



Iola Thompson "Tommie" Norton

August 13, 1920 - August 29, 2011

Iola Thompson Norton, 90, passed away peacefully on Monday, August 29, 2011, in Tallahassee, Florida.

A memorial service will be held at Westminster Oaks retirement home, in the Francis Chapel, Lower Level of the Oak South Building, 4449 Meandering Way, Tallahassee, Florida 32308, on Saturday, October 15th, at 11:00 A.M., EDT. In lieu of flowers, gifts in memory of Mrs. Norton may be made to Big Bend Hospice, 1723 Mahan Center Blvd., Tallahassee, FL 32308.

Tommie Norton was born in Ravenna, Ohio on August 13, 1920, the daughter of Iola Mary Leet and James Horce Leet. She was also preceded in death by her brother, James Horce Leet, Jr. She was raised on a farm in rural Ohio as was her husband to be. She had met her future husband, who was the son of family friends, while still a young girl. The two reconnected and after a brief courtship she married her husband Hugh Delbert Norton in 1943, shortly before he was shipped overseas in World War II. While her husband was away at war, she had her first son in 1944. She was living on the family farm and hopefully awaiting the return of her husband from war.

While he was away, she attended Kent State University and Boecher Business College. When he returned from the war, he finished college and attended and completed dental school at Case Western Reserve in Cleveland, Ohio. After graduating dental school and while still in the reserves, the couple moved to Eglin Air Force Base in Fort Walton Beach, Florida. After he completed his military service, he established a private dental practice in

the Florida Panhandle. He was 32, she was 31, it was 1951, and they had two sons and a daughter. While her husband worked long hours at his new dental practice, she, like so many of her time, kept the household running smoothly. She immersed herself in the ways of the Florida Panhandle and the couple made many new friends who, like themselves, were post war and starting their businesses and professions. Largely due to her efforts, the Norton home was “always open” and visitors routinely found themselves as guests at the dinner table. Tommie always made certain that there was an extra pot of gumbo and a secret stash of her famous Tollhouse cookies. The couple enjoyed the company of many close friends with weekly beach parties and trips to their then isolated beach property, now the site of Seaside. Tommie always made certain that there was a fire burning in the Norton home during the winters and graciously hosted many an oyster roast on the couples’ back patio. She was always eager to experience new places and new cultures and was a great traveling companion to her husband and her family as they experienced trips all over the world.

Later in life, she took great pleasure in seeing her children grow and prosper and found particular pleasure in the visits of her grandchildren. She was a constant companion to her ailing husband and source of great comfort to him as his health failed, and he passed away approximately a year before her. She is survived by her oldest son Robert, his wife Susan, and their son Rush; her daughter Carol, her husband Ray Regan and her two daughters, Kelly and her husband Jim Smith and their twins Warner and Parker; and Piper and her husband Ryan Corley and their daughters Bailey and Emma; and her youngest son William, his wife, Denise and their children Rachel, Sarah, and Tucker. She was a good and loyal mom and a friend who could always be counted on to lend a sympathetic ear. Truly, she was the glue that held her family together.

Previous Events

Service

OCT **15**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Francis Chapel at Westminster Oaks
4449 Meandering Way
Tallahassee, FL 32308