

Ethel Voleta Whittenburg

92, a resident of Lincoln, Arkansas, passed away December 9, 2011 in Lincoln. She was born May 6, 1919 at Henryetta, Oklahoma, the daughter of W. P. and Ethel Mollie Towler Conner.

She was a graduate of Henryetta High School, a member of the Central United Methodist Church in Lincoln, Arkansas, the Hill Valley Club, and American Legion Auxiliary. Ethel was a retired poultry grower and Apple Town employee.

Ethel was preceded in death by three husbands, John Menan Martin, Elbert Ray Luginbuel and J.D. Whittenburg, and one brother, James Barclay Conner.

Survivors include two sons, Jon Martin and his wife Sue of Lincoln, Arkansas, and Jeff Whittenburg and his wife Marcia of San Jacinto, California; three daughters, Jerry Ruland and her husband Harry of Lincoln, Arkansas, Shirley Spears and her husband Bobby Jack of Cincinnati, Arkansas, and Vicki Whittenburg, of Sun City, California; thirteen grandchildren, Vi Schooler and husband Allen, Ray Ruland and wife Casie, Rhonda Freeman and husband Ken, Jon E. Martin and wife Amy, Paul Martin and wife Teresa, Carl Martin and wife Alicia, Martin Spears and wife Elizabeth, Mark Spears and wife Christine, Jeannie Williams and husband Willy, Kyle Whittenburg, Jana Muth and her husband, Matthew, Shannon Taylor and his wife, Sarah and Amy Taylor; twenty three-great grandchildren, Karen Fineberg and her husband, Joel, Jennifer Ebsen and her husband, Randall, Sydney Ruland, Katherine Freeman, Dana Robbins, Corey Martin, Denise Bates, Randall Martin, Makayla Martin, Blake Martin, Brittney Martin, Natalie Martin, Marsha Robb and her husband, T. J., Monica Spears, Sara Jones and her husband, Clint, Stephanie Roach and her husband, Coley, Rachel Williams, Ross Williams, Erica Taylor, Kaylee Taylor, Tyler Muth, Treven Muth and Kynzinton Muth; sixteen great great-grandchildren, Allison Ebsen, Alexander Ebsen, Aiden Fineberg, Nicolas Robbins, Sonny Robb, Tanner Robb, Brier Robb, Madison Pagan, Nicole Pagan, Mason Pagan, Amberleigh Hale, Joyanna Hale, Lilly Jones, Cashton Jones, Brooklee Roach and Breck Roach.

APPRECIATION

On behalf of the family, we wish to express their gratitude
for your many acts of kindness, and for your
attendance at the funeral service.

Luginbuel Funeral Home

Prairie Grove, Arkansas

online guest book, visit www.luginbuel.com



Ethel Whittenburg

May 6, 1919 - December 9, 2011

May the Lord bless
and protect you;
may the Lord's face
radiate with joy
because of you;
may he be gracious to you,
show you his favor,
and give you
His peace.

Numbers 6: 24-26 TLB

CELEBRATING THE LIFE & MEMORY OF
Ethel Whittenburg

DATE, TIME & PLACE OF SERVICE
Monday, December 12, 2011 - 10:00 a.m.
Luginbuel Chapel - Prairie Grove, Arkansas

ORDER OF SERVICE

Prelude Music	Christmas Instrumental Selections
Obituary	Jack Thompson
Scripture	
Prayer	
Words of Comfort	Jack Thompson
Closing Prayer	
Postlude Music	Beulah Land

GRAVE SIDE SERVICES WILL NOT BE HELD AT THE CEMETERY.
THE FAMILY WILL REMAIN AFTER THE SERVICE TO VISIT WITH FRIENDS.

FINAL RESTING PLACE
Lincoln Cemetery - Lincoln, Arkansas

HONORARY PALLBEARERS
Martin Spears - Mark Spears - Jeannie Williams - Vi Schooler
Ray Ruland - Rhonda Freeman - Jon Martin - Paul Martin - Carl Martin

MEMORIALS
Lincoln Public Library - P.O. Box 555 - Lincoln, Arkansas 72744
or
Central United Methodist Church - P.O. Box 965 - Lincoln, Arkansas 72744
or
Patients Choice Hospice - 3277 W Sunset Ave. Suite D - Springdale, AR 72762

YOU'VE COME A LONG WAY BABY!

By: Shirley Martin Spears

Lincoln Chamber of Commerce award 1st place in Christmas lighting to Ethel Whittenburg!! Boy, you've come a long way baby!

In Sugar Hill Estates this year the 1st place winner was my mother. Let's wander back in time to get a glimpse of what this means in her life. Ethel was born in 1919 in Henryetta, Oklahoma. Right off, when she was a tiny baby her mother died, leaving a baby and a two year old son, Barclay, for a father to raise. Her dad, W. P Conner was unable to take care of her, so her grandparents took over the job and he helped out all he could. They lived on a farm near Weeleka, Oklahoma and worked hard for a living. We don't know why, but Christmas was not an event to celebrate in their home. Two little children had just another day, and nothing special at all. We also quizzed her brother, and he confirmed what she could remember. No gifts, nothing special on Christmas. How sad. When she was old enough to help around the house and after her grandfather had died, they moved into Henryetta and lived in town with her dad. Her memories were still centered around, no gifts or extras on Christmas day.

She met the Martin family when she was in high school and of course my dad, John Menan. Now this family had a whole different way of celebrating Christmas and it centered around fun, and gifts, and lots of jokes, and good times. This changed her life, adding a new dimension that she passed on to her children. We always celebrated Christmas as far back as I can remember, not many gifts, but always a celebration of Christ's birth. Mother has mentioned of her memories, but one sticks in my mind and the story will continue from there.

They moved to Arkansas in 1945 where on a small hill-side farm with a sick husband, the Martin family was struggling to make ends meet and pay for a farm. Money was short in their home, and times were tough. Mother raided her hen house, gathering up some old hens to sell at Travis Beaty's Produce store in Lincoln. With hens sold, that little bit of money bought three small children Christmas presents. The youngest, Shirley and Jerry a baton each and Jon boxing gloves. Little did they know when they awoke on Christmas morning, the sacrifices that made those gifts under a tiny tree possible. Another old hen graced the dinner table with an abundance of home canned vegetables and fruit as well as baked goodies.

As years passed, and times were easier and much thought went into what to get others for Christmas, I still did not know how she felt about the hardness of Christmas. She worked hard to provide all she could to make her family happy. When grandchildren were growing up and Christmas was such a "BIG" occasion, one time she talked to me about how much she disliked Christmas - Well, not all of Christmas, but part. I was floored - - here with all our traditions, this lady that made them happen, was telling me she didn't like Christmas! She felt like she always wanted to get more for us, but the need to have spending limits overpowered that and her children were short changed somehow. We never knew, never felt like we were deprived of anything. She hid it well.

A long talk later about the unimportance of gifts, but the VERY importance our love for each other and Christ's love at a wonderful time of year seems to help erase some of those feelings. Looking back, I'm not sure when the transformation even happened. The tree was the same, the decorations added to, the food as always, abundant. How did it happen? It did though, that love for Christ's birth that she had instilled in us was much more apparent in everything she did along with a certain peace from within.

Our mother celebrates Christmas with gusto and her heart overflows to many, both family and friends. And, my, my, her decorations are elaborate with every nook and cranny filled with Christmas decorations. Parties are many and helping others extended. That spirit flows from within and touches all of us. I always think the outside of her house matches the inside of her heart, bright and shiny and filled with love. A love of Christ, a love for her family, and a love for others shines right on through.

First place, well, I guess!! How could she get any less. You've come a long way baby, and oh, how deserving!!



Ethel Conner Martin Whittenburg in 1984



Ethel Conner Martin in 1943 in California.

JOHN MENAN & ETHEL CONNER MARTIN

***** By: SHIRLEY MARTIN SPEARS *****

John Menan Martin married Ethel Voleta Conner in October 1937 and they had three children, Jerry Voleta, Jon Wayne, and Shirley Jeanne Martin. The children were born in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, but when Shirley was only a baby they moved to California to help out in the war. They moved back to Oklahoma City in 1945 and in the fall of that year, moved to Lincoln, Arkansas. A farm, south of Lincoln was purchased and they made their home there. The Martin family made several moves, and Aunt Rachel and Uncle Roy Batson and their children always moved with us - (Or us with them). When land was purchased south of Lincoln, their farms joined. While struggling to get chicken houses built and a living established, John Menan did carpenter work to supplement the farm income. In 1952 he died from complications from heart problems. At the age of 38, he left chicken house unfinished and three children for Ethel to raise. It was not easy. Not only did our mother raise us, but two more boys also. Don McLaughlin came to live with us and remained in our home until he joined the service. Wayne Fannin, a neighbor boy lived in our home while he finished school also. Times were not easy, but Mother always seemed to make room.

Mother remarried later to Elbert Ray (Swift) Luginbuel and he helped raise the crew on Bush Valley Road. The main phrase at our house was, "there may not be much money, but their will always be enough to eat", and it really seemed to be true. It was well known, that you might not have much money, but there was no excuse for not being clean or not providing food and clothing for your family. Mother made most of our clothes, and they always had that little extra tucks or lace to make them look special. We certainly thought they were special. I read this week a quote by President Bill Clinton that summed up our growing-up years, "We were never poor; we just didn't have any money, which is real different...."

Of mother and daddy's children, Jerry married Harry Ray Ruland. Their children were Viela Dawn (Vi) Ruland and Harry (Ray) Ruland III. Vi married Clete Paine who was killed in a car accident. She is now married to Allen Schooler. Vi has two children, Karen Marie and Jennifer Ann. Jerry and Harry live about two miles west of Lincoln.

Jon married Janice (Sue) Mathews and have four children. Rhonda Sue married Kenneth Freeman and have two daughters, Katherine Marie and Dana Lynn. Jon Elbert married Anastasia Leigh (Stacy) Smith of Siloam Springs, Arkansas and live there. Their twins, Paul Wayne married Teresa Leigh Smith of Elkins and have one son Randall Wayne. Carl Dwayne is in the US Navy and has a family in Arkansas, Mitchell Blake and Brittney Nichole, and one in California. He and his wife Belen have a daughter Natalie. Jon and Sue live on the home place, across the road from where we lived on Bush Valley Road.

Shirley married Bobby Jack Spears and have lived in Lincoln and now in Cincinnati, Arkansas. They have three children, Martin Jasper, Mark Wayne, and Jeannie Marie. Marty married Elizabeth Ann Appleby and live in Lincoln. They have two girls, Marsha Ann and Monica Leigh. Mark married Christine Marie Warren of Goshen, Arkansas and they have two girls, Sarah Christine and Stephanie Ann Spears. Mark's family live in Cincinnati, Arkansas. Jeannie married Phillip Bryan (Willy) Williams and they live on a farm east of Cane Hill, Arkansas.

Sometime in the process of all the kids growing up, a lot of thing changed. Swift Luginbuel died in 1966. After several years had passed, Mother remarried to Jay Dee Whittenburg. Jay Dee died in 1978 and Mother has lived by herself since. She sold part of the farm the next year after Jay Dee died and moved to town. She still lives just on the west side of town and works to this day.

Times were sometimes very hard, but Mother always kept a positive attitude and love in her heart for us children. She provided for us when it just seemed impossible. We survived. I know how hard she worked to keep it all together and we as a family certainly salute Ethel Voleta Conner Martin Luginbuel Whittenburg. Our love to you, Mother.

REMEMBER WHEN....

....Jerry Martin Ruland climbing a tree to get away from Mary Batson Bullard and Mary climbed the tree to get her down and spanked her.

REMEMBER WHEN....

....we all used an outhouse. Two seaters were best. Those were the good old days.

REMEMBER WHEN...

....we chopped corn for Aunt Irene Decker.

MY MOTHER
BY: JERRY MARTIN RULAND

My Mother, Ethel Voleta Conner Martin is not a super mom of the 70's, 80's and 90's but a kind, genteel, lady of the 40's, 50's, and 60's. Enduring harsh surroundings and the poverty of the late 40's and early 50's, better known as "the good old days" she taught us many things.

Not having a mother and being shuffled from one to another, my mother had a strong sense of togetherness for her children. We never went hungry and had clothes to wear. She worked hard and never complained. She would can huge amounts of garden vegetables. Working from early morning until well into the night on a kerosine stove and no running water and for a long time, no electricity. This was our food until the next year.

Sewing our clothes from feed sacks. For those of you who didn't live in the "good old days", you got chicken feed in printed feed sacks. Three sacks would make a dress or gathered skirt. When the feed truck came, you tried to get to the chicken house first to pick out your printed sacks. They were washed and mother would turn them into beautiful clothes.

Our father, John Menan Martin was always sick. When he passed away we worked in love to survive. Mother would tell us what had to be done. There was no need to complain. We each had a house of chickens to feed morning and night by hand, and we made it. Because our Mother was our tower of strength. And this of course was "the good old days", you didn't run for welfare or free hand outs. Our Mother taught us to work for what you have, and to be honest and love the Lord.

Kids from "the good old days" knew a kind of love from parents most kids of today know nothing about. Hard times, no money and hard work makes strong bonds that endure all times. I thank you Mother for the love, lessons, and strength when we needed it.

Shirley, Jon & Jerry Martin



MARTIN FAMILY IN LINCOLN, ARKANSAS

BY: SHIRLEY MARTIN SPEARS

In 1945, the day the war was over, John Menan Martin, his wife Ethel Conner Martin and their three children, Jerry, Jon and Shirley arrived in Lincoln, Arkansas. Along with the Martin family was my Dad's aunt and family, Roy and Rachel Batson and children. The Batson family and Martin family, together, during the 1940's had moved from their homes in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, to San Francisco, California, back to Oklahoma City and then to Lincoln. It makes kind of an interesting tale, but I will skip that for now and concentrate on Lincoln.

My dad, John Martin, was a carpenter and in Oklahoma City, he had used his trade as a finish carpenter for the Oklahoma City Casket Factory. While working there, one of the employees was a Loyd Corley ... a long time Lincoln family. My dad and mom wanted to get back to Arkansas and Mr. Corley thought Lincoln was a wonderful place to live and raise a family. The seed was planted and my dad and mom, aunt and uncle began the plans to move to Lincoln.

The Batson family had already purchased their farm before the great move, but we lived in town for a short while before buying our little farm from I.O. Walker. Both the Batsons and Martins lived south of Lincoln about 2 miles. Their son, Jack Batson and his wife, Pauline Cheatham Batson still live on their place and my brother Jon Martin with his wife Sue still live on part of our place. The places joined and we enjoyed each others company with a path in between the two houses. We were just a little on the strange side, I guess, in that we were not kin to anyone in Lincoln with the exception of each other. It seems to me very quickly we learned, "don't say a word about anyone, because somewhere down that line they may be kin or kin-to-kin". You may have been told that also, for it is still that way today.

In our family, Jerry married Harry Ruland and they have two children, Vi and Ray. Vi is married to Allen Schooler and they have two daughters, Karen (her dad, Cleve Paine, died in a wreck) married Joel Fineberg and Jennifer. Ray married Casie Hartwell and they have a daughter Sydney.

Jon married Sue Mathews and they have four children: Rhonda married Kenny Freeman and they have two daughters, Kathy and Dana; Jon married Stacy Smith and they have one daughter, Corey; Paul married Teresa Smith and they have two children, Randy and Mikayla; Carl married Angie and they had two children, Blake and Brittney and he is now married to Alisea.

Shirley married Bobby Jack Spears and they have three children: Marty married Elizabeth Appleby and have two daughters; Marsha married T.J. Robb and they have a son Sonny Ray; Monica married Josh Pagan and they have two daughters, Madison and Nicole; Mark married Christy Warren and they have two daughters Sara and Stephanie; Jeannie married Willy Williams and they have one daughter, Rachel

While we were doing all this, our dad died in 1952 and later mother married Elbert Ray Luginbuel (Swift). After helping raise the three of us, he died in 1966. A few years later mother married again to J. D. Whittenburg. J.D. died in 1978 leaving mother alone again. She sold part of the farm after J.D.'s death and lives in Sugar Hill Estates in Lincoln.

We were not one of the "OLD TIMERS" but consider that Lincoln took our family in and we become one with them. We have found that Lincoln, Arkansas is a great place to live and mother and all her children live in a 10-mile radius around Lincoln. All but one of her grandchildren and two great grandchildren lives in this Northwest Arkansas area too.

MOTHER, MY TRIBUTE
BY: SHIRLEY MARTIN SPEARS

Ethel Voleta Conner Martin Luginbuel Whittenburg, what a name and what a woman. Her Conner family calls her Leta, but here in Arkansas, they all call her Ethel.

When I think of all the things she has done in her life, I think of the scriptures in Proverbs that relate the attributes of a woman. The many things they point out, she is. In Proverbs 31 vs 10-31 is goes like this....

If you can find a truly good wife, she is worth more than precious gems! Her husband can trust her, and she will richly satisfy his needs. She will not hinder him, but help him all her life. She will (Shirley paraphrase)

- 1) Cloth her family by means available
- 2) Buys well and knows a bargain
- 3) Gets up early and runs a smooth household
- 4) Uses her business skills
- 5) Knows how to tend for her families food
- 6) Energetic, hard worker, saves money
- 7) Helps the poor and needy
- 8) Provides warm clothes for family
- 9) Provides for family food for winter months
- 10) Decorates her house well and has well made clothes
- 11) Know fine value
- 12) Well known and respected family
- 13) Can make business dealings well

She is a woman of strength and dignity, and has no fear of old age. When she speaks, her words are wise, and kindness is the rule for everything she says. She watches carefully all that goes on through out her household, and is never lazy. Her children stand and bless her; so does her husband. He praises her with these words: There are many fine women in the world, but you are the best of them all! Charm can be deceptive and beauty doesn't last, but a woman who fears and reverences God shall be greatly praised. Praise her for all the many fine things she does. These good deeds of hers shall bring honor and recognition to her.

She has always been the wife and mother that sets an example to those around her. Full of love and wisdom and caring that far surpasses most women. She is an example to follow.

Life has not come along the easy path, but this is where that outstanding character shines through. Born in 1919 to Winfield Poyner and Ethel Mae Mollie Towler Conner the second child and only daughter. Shortly after her birth, her mother died. This left two small children for Grandpa to raise, James Barclay at two years and she just about ~~500~~ months old. Well he could not do this and work too, so Grandpa William Henry and Grandma Mary Francis Conner took over the job until Mother and Uncle Barclay were bigger. As they grew up they went back to live with Grandpa in Henryetta, Oklahoma. She and Uncle Barclay both graduated from Henryetta High School in 1937. Their lives went on from there.

Mother married our dad, John Menan Martin and moved to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. He worked there and she kept their home and started their family. Three children were born in Oklahoma City, Jerry Voleta in 1939, Jon Wayne in 1940 and Shirley Jeanne in 1942. The war came along about now and since they would not accept Daddy into the military with his heart condition, he decided to move to San Fransisco, California to work in the ship yards so he would be a part of the war.

San Fransisco was not the place Mother wanted to be, but for a few years they called it home. With the war over, they moved back to Oklahoma City and had a short stop over in Henryetta and then on to Lincoln, Arkansas in 1946. This has been our home since that time.

Mother has raised three children, and out lived three husbands, John Menan Martin, Elbert Ray (Swift) Luginbuel, and Jay Dee Whittenburg. She also dated B. Jack Basden for a number of years before he passed away in 1992. These four men in her life had nothing but good things to say about her. Her determination and dedication to the life around her has indeed seemed like those Proverb verses were written about her. He she is 75 years young, still working a job and just got back from a cruse of the Holy Lands.

Mother and I are a little alike and sometimes it is easy to just see the surface of things without going a little deeper to fine the "real part" of people. This helps me to know and understand her better. Mother has lived that life that gives a gift to her children, grand children and great grand children of love, peace, kindness, patience, consideration to others and always that willingness to share what is hers with others. My tribute goes out to her with love in my heart. I'm sure we will all lift her up and call her blessed. Thanks, Mother for a wonderful gift of life.



Shirley, & Jon Martin - 1942

Jon, Jerry, Ethel with Shirley Martin