



Shirley B. Sprinkle

July 20, 1929 - Feb. 5, 2023

Shirley B. Sprinkle, 93, of Morganton, NC, passed away Sunday, February 5, 2023.

Born in Buncombe County, NC on July 20, 1929, to the late Guy A. Boughman and Elsie Poteat Boughman, but grew up in Lenoir, NC. Shirley was a graduate of Mars Hill College. Along with her husband, Mrs. Sprinkle operated Sprinkle Oil Company until 1970. In 1971 she opened The Muses Book Store, one of the first businesses owned and operated by a woman in Burke County. The Muses and reading were her passions. The Muses served readers for nearly 40 years.

Shirley is survived by her children, Linda Kelly Treiber (Greg Hoff) of Morganton, Frances Tilmon (Melvin) of Atlanta, GA, and Ben D. Sprinkle (Paula) of Lenoir; grandchildren, B. Nathan Eisner (Katherine), Kyle Treiber Spencer (Richard), Kimberly Treiber, Alana Eisner, B. Daniel Sprinkle (Morgan), and Ryn Sprinkle; great-grandchildren, Jocelyn Spencer, Alexia Spencer, Ben Sprinkle, Boone Sprinkle, and Calista Spencer; sisters, Lucille Andrews and Edith Collier; and many nieces and nephews.

In addition to her parents, Shirley was preceded in death by her husband, Benjamin Franklin Sprinkle, III; grandson, Colin Treiber; sister, Marie Olson; and brothers, Wayne and Cecil Boughman.

Private services for Shirley will be held at a later date.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Burke County Literacy Council, 200 N. King Street, Morganton, NC 28655 or to Friends of the Burke County Public Library, 204 S. King Street, Morganton, NC 28655.

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

Tribute Wall



Ms. Shirley and the Muses were an integral part of my childhood and adolescence. I cannot begin to count the ways she improved our entire community one book at a time.

—Dawn E Neatherly

Kelly, I have met you a couple of times, once as a census taker and once at Muses. My first husband and I first met Frank and Shirley when we wandered into The Muses, then in the lean-to building next to the rental store. They were all excited because we were their first actual customers. A large one dollar bill was above the check out from their first sale. Shirley became a mentor and friend that I have never forgotten. David (my then husband) even worked for Frank for a time. I think of Shirley often. It saddens me that she is gone. The world had a little more kindness and hope with her living here. May all of you find peace and comfort in each other and your memories.

—Martha (Peabody) Ollis



Paula, I first met your mother-in-law many years ago when she helped me order classroom sets of books for my students. I loved to browse all the offerings at Muses and enjoyed talking with her about books. She was a delightful woman who loved learning, and the length of time Muses stayed open was a testament to her business acumen. I did not know that she was your mother-in-law until I read her obituary. Please share my thoughts and prayers of

certainly. I will share my thoughts and prayers of condolence with the family. The world was, indeed, a happier place because of her well-lived life. She will be sorely missed.

—Jan Pritchard

I am sad to hear that Shirley passed away. She was such a force for women and literacy. She supported reading and bookclubs in Morganton for many years. I'm so grateful for all Shirley did to encourage others to love reading. You and your family are in my thoughts and prayers. Shirley left a beautiful legacy. Love, Brownie

—Brownie Rochefort

Shirley was a lovely lady. Going to Muses was always a special experience.

—Lana Reavis Smith



I absolutely LOVED the Muses. I used to go there with my children and sometimes sit down, read and then purchase some reading materials. Mrs. Sprinkle was always welcoming and inviting. Not only that my mother worked for her some with housekeeping. May she now RIP and, to the family I offer my sincere condolences.

—Ruth Roseboro

Deepest condolences and prayers to Shirley's family. What a remarkable woman, mother, wife, grandmother with an encyclopedic knowledge of so many things, as well as an entrepreneurial trailblazer who gave so much of herself to her family and others. I admired her so much.

—Sheila D. Dill

—Edith Collier

Shirley will long be remembered for the contributions she made to this community. Anyone who ever set foot in the Muses will carry the memory of her outreach and her drive to share her love of reading and books. She was sincerely interested in the readers of Morganton, and in lighting that spark in children that certainly ignited into a love of books and learning. My sympathy to all of her family.

—Susan Houck

My condolences to your family. Shirley was a wonderful and kind woman. She blazed a trail for other female business owners in Burke County in addition to raising a lovely family.

—Nikki Malatin



My sincere condolences to Mrs. Sprinkle's family. She was so helpful to the customers in the Muses bookstore. She would also allow you to just search the shelves. May God bless each of you during this most difficult time in your lives.

—Diann Thomas Tate



Some of my fondest memories as a youth were periodic trips my family would take to Morganton. The purpose, of course, was to see Aunt Shirley and visit the Muses. After saying hi to Shirley, I could usually be found struggling to get a double handful of books to the checkout counter. SO MANY GREAT BOOKS! A full, and well-lived life has come to a close, but the many fond memories remain. Shirley, I am forever grateful for your kindness and encouragement.

Kelly, Fran, Benny -- sending love to you and your families!
Be well.

—Charles Andrews, Jr.

Shirley was a true gift to this world. Her consistent cadence and pace of life were outcomes of her fine tuned skill to create a meaningful, impactful life that had meaning every day. She invested in herself as a person through her dedication to reading and shared that passion with generations that followed. Her legacy lives on in her children, family, and the community she built during her career. She is someone I will always look up to. I'll have to look up a little higher now!

—Hayley Carter McIntire

My condolences to the family. Ms. Shirley was one of the kindest ladies I ever met. I loved going to the book store and just spending time..

—Teresa Berry

Sorry for your loss. I remember going to Muse with my dad and seeing her helping everyone. RIP!!

—Michael Goodnight

Thoughts and prayers for the family. Shirley was such a sweet person, always a smile and positive outlook. She will be missed.

—Laura McCoy

Sincerest condolences. Mrs. Sprinkle had THE BEST book shop, best reading recommendations, school/summer reading lists for our children. What an asset to our community.

—Mary Ayers