



Joan Clopton

April 18, 2013

Joan Audrey Sayre Clopton, who lived in the 700 block of Maple Street in Jefferson for more than 60 years, died of heart failure on April 18, 2013, at the home of her youngest daughter in Galveston, Texas. She was 88 years old. A memorial service honoring her life will be held 2:00 pm Friday, June 27, 2014 at First Presbyterian Church in Jefferson.

Born on Dec. 30, 1924, in Sioux City, Joan was the first of eight children of James Edward Sayre and Leonilla Wessling Sayre. She was baptized at St. Patrick's on Cedar west of Churdan. She grew up on a farm near the Raccoon River on the road between Churdan and Scranton, and in the town of Churdan, graduating from Churdan High School in 1942.

She married James "Toby" Clopton at the Baptist Church parsonage in Jefferson in 1943. While Toby served in the U.S. Navy in the South Pacific in World War II, their first son, James Leroy "Jim" Clopton, was born in Jefferson in 1944.

Joan and Toby also were the parents of Jeffrey B., born in 1947; Frances Margaret, born in 1951; Ellen Elizabeth, in 1953; and Melinda Ann, in 1964. Toby, who owned Elite Cleaners in Jefferson, died in 1971.

A lifelong and avid reader, Joan loved fiction, especially English mysteries. She borrowed and read 1000s of books from the local public library. She worked crossword puzzles every day. A unique personality, dignified, yet spunky, Joan was a sparkling conversationalist, known for making apt and humorous observations, and she aged gracefully, interacting with family and friends until shortly before her death. Joan sang bass with the local Sweet Adelines for many years. As a silent member of the Stardusters jazz combo, she accompanied the group to gigs throughout the state with her longtime friend Marie Saunders Heath, who played keyboard. She loved to dance, and she was a loyal fan of the Chicago Cubs and a staunch Democrat.

Joan's family loved her "scratch" cooking, and devoured everything she made, especially her home-baked cinnamon rolls and special birthday dinners featuring each child's favorite

dishes.

Joan worked at the Jefferson Public Library for 10 years, a job she truly loved because of her passion for reading and books. After Toby's death, she worked for 20 years as office manager at the Bee & Herald newspapers, retiring in 1992. She was a member of the Jefferson Baptist Church for many years, and in later life, a member of the Jefferson Presbyterian Church.

Joan Audrey Sayre Clopton was preceded in death by her parents; by her husband James Leroy "Toby" Clopton; by her daughter Ellen Elizabeth, who died in 1995; and by her elder son Jim, who died in 2008. And also by her siblings Jacqueline Sayre Ganoë, James A. "Ike" Sayre and Barbara Sayre Rosales.

She is survived by her son Jeffrey B. Clopton of Cedar Rapids, and by her daughters Frances Clopton of Phoenix, Ariz., and Melinda Clopton Gooding and her husband Denis of Galveston.

Other survivors include her brothers Keith Sayre and his wife June and Joseph Sayre and his wife Carmen, and by her sisters Wanda Sayre Hudson and her husband Chuck and Linda Sayre Brooks, all of California; her daughter-in-law Colleen O'Brien Clopton of Jefferson; five grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; and one great-great grandson.