



Bess Williams Swaynham

August 25, 1938 - April 13, 2023

Bess Williams Swaynham
Pickens, South Carolina

Bess Williams Swaynham, 84, passed away on Thursday, April 13, 2023 at her home. She was the wife of the late Henry Patten (Pat) Swaynham. She was a Christian and a member of Pickens Presbyterian Church.

Born in Jackson County, North Carolina, she was the daughter of the late Lewis H. and Nellie W. Williams. She was a wonderful wife and mother who lived her life as she wanted and fought fiercely for what she thought was right. She taught at the Pickens County Vocational School and worked at many things in her life. She was instrumental in the establishment of the Rape Crisis Council of Pickens County and the Victim's Advocacy Program of Pickens County.

She is survived by two children, Tom Swaynham (Cathy) of Pickens and Mary Monroe (Charles) of Sunset; two beloved grandchildren, Thomas Wade Monroe and Ada Ellen Monroe of Sunset; a sister Mary Williams Hinkle of Salem; and several nieces and nephews. In addition to her husband and parents, she was predeceased by another beloved grandchild, Maggie Patten Cribbs, and a brother, Truman Joe Williams.

A memorial service will be held at Pickens Presbyterian Church at 2 PM on Wednesday, April 19, 2023. A private burial will take place at a later date. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Pickens Presbyterian Church.

Mountain View Funeral Home – Pickens Chapel is serving the Swaynham family.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

APR **19**. 2:00 PM (ET)

Pickens Presbyterian Church
311 West Main Street
Pickens, SC

Tribute Wall

RH

“ Bess Swaygham was my friend, my mentor and my teacher. Everything she suggested that ai do to further I did. I had left home at 15. She gave me money, she fed me and even gave me her little MG car to try for my liscense. I first met her at a summer program the Pickens Vocational school held. She inspired me to take Cosmetology. I have been practicing that career for close to 40 years. I will never forget she slipped me in as a model for other students taking state board exams. She drove us all to Columbia out of her own expense. She was not just a teacher she cared. During my beauty school course because I was underage I was taken to liven at a foster home in Spartanburg. After the 3 Rd day there I hear a familiar voice arguing and it was Bess Swaygham fighting for me. " I will never forget her telling them she belongs with me, you are going to mess up her career. She wanted them to prove how I could be better off there. The next day I was back in Pickens back in Cosmetology class. I love her. She loved me. She went the extra mile. I had no idea she was gone. I found her death by accident. I am heartbroken for you Tom and Mary as the grandchildren. I was a life that was changed because of her caring and I want you to know I would have been there had I only knew. The last time I saw her she was planting flowers at Laura Hill and I told her that the one thing she forgot to tell me was how it sucked to do hair after all these years and she politely looked at me and said why do you think I'm here digging in the dirt. She didn't hold back she was funny she was tough she was lital to her family and at times a little dingy but that was her. There will only be one Bess Swaygham. I am who I am because she cared.

Rena' Harris - June 13, 2023 at 04:58 PM

LA

“ I have so many fun memories of Bess, like spending the night with Mary and driving Bess crazy. She was always so funny and kind to me though. I've thought about her often over the years. She was truly one of a kind and will be greatly missed.

Lisa Grant Alexander - April 19, 2023 at 12:13 PM



“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Bess Williams Swaynham.



April 19, 2023 at 10:46 AM

CG

“ Dearest ones, I'll try to make this as short as I can , however, there is so much good to say about this lady. I met ur parents when I was maybe 8 or so. At that time , I was taken aback at how beautiful Bessie was. And the relationship between the two of them ,or seemingly to me was one that was good enuf for me even at the young age I was to notice that it was so sweet and made them both smile. Your dad to me was a big man and he was always funny when in her shop and she was always laughing w him. Every little kid was his sweetheart and I loved being around them both . She was great at her job and I just cldnt wait toget to.that little mobile home salon, hoping to hear them both were there. Bessie was always laughing and working to please even the pickiest people. Everybody trusted her to make them beautiful. But she was beautiful I thought without any effort. Then years past, I grew up and cld see her all over town, in that old truck, w shovels hoes , buckets , plants , trees etc working on a sign or billboard of just a piece if dirt, doing what she enjoyed . Making PICKENS look better , inviting, etc. My guess is she offered to do these projects not for money , but just cuz she wanted to do. She carried a smile everytime I saw her. Sometimes I wld pull over to chat w her for a few and so glad she took the time to chat w me. Bessie was a lady always but rough at the same time. Man..I wish I cld have handled life as she did. One of a kind she was! You all are blessed having had her as a mother. If I cld have picked mine, I wld have wanted her or one just like Bessie ! Let the many many memories u have of her comfort you. And know that if you didn't deserve them , you wldnt have them . How precious!

Cathy hendricks green - April 19, 2023 at 02:25 AM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Bess Williams Swaynham.*



April 19, 2023 at 12:15 AM



“ *Bess was the most caring teacher I ever had. She made sure we were all doing well during the worst time of her life. She made class interesting and fun. Praying for the family* ♡♡

Anita - April 18, 2023 at 12:24 AM



“ *Tom and Mary, so sorry to hear of Bess passing She was a loving lady and gave her heart to all that she met. As my GodMother she was a second Mom to me and I loved her as such. Our families had a lot of great times together along with a lot of other friends and families in Pickens. We all felt like a large family and looked out for one another. Bess will be missed and she is uniting with my Mom and again guarding over us as Angels do. Love y'all and prayers are with you during this time. Midge*



Midge - April 17, 2023 at 10:53 PM

JT

“ *Jamie Tilson lit a candle in memory of Bess Williams Swaynham*



Jamie Tilson - April 16, 2023 at 02:42 PM

SH

“ *Tom and Mary - So very sorry to hear this. Fond memories of childhood at your home and with the Hinkles. Sending prayers.*
Stacey Haynes

stacey haynes - April 16, 2023 at 12:32 PM

TM

“ *To the family I am so sorry for your loss. Bess was a absolutely wonderful person. She loved wholeheartedly. She helped everyone she came in contact with. Not only was she a absolutely wonderful teacher, but also like a second mom to me. I was having a hard time in my life and she helped me through it. She was also like a therapist to me, she talked me down quite a few times. I could always talk to her about anything. She love us girls and genuinely cared for us and our well-being. This world lost a wonderful person a one of a kind. I'm sending prayers and love to the family,*
Tosha Pearson

Tosh Moody - April 15, 2023 at 01:35 PM

BD

Thinking of you Mary.
Barbara Daniel

Barbara Daniel - April 22, 2023 at 07:58 AM

TM

“ *Tosh Moody lit a candle in memory of Bess Williams Swaynham*



Tosh Moody - April 15, 2023 at 01:20 PM

LW

“ *Truly an independent lady. May GOD bless this family. Louis R. Williams*

louis williams - April 15, 2023 at 12:17 PM

RS

“ *Richard Stewart lit a candle in memory of Bess Williams Swaynham*



Richard Stewart - April 15, 2023 at 02:18 AM

LG

“ *Bess was my cosmetology teacher when I was in high school. She was alot of fun. She treated us like her own. She was beautiful inside and out. Sorry to hear of her passing.*

Linda Garren - April 14, 2023 at 09:18 PM

SP

“ *Tom and Mary,
Sorry for your loss! You know I love you both, my friends! May fond memories fill your thoughts.*

Sandy McJunkin Preusz - April 14, 2023 at 06:07 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Bess Williams Swaynham.*



April 14, 2023 at 02:03 PM



“ *Sorry for the loss of Bess! May peace and prayers surround your family during this most difficult time!*



Louis Kayren Hinkle - April 14, 2023 at 01:03 PM



Such a really great independent lady. To know her was to love her. Sympathy and prayers for her family and friends.

Doug & Rosemary Thomas - April 14, 2023 at 04:24 PM



A special lady! So sorry for your loss. She was a trooper working for others and great causes!

Carolyn Dalton - April 14, 2023 at 08:19 PM



“ *Mary, Tom and family, I am so sorry! My prayers are with you all during this time. I am so thankful for Bess as she was a great teacher, friend and Mother figure through out my life. Many of laughs and some tears shed together but she kept me going and our whole class!*

Much love to you all, Diane Green

Diane Green - April 14, 2023 at 11:50 AM

MC

Tom I am so sorry to hear about your mother you are in my thoughts and prayers

Michael Chapman - April 15, 2023 at 10:13 PM

TH

Mary, So sorry for your loss Bess was such a fine lady. You and your family are in our thoughts and prayers.

Tommy Hill

Tommy Hill - April 18, 2023 at 07:59 PM

SH

Tom, Mary, and Extended Family,

It's hard for me to express my feelings about Ms. Swaynham. When my sister let me know she had passed. I thought how could that be...she was young. Not realizing how much time had passed since I had seen her. I'll never forget the lessons she taught me whether in was in her cosmetology class or in life. For lack of a better adjective - I never met such a "spicy" lady. She was someone to admire and pattern yourself after. Her energy and smile was addictive when you were around her. I'll never forget the memories made with her and I'm sure everyone can attest to the empty place she will leave in everyones' heart. Love you, Ms. Swaynham!

*Sandra (Sam) "Riggins" Howard
Class of '74*

Sam Howard - April 19, 2023 at 10:24 AM

JL

*Dear Mary, Little Mary, Tom and Family,
I am so sorry for your loss. There are many things that could be said about Bess and you all know better than anyone that she was truly one of a kind. She was so beautiful, a caring person who loved and was loved by many. I know her health took her way too soon and you must feel you have lost her twice. But I hope you will always remember her as she was, her love for you and Pat, her contributions to society, her heart for her students and for victims advocacy--just part of what made Bess so special. I am sorry I will not be able to attend her memorial service but please know you are in my thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.*

*With love and big hugs,
Judy*

Judy Looper-Wood - April 19, 2023 at 11:48 AM