



Frances "Punkin" Mitchell Painter

August 19, 1925 - June 27, 2015

Frances "Punkin" Louise Mitchell Painter, age 89 passed away Saturday, June 27 at the Tullahoma Life Care Center. Memorial services will be held Sunday, July 5 at 2 PM at the First United Methodist Church in Tullahoma. Visitation with the family will be from 1 PM until service time.

Mrs. Painter was born August 19, 1925 to Lillard and Frances Adams Mitchell at the home of her paternal grandparents in Tullahoma. She attended school in Tullahoma and graduated from Tullahoma High School as a proud member of the Class of 1943. It was during these school years that she was a pumpkin in a class play. That led to the nickname, "Punkin" which friends and family continued to call her.

Frances attended the University of Tennessee and graduated in 1948. Her first full time teaching job was in Perryville, Missouri. After two years she returned to Tennessee and taught in the Crossville City Schools. While temporarily leaving the teaching field and working for a family business venture in Knoxville, she decided to serve her country during the Korean Conflict. She enlisted in the Woman's Medical Specialist Corps of the Army and served at Ft. Sam Houston, Texas as a commissioned officer.

At the completion of her assignment in the army, she returned to Tullahoma and taught third and fourth grade at Normandy, Tennessee. The following year

she accepted a job with the Tullahoma school system as a sixth grade teacher at Bel Aire Elementary School. During her teaching career, she had and continues to have a great influence on “my children” as she called them. Many of her former students continued to write, call or visit her, years after leaving her class. Punkin retired from teaching while at West Middle School.

Frances was a faithful member of the First United Methodist Church of Tullahoma. She enjoyed her Sunday school Class and her circle group as well as the senior citizens activities. She was also a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

In addition to her parents, Frances was preceded in death by her husband, Auburn M. Painter and her sister, Barbara Porter. She is survived by sons, J. D. Painter and his wife, Kathryn of McEwen, TN and Marvin Painter and his wife, Teresa of Greenville, SC; six grandchildren; three step-granddaughters and four great grandchildren. She is also survived by many cousins who have been dear to her and share many memories.

The family would like to thank her caregivers, Judy Beaulieu, Loretta Starks and Margie Riggins and also many loyal friends who helped care for her.

In lieu of flowers, the family has requested memorial donations be made to the First United Methodist Church, 208 W. Lauderdale Street, Tullahoma, TN or St Judes Children’s Hospital.

Online condolences may be made at www.davesculbertsonfuneralhome.com. Daves-Culbertson Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 5. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

First United Methodist Church
Tullahoma, TN

Memorial Service

JUL 5. 2:00 PM (CT)

First United Methodist Church
Tullahoma, TN

Tribute Wall



“ *Frances "Punkin" Mitchell Painter*

January 25, 2023 at 12:28 AM



“ *Ms. Mitchell was my 6th Grade Teacher in 1965 & she was my favorite teacher throughout my educational journey. She was the reason I became a teacher myself, at the Elementary Level & also in Special Education. You see I was a very shy, "follower" of a little girl at the time, & Ms. M. made me feel special & she challenged me & brought me out of my "shell." The two of us have written letters to one another at Christmas time every year for the past 39 years. And this past Christmas was the first time I did not receive one from "my Ms. Mitchell." It was heart breaking. I have kept many of her letters, & especially the last several years, as I knew it may be the last one I'd receive. I loved hearing about all her classroom experiences through the years & then stories about her kids & grandkids. To all of her family, you had a wonderful Mom, Grandma, Sister, Aunt, Great-Grandma, & Friend. She was much loved by all of her students & I know ,by her family & friends. She attended the same Methodist Church as my sister & her husband, Dianne & Sam Sawyer, who are both deceased. I will miss her & our annual correspondence each Christmas! Hugs to all the family, Love, Laura (Carlson) Doheny.*

Laura (Carlson) Doheny - July 12, 2015 at 05:17 PM

LD

Adding to my previous post, I was in Ms. Mitchell's same 6th Grade Class as Rose (Gallagher) Shepherd, who sent a post right ahead of me. Rose & I loved Ms. Mitchell & everything about her class & the way she taught! We had so much fun & learned many valuable lessons! Rose & I visited Ms. M. at her house after we had graduated from 6th Grade. We loved her doll collection. My first memory of Ms. Mitchell was when she walked into the classroom to introduce herself to the class that first day of school. She said, "Many students know that I'm a strict teacher & some have even said I have horns on my head, but (and she leaned over so we could see the top of her head), see, I don't." We laughed & I knew right then & there, she was the teacher for me (& Rose too)..... Laura (Carlson) Doheny

Laura (Carlson) Doheny - July 13, 2015 at 10:18 AM

RS

“ Referring to my previous post: I'm sorry I didn't include the year I was in "Miss Mitchell's" class in Tullahoma! Must've been about 1965-66. My name then was Rose Gallagher (now Shepherd.)

Rose Shepherd - July 06, 2015 at 06:25 PM

RS

“ I was one of Mrs. Painter's 6th grade students at Bel Aire Elementary in Tullahoma! I kept in touch for several years but then lost track of her. She was a wonderful teacher who made an eternal imprint on my life. I'm so grateful for her life and influence.

*Rose Shepherd
Crown Point, IN*

Rose Shepherd - July 06, 2015 at 06:22 PM

JW

“ Ms. Mitchell was a blessing to all who knew her, but especially her students. All her students had one thing in common, we all thought we were special to her. What a gift!
She was also a true Christian lady with a caring heart for all.
Jesus is waiting with open arms.
Jeanne Wright

Jeanne Wright - July 04, 2015 at 09:35 AM



“ Secret Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Frances "Punkin" Mitchell Painter.



July 03, 2015 at 12:34 PM

MC

“ I never had the privilege of meeting Punkin and heard nothing but wonderful things about her for many years from my cousins, Marvin and Terry Painter. My heartfelt thoughts and prayers are with the entire family. Madelyn Carroll

Madelyn Carroll - July 02, 2015 at 12:42 PM

DP

“ You were a great addition to our family and was always there for my Uncle Auburn. I regret not getting to know you better. It appears you had an active and great life. Thank you for your service to our country. May GOD bless you and may you rest in the house of the LORD forever.



Dennis W. Painter - July 01, 2015 at 06:30 PM



“ I am deeply saddened to her of Ms. Mitchell's passing. I wrote about the impact she had on my life in an essay in 2000: Most of my teachers have faded into a nameless, faceless blur. However, there was one savior in the midst of my 12-year confinement. Ms. Mitchell came to Bel-Aire Elementary (Tullahoma, Tennessee) full of life and vigor and wit, and she really cared about what she was doing. More than that, she really cared about us. She encouraged our natural curiosity, punished us justly for our juvenile pranks, rooted for us on the ball field, and treated us with respect. Perhaps this was the greatest thing—she saw something in me, perhaps in each of us, that was precious to her, and she endeavored to draw that out so that we could see it, so that others could see it as well. Rest in peace, Punkin.

Bruce Mulkey - July 01, 2015 at 12:02 PM

PB

“ Mrs. Painter was a valued member of the Coffee County Retired Teachers Association. Speaking on behalf of our association, we will miss her dearly, but we can rejoice to know that she is now with her heavenly family.

*Pat Barton, President
Coffee County Retired Teachers Association*

Pat Barton - July 01, 2015 at 11:15 AM

FL

“ I always remember a teacher with the ability love and appreciate all of her students. Her long and outstanding career allowed her to witness history and changes in Education! God bless her because she loved me!

Fredia Flack Lusk

Fredia lusk - June 30, 2015 at 11:06 PM

BS

“ *I will always remember her as one of my favorite teachers. What a wonderful lady, may she rest in peace.*

Barry Shill - June 30, 2015 at 09:48 PM

BG

“ *So sorry to hear of your loss.. I had Ms Mitchell at BelAire and she was a wonderful teacher..*

Bonnie Fairris Graham - June 30, 2015 at 09:40 AM



“ *Kathy Campbell lit a candle in memory of Frances "Punkin" Mitchell Painter*



Kathy Campbell - June 29, 2015 at 08:30 PM



“ *She was a strong woman and teacher. She had a very big influence on me and still does. I visited her with my grandchildren in July of 2014 and had planned to visit again this year. I'm very glad we got to see her one more time. I got to wear the Bel Aire Beetle cap again! I will treasure memories of her always.*

Kathy Campbell - June 29, 2015 at 08:29 PM

SH

“ To family and friends: I am so very sorry to hear of your loss. Frances was a dear friend of my Mother, Mary Marconi, who is now deceased. That is how I got to know and love Frances. She was a wonderful lady. I have not seen her for many years, but I have fond memories of her. My thoughts and prayers are with you. Love, Susan Marconi Hagans



SUSAN MARCONI HAGANS - June 29, 2015 at 02:30 PM

SH

“ My first teacher in Tullahoma when we arrived here in the mid 60's; my best teacher all the way thru graduate school. She ran a tight classroom that none of us (22 girls and 11 boys) have forgotten and all of us honor, because it made us better. She taught us how to strive ... and jog in the cold! Beetle Patrol forever!

Sam T. Harper - June 29, 2015 at 01:08 PM

SS

“ 1 file added to the album Family



Susan Adams Seals - June 29, 2015 at 12:40 PM

SS

“ 1 file added to the album *New Album Name*



Susan Adams Seals - June 29, 2015 at 12:37 PM

SB

“ *What a wonderful person and teacher! She was my 6th grade science teacher around 1974 - 1975. I had a turquoise and silver ring that my great uncle had made and she LOVED that ring. Many days I would come into class and she would ask me if she could wear it. I also had really long hair (for a guy) in those days and each day she would come up to me, move the hair out of my face and tell me that it was easier to teach a face rather than a bunch of hair.*

She was truly a blessing to me during that time and she was a wonderful teacher. I've thought of her often and now will remember her forever.

*Many blessings
Steve Baker*

Steve Baker - June 29, 2015 at 10:13 AM

JF

“ So saddened to hear this. " Miss Mitchell " was by far my most favorite teacher of all time. She taught me so much about respect and about how to trust in myself in the classroom. More importantly, she loved teaching and loved " her children " , as she called us. She always remembered each of us. Thank you so much for being who you were to me. I will always cherish my time as your student and child. God Bless - Julie Hutson Foreman

Julie Hutson Foreman - June 28, 2015 at 11:05 AM

MB

I am very appreciative of the comments I have read from former students of my cousin, Frances Louise Mitchell Painter. I know how much she loved teaching and loved her students. She would be so pleased and honored to know how you, her former "children," felt about her.

Mary Katherine Adams Burchfield - July 01, 2015 at 07:51 PM