



## Dr. Dr. Mary Lemon Brooks

October 17, 1925 - December 31, 2015

Dr. Mary L. Brooks, age 90, of Durham, NC, passed away peacefully at Duke University Medical Center on Thursday, December 31, 2015, surrounded by her daughter, Maria Lynette Brooks-Cornwall and her grandchildren, Deidra J. McMillan, Christopher B. McMillan, Terrance T. Cornwall, Jr., Tyiah S. Cornwall and great grandson Jailyn O. Moore.

Born October 17, 1925 to Primus and Malisha Lemon in Gainsville, Alabama. Mary started her religious training early in life. Mary attended Sunday worship, Sunday school, mid week prayer service and vacation bible school.

Mary's love of education began at a very early age, as her parents were both educators at Freedom Elementary School in Gainsville, Alabama. Her family moved to Mobile, Alabama, where she finished Dunbar High School as valedictorian of her class. As Mary started her professional endeavors, she went on to earn four college and university degrees including, a B.S. At Spellman College, M.S. at Indiana University, J.D. Professional Diploma at Columbia University and PhD at Duke University.

During Mary's educational journey, she met the love of her life, Henry Lindsay Brooks. Mary and Henry eventually married and continued their studies together. In 1968, Mary and Lindsay moved to Durham to study at Duke University. She studied in Psychological services and exceptional child

education. Mary was an outstanding educator for many years in various school systems, but most notably for her contributions and accomplishments through the Durham Public School System as Assistant Superintendent and Director of Special Education.

In 1966, Mary and Henry welcomed their only child, Maria Lynette Brooks, who they loved and transferred their love for education to. Mary and Henry were married for 33 years. Although Henry passed away, Mary accepted both of their degrees from Duke University.

Mary accomplished one of her most loved mission in life by enhancing the lives of others through dedication and outstanding services to the community and local churches, especially Covenant Presbyterian Church. Mary believed that one of God's finest creation was the "Rose".

Left behind to cherish Dr. Brooks special memories are her daughter, Maria Lynette Brooks-Cornwall (Donnie0 of Durham, NC; grandchildren, Deidra J. McMillan, Christopher B. McMillan, Terrance T. Cornwall, Jr. And Tiyah S. Cornwall, all of Durham, NC; great grandchildren, Jailyn O. Moore and Christopher McMillan Jr.. Also, surviving is one sister, Ethel Wright of Philadelphia and a host of nieces and nephews.

Funeral services will take place on Thursday, January 7, 2016 at 1 p.m. with visitation one hour prior to the service. All services will be held at Covenant Presbyterian Church, 2620 Weaver Street, Durham, NC. Officiating will be the Reverend Jimmy Hawkins, with committal services following at Beechwood Cemetery.

# Cemetery Details

## Beechwood Cemetery

3300 Fayetteville St  
Durham, NC 27707  
(919) 560-4154

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JAN 7. 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM (ET)

Covenant Presbyterian Church  
2620 E Weaver St  
Durham, NC 27707  
preache2@yahoo.com  
<http://cpcdurhamnc.com>


## Service

JAN 7. 1:00 PM (ET)

Covenant Presbyterian Church  
2620 E Weaver St  
Durham, NC 27707  
preache2@yahoo.com  
<http://cpcdurhamnc.com>

# Tribute Wall


**TC** “ *Tyiah C sent a virtual gift in memory of Dr. Dr. Mary Lemon Brooks*



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**Tyiah C** - February 17 at 10:09 PM

**TC** “ *We miss you so much grandma!* 💖



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**Tyiah C** - July 11, 2025 at 08:07 AM

 “ *Dr. Dr. Mary Lemon Brooks*

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October 05, 2023 at 11:31 AM

**MB** “ *Maria Lynette Brooks lit a candle in memory of Dr. Dr. Mary Lemon Brooks*



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**Maria Lynette Brooks** - October 16, 2018 at 01:12 PM

GB

“ I am very sorry to hear of the passing of Aunt Mary. She will be missed truly by her only surviving sister, Ethel Wright. I brag about Aunt Mary all the time! Her love for education has certainly been passed down throughout the generations in our family. Next to my mother, Ethel Wright she will always be my mentor. Her tenacity in becoming educated during one of the most contentious times in our history should not be ignored! I will miss hearing she and my mother yell at one another on the telephone! God bless her life. May God continue to bless her family. Love, her Neice, Gwendolyn Blue

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**gwen blue** - January 27, 2016 at 12:43 PM

PL

“ I was sorry to hear of the passing of my Aunt Mary. I have fond childhood memories of her visits to Detroit. She was dearly loved by her Brother and all of his children. I still cherish the handmade blanket I received from her on my wedding day. My prayers and thoughts are with her family.

Sincerely

Primetta Lemon

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**PRIMETTA LEMON** - January 24, 2016 at 09:29 PM

ML

Aunt Mary I will miss our phone calls and the political discussions. I will always remember you!

Your niece  
Margarie Weston lamb

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**margarie weston I** - January 25, 2016 at 03:59 AM

GB

*I am very sorry to hear of the passing of Aunt Mary. She will be missed truly by her only surviving sister, Ethel Wright. I brag about Aunt Mary all the time! Her love for education has certainly been passed down throughout the generations in our family. Next to my mother, Ethel Wright she will always be my mentor. Her tenacity in becoming educated during one of the most contentious times in our history should not be ignored! I will miss hearing she and my mother yell at one another on the telephone! God bless her life. May God continue to bless her family. Love, her Neice, Gwendolyn Blue*

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**gwen blue** - January 25, 2016 at 08:17 AM

RA

“ *Our sincere condolences to the family.  
From the Staff and Management of Sandy  
Winchester and Company*



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**Raymond** - January 12, 2016 at 11:35 AM

DB

“ *Dona Brown lit a candle in memory of Dr. Dr.  
Mary Lemon Brooks*



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**Dona Brown** - January 08, 2016 at 03:00 PM

DP

“ *Dr Brooks was a dear lady and we enjoyed serving her with her rose care. She will be greatly missed and we will be praying for the family during this difficult time. I will never forget her coming to the garden shop to ask questions about her roses and the joy they brought to her.*

*Sincerely,  
David Pike  
Pres Witherspoon Rose Culture.*

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**david pike** - January 08, 2016 at 11:51 AM

TB

“ *On behalf of the Triangle Chapter of the National Alumnae Association of Spelman College, we extend our deepest and heartfelt sympathy to the family of our Beloved Sister, Dr. Mary Lemon Brooks (C' 1947). Our prayers and thoughts are with you.*

*Tuere A. Bowles  
President, Triangle NAASC*

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**Tuere Bowles** - January 07, 2016 at 07:44 AM

MB

“ *Mary and Marcia Brooks purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Dr. Dr. Mary Lemon Brooks.*



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**Mary and Marcia Brooks** - January 07, 2016 at 12:58 AM

CW

“ *Dr. Brooks was an amazing woman. She shared many inspiring stories with members of the Triangle Chapter - National Alumnae Association of Spelman College.*



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**CT Woods** - January 06, 2016 at 05:40 PM



“ *To my Cousin Lynette and Family*

*I have many fond memories of trips made to Selma when we were oh so young. Fond memories of many trips to Durham over the years. I was so impressed when Aunt Mary arrived in Selma with Deidra in July of 2013 for my mothers funeral. She also called me this past July when she was told of Aunt Marjorie's passing. A true family member always. My Soror of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc.*

*You all take care of each other and I will be that way soon.*

*Love  
Eris Brooks Beasley*

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**Eris Beasley** - January 06, 2016 at 03:58 PM

RA

“ *Well respected educator in the Durham Public Schools. Will be surely missed.*

*From the staff and management of Morehead Montessori Elementary School.*

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**Raymond** - January 06, 2016 at 01:46 PM