



## Catherine Welch Hull

June 27, 1916 - May 5, 2017

Catherine Welch Hull of Tallahassee died peacefully May 5, 2017. Hull, who was born in Ocala and considered St. Petersburg her home, would have celebrated her 101st birthday in June.

With a passionate interest in St. Petersburg, she devoted a great deal of time as a curator of the Haas Museum, best known for its red cabooses, and as a guide for the St. Petersburg Historical Society. She fondly recalled her life in the 1920s and 1930s spending time along the Gulf Coast beaches her family owned and traveling the Welch Causeway built by her father, a bridge that connected the mainland to Madeira Beach. She attended Florida State College for Women (now Florida State University) in Tallahassee and served in the Aircraft Warning Service as an airplane spotter during WWII.

She married her husband, Robert, in Kansas City, Missouri days before his US Army Air Force unit shipped out to New Caledonia to join in the invasion of Japan. After his return to the States she joined him at Mountain Home Army Base near Boise, Idaho, where their first son, David, was born. After Robert was discharged, they moved back to Missouri, then to Illinois, and finally back to her beloved Florida.

Until moving to Tallahassee in her 80s in order to be closer to family, Hull traveled out West several times to visit her other son, Robert, and his family and explore California and New Mexico. Her adventures included meeting Koko, the gorilla that communicates through sign language, panning for gold, sitting with favorite author Tony Hillerman at lunch, and climbing ladders into

archaeological ruins at Mesa Verde and other Southwestern sites. She collected antiques and was an avid reader.

She will be dearly missed by those who knew her.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Florida pioneer, inventor, and lumber magnate David Sewall Welch and her mother Lelia Light Welch, both of Iowa; and by her husband, Robert L. Hull, a WWII veteran. Catherine Hull is survived by two sons, David Hull (Jane) of Tallahassee and Robert Hull (Linda) of Los Alamos, NM; four grandchildren, Gabriel Hull of Dayton, NV, Andrea Michael (Mark) of Orlando, Heather Hallberg (Christian) of Fort Collins, CO, and Hayley Hull of Greeley, CO; and two great-grandchildren, Jordan and Ashlyn Michael of Orlando.

She will be buried at Royal Palm Cemetery South, St. Petersburg, Florida, next to her husband who preceded her in death in 1973, and her parents. At her request there will be no funeral and only a private graveside service. In lieu of flowers donations can be made in her name to the Tallahassee Christian College and Training Center, 1717 Hermitage Boulevard, Suite 102, Tallahassee, Florida 32308, Phone 850-513-1000.

Kelly Barber is assisting the Hull family with their final arrangements.