

OBITUARY

Stella Irene Lewis Reynolds was born July 7, 1914 to Willie Franklin and Ada Dixon Lewis on Sandlick Creek at Whitesburg, Kentucky.

Irene attended elementary and high school at the Junior Order Orphanage in Tiffin, Ohio. She was placed there, along with her brothers and sisters, after the death of her father during a typhoid epidemic in 1923. During her time at the orphanage, she felt the responsibility for the well-being of her four younger brothers and sisters. She was graduated from the Junior Order High School and attended Berea, Lees and Georgetown Colleges. Irene was a kindergarten teacher under the W.P.A. program and taught at the Hemphill, Sergent and Marlowe Grade Schools in Letcher County. She also taught in Rockcastle County.

In 1938, Irene married Joe Coleman Reynolds. This was a romantic and business partnership that lasted for fifty-six years. Joe often recalled when he first saw her walking down the streets of Whitesburg in a pair of "twisty highheels" and how he was never the same. They co-founded Reynolds Furniture Company in 1945 in Neon and opened a store in Whitesburg in 1957. Their store closed in 2005.

While in high school, Irene made a profession of faith and was baptized in the non-denominational church at the orphanage in Tiffin. She was later affiliated with the Graham Memorial Presbyterian and First Baptist Churches in Whitesburg. She served as a Sunday school teacher and a member of the Women's Missionary Union. She was a member of the Pine Mountain Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Sandlick Bible Club and the Sandlick Homemakers. Irene was an active member of the Republican Party.

In 1988, Mrs. Reynolds was diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease. She participated in a research program at Jewish Hospital in Cincinnati, Ohio. She bore this illness with the same dignity and grace that characterized her entire life.

Irene is survived by two sons, James Lewis Reynolds (Wanda) of Winter Park, FL, Joe Coleman Reynolds, Jr. of Ermine, KY, one daughter, Mahala Reynolds Frazier (Sonny) of Whitesburg, KY, eight grandchildren and nine-great grandchildren. Also surviving are one brother, Quentin H. Lewis, Bristol, VA, and two sisters, Evaleen Towery of Crockett TX and Willa Mullins of Guilford, IN. Preceding her in death were her husband Joe and a brother Edwin R. Lewis of Jackson, MI



Stella Irene Lewis Reynolds
1914 - 2006