

# OBITUARY

## DECATUR



**Margaret Anne Barnes**, in front of the Coweta County Courthouse, holds a copy of "Murder in Coweta County," which was made into a TV movie starring Johnny Cash.

# Margaret Anne Barnes, 'Murder in Coweta' author

By **HOLLY CRENSHAW**  
 hcrenshaw@ajc.com

Author Margaret Anne Barnes embraced the South in all its messy glory.

In person, she embodied the best of its genteel charms. But she preferred shining her literary flashlight on its dark underbelly of history.

Much of what she describes in two novelistic works of nonfiction — 1976's "Murder in Coweta County" and 1998's "The Tragedy and the Triumph of Phenix City, Alabama" — isn't pretty: racial tension, murder, cover-ups and lies.

She wanted to place heroes at the core, like Sheriff Lamar Potts — played by Johnny Cash in the "Murder in Coweta County" TV movie.

But she insisted her writing ring true. Which is why she had little patience for Georgia author Erskine Caldwell and his "Tobacco Road."

"Mostly, I find him as interesting as a block of cement," she said in a 2003 Atlanta Journal-Constitution article. "He always said that he was holding up a mirror to the South, but I think it was one of those awful distorting mirrors you see at a carnival."

What she championed was a fair and kind South, but a South that valued its sense of place.

"I worry about the South becoming homogenized," she said in the same article. "I think we're losing our eccentricities. We used to put them out on the front porch and introduce them to people. Now we do what Yankees do: We put them in institutions. Which, to me, is a crying shame."

Fearless and funny, Ms. Barnes' "personality persisted right up to the last," said her friend Mary Lu Mitchell of Atlanta. "She saw the humor and irony in daily life, and she delighted in the foibles and strengths of ordinary people."

Ms. Barnes, 80, of Decatur died of respiratory failure Thursday at Emory University Hospital. The funeral is 3 p.m. today at Central Baptist Church in Newnan. McKoon Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

The Newnan native studied journalism at the University of Georgia, worked for the Newnan Times-Herald, and

lived for a while on a Virginia farm. She used it as the setting of her 1981 memoir, "A Buzzard Is My Best Friend," which earned her a Georgia Author of the Year award.

Her friend, attorney Joe Beck of Atlanta, called it "a feminist book with a sense of humor."

"She was a very strong, aggressive, wonderful person," he said. "She was determined to live life her way, and she did so with great integrity and courage."

Ms. Barnes liked to quote that "the weakest ink lasts longer than the strongest memory." She felt the power of her own ink in sometimes frightening encounters.

"A late-night caller asked her how she'd like to be dumped in the Chattahoochee with a pair of concrete boots," Mrs. Mitchell said. Another man came to a signing, bought a copy of her book and said that if he didn't like it, he knew where she was staying and would see her in the morning.

Still, she remained as immovable as her hairdo. "She'd been a cheerleader. She loved her ball gowns and her dances and her parties and her silver punch bowls," Mrs. Mitchell said. "But she could interview the Southern mafia and be tough."

Ms. Barnes' accent was so thick that when she asked a hospice worker to place some flowers on the "cot," it took him a moment to realize she was saying "cart."

"She relished words, stories, conversation, literature," Mrs. Mitchell said. "When she entered hospice, I said, 'How will you deal with it?' And she said, 'I'm just going to remember the motto: Function in disaster, finish in style. That's what I'm going to do.'"

"And she did. She was still making decisions and calling the cemetery and funeral home and telling them what she needed."

"Margaret Anne Barnes was a force," Mrs. Mitchell said. "A delightful force."

Survivors include her sons, David Jefferson Dukes of Decatur and Steven Stewart Dukes of San Francisco; a brother, William Young Barnes III of Marietta; a sister, Mary Clare Medlin of Orlando; and one grandchild.

## FAMILY-PLACED DEATH NOTICES

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- OTHERS**  
BAILEY, Agatha M.  
MESH, Lawrence Larry, Jr.

### ARCARO, Natalie



**NATALIE "Nellie" ARCARO**  
 Mrs. Natalie "Nellie" Piccolo Arcaro, of Winder, GA, and formerly of Waterbury, CT, passed away on Saturday, October 13, 2007. She is survived by her husband of 66 years, Mr. Jerome Arcaro, Winder, GA; daughter, Sister Susan Arcaro, Hoschtown, GA; son and daughter-in-law, Jerome and Nina Arcaro, Lake Mary, FL; grandchildren, Susan and Robert Mack, New Hampshire; Brian and Patti Arcaro, Boiling Springs, SC; great grandchildren, Alexa Mack, Veronica Mack, Gabriella Mack, Krysta Mack. Mrs. Arcaro was born in Waterbury, CT where she was a lifelong resident. She was retired from the City of Waterbury, CT School System in food preparation. She was a member of Prince of Peace Catholic Church in Flowerery Branch, GA and formerly a member of St. Lucy Catholic Church in Waterbury, CT. Everybody that knew her knew her delicious baked goods, her deep faith and deep devotion to St. Joseph. Funeral Mass will be held on Tuesday, October 16, 2007 at 10:30am at Prince Of Peace Catholic Church with Father Fred Wendel serving as the Celebrant. Interment will be in Pine Grove Cemetery, Waterbury, CT on Friday, October 19, 2007 at 2:30pm. The family will receive friends at the funeral home on Monday evening from 7:00pm until 9:00pm with a Prayer Service at 8:00pm. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Cenacle Sisters Ministry Fund, c/o Sister Susan Arcaro, 5913 Jackson Trail Road, Hoschtown, GA 30548, in memory of Natalie Piccolo Arcaro. ARRANGEMENTS BY: Junior E. Flanigan of Flanigan Funeral Home and Crematory, Buford, GA 770-932-1133 [www.flaniganfuneralhome.com](http://www.flaniganfuneralhome.com)

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### BERRY, B. Carroll, Jr.

Benjamin Carroll Berry, Jr. CLU, ChFC, died of Parkinson's complications on October 13, 2007. He was born in 1932 in Hertford, North Carolina, to Blanch Moore and B. Carroll Berry, Sr. He graduated from Perquimans County High School and the University of North Carolina and belonged to Pi Kappa Alpha Fraternity and the Monogram Club. He moved to Atlanta in 1954 and joined the Home Life Insurance Company of New York as an agent. Carroll was President of the Atlanta Life Underwriters Association, and Atlanta chapter of Chartered Life Underwriters, a Lifetime member of the Million Dollar Roundtable, a member of the American Association of Life Underwriters, was a hall of fame member and received Phoenix Home Life Lifetime Achievement Award. Carroll belonged to Camden, SC Country Club, The Kiawah Island Governors Club, Southern Seniors Golf Association, Peachtree Racket Club and Cherokee Town and Country Club. He played golf from Baltistol, to Pebble Beach, Scotland, Canada and Mexico. Golf and Gin Rummy were favorite games, wine and art his great interests. This past spring, his collection of the Abstract Expressionist Group, "The Irascibles," was exhibited at The Ackland Museum at UNC Chapel Hill, where he served several terms as board member. He was a member of the High Museum, Georgia Museum, MOCAGA, The James Beard Foundation, and The Chaine des Rotisseurs, and belonged to Northside United Methodist Church. He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Jeanne; son, Ben of Portland, Oregon; daughter Marie Berry Oravetz and her husband, Brian Oravetz; granddaughter, Riley Carroll Oravetz, all of Atlanta; sister, Blanche Dillon and her husband, Jay Wilson Dillon of Hertford, NC; nephew, Jay Dillon of Greenville, NC and niece Jan Shearin of Atlanta. He is predeceased by his parents and son, William Franklin Berry. Donations can be made in Carroll's name to the Ackland Art Museum at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Northside United Methodist Church, Parkinson's Research at Emory University. Memorial service will be held at Northside United Methodist Church, Monday October 15th. Visitation will be at 1:00 pm. Services will be held at 2:00 pm. Cremation Society of the SOUTH is in charge of the arrangements, 770-420-5557.

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### BAILEY, Agatha

Agatha Madden Murphy Bailey, born in Fall River, MA, on December 14, 1920, died peacefully in Tucson, AZ on October 9, 2007, after a lengthy illness. Beloved wife of David A. Bailey, Sr. (passed 1998), Agatha loved her family and her many friends and entertaining them all. For many years, she managed gift shops in Metuchen, NJ and was president of the Metuchen Chamber of Commerce. A resident of New Jersey for six decades, she never lost her New England accent or Yankee horse sense. She was an original "wild woman", who traveled and lived in many locations in the U.S.A. and Europe while being an Air Force officer's wife. She is survived by her children: Karen Bailey of Tucson, AZ, Nancy Bailey of Tucson, AZ, Cathleen Bailey (Fred Kiang) of Tucson, AZ, David Bailey (Joan) of Wake Forest, NC, Pat Bailey of Dunellen, NJ, Moira Bailey of Alpharetta, GA, and Jonathan Bailey (Kathy) of Edison, NJ; grandchildren Meaghan Hays (Ray) of Tucson, AZ, William Hackett III of Honolulu, HI, Eric Boulton-Bailey of Englishtown, NJ, Katherine Bailey of Tucson, AZ, Dana Kiang of Tucson, AZ, Adam Bailey of Alpharetta, GA, Caitlin Bailey of Edison, NJ, Sam Bailey of Dunellen, NJ; and great-grandchildren Savannah Hackett of Seattle, WA, Lily Hays of Tucson, AZ and Ryan Hays of Tucson, AZ. Our heartfelt thanks to a special health care aide, Aletha of Bayada, who took care of her in her final months and moments and to the support of the hospice team at Carondelet Hospice. A memorial Mass will be held on Saturday, October 20, at 10:15am at St. Francis of Assisi Cathedral in Metuchen, NJ.  
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### BROWN, Eddie Mae

Funeral Services for Mrs. Eddie Mae Brown of Atlanta, will be held on Monday, October 15, 2007, 11:00 A. M. at The Body of Christ Church, 274 Hendrix Avenue, Atlanta, with remains placed in state at 9:30 A. M., Reverend Roger C. Jackson, Pastor, Officiating. Family will receive friends in our chapel this evening from 5:00 P. M. until 6:00 P. M. She is survived by sons Charles E. Walton and Carl Brown, Sr.; granddaughter, Beverly L. Walton; four granddaughters, grandson, six great grandsons, two great granddaughters; cousin, Rosa Mullens, host of other relatives and friends in Florida and Alabama. Family will assemble at 128 Brower Street, Decatur at 10:00 A. M.; Donald Trimble Mortuary, Inc., 1876 Second Avenue, (404) 371-0772-3.

*Service by Professionals*  
**Donald Trimble Mortuary, Inc.**  
 1876 Second Avenue, Decatur, Georgia 30032  
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### BRYANT, Edna

Funeral Service for Edna Coleman Bryant, 88, of Lugoff, SC, will be held Tuesday at 11:00 a.m. at Shadowbrook Baptist Church, Suwanee, GA, with burial at 2:00 p.m. in Crest Lawn Memorial Park, Atlanta, GA. She is survived by her daughter, Mary Ann Forrest; and son, Lamar Bryant.  
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### BYRD, Georgia

Ms. Georgia Byrd passed away October 13, 2007. Services to be announced at a later date. Sellers Brothers, Inc. 404-522-6924  
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### DOLTON, Velvithra

Mrs. Velvithra L. Massey-Dolton, wife of Mr. Jerald Dolton of Stone Mountain, GA, and the daughter of Mr. Freddie and Barbara Massey of College Park, GA, passed October 12, 2007. Services will be announced later. Goolsby Mortuary, 404-588-0128  
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### DOUGLAS, Ernest

Mr. Ernest Douglas of Atlanta, Georgia passed on October 7, 2007. His services will be announced by Donald Trimble Mortuary, Inc., 1876 Second Avenue, (404) 371-0772-3.  
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### FRANKLIN, Walter

Homegoing services for Walter (Redd Fox) Franklin, of SE Atlanta, will be held Monday, October 15, 2007 1PM at Morning Star Baptist Church, 197 Gibson Street, Rev. Paul M. Harvey, officiating. Interment Kennedy Memorial Gardens. In state at 11AM. Visitation today from 5 to 8PM at Lincoln Funeral Home. Walter is survived by a loving wife, Constance Franklin; three children: Mario, Lakesia and Walter; granddaughter, Alani (Stink); mother and father, Mr. and Mrs. Robert (Helen) Johnson; brother, Robert Johnson, Jr.; sister, Mekeeta Gillon (Russell); grandmother, Alice Franklin; aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews and other relatives and friends. Family and friends will assemble at the home of his parents at 11:45AM, Lincoln Funeral Home & Chapel, Inc., 2321 Candler Road, Decatur, 404-289-1510.  
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### FREEMAN, Eva

Eva Blake Freeman, 81, formerly of Decatur, died in Washington, DC, on October 10, 2007. Funeral Mass will be held at 10a.m. Wednesday, October 17, at St. Thomas More Catholic Church, 636 W. Ponce de Leon Avenue, in Decatur, with Msgr. Paul Fogarty serving as celebrant. Interment will follow at Locust Grove Cemetery in Locust Grove. Mrs. Freeman was born in Lexington, MS, on September 24, 1926, the daughter of Melville E. and Eva Minor Blake. She graduated from Lexington High School in 1944 and received a Bachelor of Sciences degree in medical technology and a Master of Science degree in Biochemistry from Mississippi State University. She was a registered biomedical technologist for 25 years with the GA Department of Health and Human Services; after working in this field in MS and New Orleans, LA, she moved to the Atlanta area. After retirement in 1993, Mrs. Freeman traveled extensively and engaged in numerous volunteer activities. She participated in the Carter peoples-to-peoples program, and was a guide at the Fernbank Museum of Natural History. She was a lay minister and trained the altar servers at St. Thomas More Catholic Church for many years. Her husband, Carl Freeman, died in 1992. Mrs. Freeman is survived by her brothers, Melville Blake of Bethesda, MD, and Waldo Blake of Colesville, MD; five nieces; four nephews; seven grand nieces and three grand nephews. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to: The St. Thomas More Catholic School, 630 West Ponce de Leon Avenue, Decatur, GA 30030. Horis A. Ward's Rockdale Chapel, 770-918-8851.

**Horis A. Ward Rockdale Chapel**  
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### GEE, Ronald



**RONALD W. GEE**  
 December 27, 1926 - October 12, 2007  
 Whether it was a time of celebration or strife, Ronald Gee was always there. His steadfast love, compassion and unwavering thoughtfulness for family and friends shown through with a heartwarming smile, an encouraging pat on the back, a humorous one liner or simply his presence. As a young man in Albany, GA, he spent countless hours working in the projection booth of the local theatre watching larger-than-life cowboys and other Hollywood heroes in action. This began a lifelong love for film and its classic icons from John Wayne and Humphrey Bogart to W.C. Fields and Laurel & Hardy. He saw action himself at 17 in the U.S. Navy during WWII as a radio operator on ammunition ship the USS Nitro. He participated in the Normandy invasion of France on D-Day and later in various battles in the Pacific Theatre. Upon returning home, he attended the University of Miami and later graduated from the Atlanta Division of the University of Georgia with a degree in Business Administration. Beginning in the late '40s, Ronald had a long and successful career in the steel industry. He chucked up years with both the Atlantic Steel and L.B. Foster companies. But he spent the majority of his career with Valiant Steel & Equipment of Atlanta and Savannah where he served as corporate treasurer and director for 30 years. His analytical mind and knack for numbers had him recognized as one of the top credit managers/analysts in the industry. After his retirement, he served for several years as a consultant for Load Pro, Inc., a transportation company in Tucker, GA. Out of the office, Ronald was a voracious reader and avid sports fan with an encyclopedic knowledge of trivia and statistics. Up until his late 70s, he found himself in Little League dugouts as a baseball manager and coach who often followed his players' lives and remained in contact with them throughout the years. One of his fondest pastimes was his daily bike ride that found him zipping around Midtown, Virginia-Highland and Inman Park where he became fast friends with many residents and shopkeepers along the way. His Christian faith was something he held dear. As a lifelong member of the United Methodist Church, he served on many committees and commissions. His strong, enduring faith was a witness to others. But he was arguably most proud of his 58-year marriage to wife Jeanne with whom he shared mutual love and devotion until the end. Together their matching sense of humor could elicit a chuckle even during life's more difficult times. The strength of their bond and commitment to each other was a testament to those around them. He was preceded in death by his parents Wyche and LaRue Stewart Gee, and brothers William and Olin. In addition to his wife, he is survived by son William (Bill) Gee and wife Martha of Louisville, KY and granddaughters Erin and Mandy Gee of Atlanta, GA and step granddaughters Megan Davis of Charlotte, NC and Amelia Pillow of La Grange, KY; daughter Robin Casey and husband Doug of Grayson, GA and grandson Allen Casey of Bozeman, MT and granddaughter Melissa Casey of Grayson, GA, and a wealth of family, friends and godchildren, many of whom will fondly remember him as Uncle Snooks. Although he's gone to be with God, Ronald Gee will still always be there in the hearts and minds of all who knew him. Burial at Riverside Cemetery in Albany, GA at a later date. A memorial service will be held Sunday, October 21, 2007 at 4:00 P.M. in the chapel of A. S. Turner & Sons. The family will receive friends one hour prior to the service. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the United Methodist Children's Home, 500 Columbia Dr., Decatur, GA 30030-9982. A. S. Turner & Sons.  
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**GILLINGHAM, Virginia**  
 Virginia Horsley Gillingham, 84, of The Villages, FL, died Thursday, October 4, 2007, of natural causes. Virginia was a longtime resident of Marietta, GA, and a homemaker. She was a member of the Marietta Garden Club, the Altar Guild at St. James Episcopal Church, and a former member of the Marietta Country Club. Survivors include three daughters, Bonnie Stewart, Niagara Falls, NY, Laura Budd, Madison, NJ, Barbara Berret, Rector, PA; two sisters, Shirley Colart of Sanford, NC and Jacqueline BeVier of The Villages, FL; seven grandchildren, one great grandchild, and two great-great grandchildren. Memorial Service to be held 11:00am, Saturday, November 3, 2007 at St. James Episcopal Church, Marietta, GA. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the St. James Episcopal Church, 161 Church Street, Marietta, GA 30060. Hiers-Baxley Funeral Services, The Villages, is in charge of arrangements.  
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**HALL, Harriet**  
 Harriet Hall, actress, died September 29th, 2007. Harriet Hall, who played Andrea Moore on NBC's daytime "Somerset," had leads in "Tribes" for FOX, "The Witching of Ben Wagner" for Disney, and "Foxfire" for CBS/Hallmark, died of a sudden heart attack in Chatsworth, GA, a few weeks before her 59th birthday. She was born in Atlanta, graduated from Illinois Wesleyan University, and began her career in Chicago's dinner theatres. She retired when back problems became chronic. Before her last role in "The Dianas of Adam and Eve" with David Birney, and between spiritual journeys to India and the Middle East, Harriet had lived on both coasts, appeared in national commercials, and worked with such actors as George C. Scott, Colin Blakely, Lois Smith, and her brother. She was equally at home on stage or screen, classic or contemporary. Her finest, certainly her funniest, performances were her impersonations of her Southern family. She is survived by her mother, Betty Hall of Chatsworth, GA, and her brother, Davis Hall of New York City. For more information contact [davis.hall@earthlink.net](mailto:davis.hall@earthlink.net). No date for a memorial as yet. A donation in Harriet's name would be appreciated. Jones Funeral Home of Chatsworth, GA in charge of arrangements. 706-695-4544  
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