



Shirley Seward Cockes



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Elberon, VA

08.24.1933 - 01.29.2019

Shirley Seward Cockes passed away Tuesday, Jan. 29, 2019 at the age of 85. She was predeceased by her parents, Clyde and Virginia Madeline Bennett Seward; sister, Mildred S. Hailey; brother, Melvin C. Seward; husband, E. Dixon Cockes, and two daughters, Debra Carolyn Cockes, and Lisa Jo Cockes Judkins.

Left to cherish her memory are her daughters, Vicki Lynne Cockes Thompson, and Suzanne Leigh Cockes Madigan and her husband, Russ; grandchildren, Ben Maciariello, Tom Maciariello, Cathy Wilson and her husband, Kevin, Daniel Judkins and his wife, Jennifer, Laura Thompson Pittman and her husband, Matt, Aaron Thompson and his wife, Carla, and Amanda Thompson; great-grandchildren, Ryne Wilson, Jack Wilson, Reid Judkins, Walker Judkins, Graycen Pittman, and Tucker Thompson.

Shirley was born and raised in Petersburg, Virginia, where she completed high school and nurses' training. Her favorite assignment during her short nursing career was the obstetrics unit, where she cared for expectant mothers and their newborns.

As a teenager, she often visited friends and relatives in Surry County, where she met Dixon Cockes. The two married in 1954, and she left her nursing career to become wife to her Air Force pilot. Assignments took the couple all over the United States and their family grew to include four daughters. The family often went camping; they started with a tent and soon after bought a travel trailer -- the first of several.

The family moved back to Surry County in 1975 upon Dixon's retirement from the Air Force, minus the eldest daughter who married. By 1979, Dixon and Shirley were 'empty-nesters' and hitched up the trailer to begin traveling again -- typically South in the winter and North in the summer. During one of their trips, Dixon passed away unexpectedly and Shirley returned to their home in Elberon, Surry County.

She attended church at Moore's Swamp Baptist Church and became active in the historical societies in Surry and Wakefield. For a period of time, her home was one of the water stops for bicycling groups. She was an avid reader, Jeopardy fan and loved playing Mah-jongg. Although she no longer traveled extensively, she enjoyed visiting with friends in Mathews and on the Eastern Shore.

She was "a great lady" with a wide circle of friends including long-time Air Force and VMI friends who remained in touch. She sewed countless outfits when her daughters were young and readily shared sewing tips and tricks. Kind and generous, she spent many hours knitting scarves that she donated to cancer patients in the same clinic where she received treatment.

To celebrate Shirley's life, family and friends are invited to the funeral service at 11:00 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 9, 2019 at R.W. Baker & Co. Funeral Home, 11414 General Mahone Highway, Wakefield, VA 23888 with Rev. Ray Rowland officiating. A private burial service will follow. In Lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Surry County VA Historical Society, P.O. Box 262 Surry, VA 23883, (<https://surrycountyvahistory.org>) or to the Peninsula Cancer Institute (Riverside Foundation, 701 Town Center Drive, Newport News, VA 23606, (<https://www.riversideonline.com/foundation>) . Condolences may be offered online at RWBakerFH.com.

Service

Start Time: Saturday, February 9, 2019 -
11:00am

R.W. Baker & Co. Funeral Home
11414 General Mahone Highway
Wakefield, VA 23888
United States

Google Maps Link

[Directions to R.W. Baker & Co. Funeral Home](#)



R.W. Baker & Company
Funeral Home and Crematory