atlanta, Georgia and Greensboro, North Carolina before moving to Morganton with her husband, the late Nathan Cooper, Sr. in 1946. Together, they opened the first radio station in Burke County, WMNC, that went on the air September 23rd, 1947. For a brief time, she taught school at North Carolina School for the Deaf before leaving the business world to raise a growing family. Upon the death of Nathan Cooper in 1977, she became the President of Cooper Broadcasting, a position she held until her death. In 1985 she married the late Herbert Speas, Sr. of Morganton. She was very active in the community serving in every position multiple times of the Morganton Garden Club, where she was a Master Flower Judge. She was a past president of the Morganton Woman's Club, a past Vice President of the Burke County Fair Board, a member of the Book Club and the DAR. She was an active member of the First Methodist Church, where she served for years on the flower committee, the finance committee, played in the hand bell choir and sang in the adult choir.

She was preceded in death by a son, Cleve Cooper of Drexel, NC, a step-daughter, Deborah Peacock of Goldsboro, NC, a sister, Mrs. Lucy Little Ayers of Greensboro, NC, and her identical twin Mrs. Janice Little Merrill of Lakeland, Florida.

She is survived by three sons, Joe Cooper, (Elizabeth) of Hickory, John Cooper (Jefflyn) of Fort Mills, South Carolina and Hal Cooper of Drexel; one-step son Herbert

Speas, Jr. (Marchalle) of Morganton. 6 grandchildren and 4 step-grandchildren, along with numerous nieces and nephews, also survive.

A Celebration of Life conducted by the Rev. Jim Taber was held for extended family at the Colonial Chapel of Sossoman Funeral Home on Saturday, December 7, 2019.

Mrs. Speas was the last surviving grandchild of Dr. Q.M. Little of Catawba, and as such, the family is requesting memorial contributions be may made to the Town of Catawba Historical Association (P.O. Box 147, Catawba, NC 28609) which operates the Dr. Q.M. Little Museum.

Sossoman Funeral Home and Crematory Center is assisting the family with the arrangements.

Tribute Wall

No tributes added yet.