



## Mrs. Mary Lea Sherrill

October 21, 1917 - December 21, 2015

### Mary Lea Sherrill

Mary Lea Sherrill died peacefully at age 98 on December 21, 2015 at the Samarkand Retirement Community in Santa Barbara, California where she lived for 15 years. She was born on October 21, 1917 to James Armour Brice and Evelyn Ada Kennedy in Eau Gallie, Florida (now in Melbourne). She lived with her family in Key West, Florida until she was 3 years old when her mother died. She moved with her father, brother and sister to Island Grove, Florida where James Armour helped manage the General Store owned by his father, William Riley Brice ("Old Boss"). When she was about 15, her step-mother's father died, prompting the family to move to Barney, Georgia. Shortly thereafter, Mary Lea moved in with Great Aunt Laura (Alderman Moore) and Aunt May (Kennedy) in Statesboro, Georgia where she graduated from high school. She attended a small woman's college, Bessie Tift College (later Tift College), in Forsyth, Georgia, where she was noted for her basketball prowess and graduated with a degree in Education in 1939.

Moving to Buckhead in Morgan County, Georgia to teach, she met Shirley T. Sherrill, married him in 1940, and Shirley Ann was born in 1941. In 1942, the family moved to Gardner, Massachusetts so Shirley T. could attend seminary at Boston University School of Theology and pastor the Methodist Church in Gardner, Massachusetts. Adrienne was born in 1944. In 1945 the family moved to San Francisco where Shirley T. became a member of the Northern

California-Nevada Methodist Conference. Linda was born shortly thereafter in 1945. Living in several towns in Northern California (Selma, Santa Rosa, Chico, San Jose, Lodi and Concord), Mary Lea started teaching elementary school once all three daughters were in school. While in Santa Rosa, she pursued a master's degree in Education at San Francisco State University, graduating in 1962. She was well known in Santa Rosa as a first grade teacher, a job that she took very seriously as this was the basic foundation for a child's education. At the end of her career, she was a Specialty Teacher, tutoring children with learning disabilities in the Concord, California area. Mary Lea had a sparkling personality. Her future husband, Shirley T., noticed her sparkling eyes and radiant beauty when he first met her at the boarding house in Buckhead where Mary Lea lived. She retained her beautiful dark brown hair until death, with a touch of gray around the edges of her face. She tickled her family and parishioners with her laugh. Her outgoing personality made her a perfect fit as a 'preacher's wife'. She and Shirley T. complemented each other well in their vocations/avocations at the Methodist Churches that they served. Both always greeted the parishioners as they left church. Mary Lea especially kept track of the members, so that they could be with them at special times of joy and sorrow. Mary Lea also loved music and sang in the church choirs as a soprano. After they retired, they continued their service to the Methodist Church, spending two years (1983-1985) in Shepley, near Huddersfield, in northern England. Mary Lea and Shirley T. were true partners in their lives together.

Family was very important to Mary Lea. She always provided opportunities to her growing daughters, with music, dance and acrobat lessons. She was always there, supporting her daughters in their education, recitals, and even at the swim meet competitions. She made sure that each had the opportunity to attend college and offered a year in Europe to each. She said that nothing made her happier than to see the success and happiness of her daughters. Mary Lea is survived by her daughters, Shirley Ann Hurley, Adrienne Cupples and Linda Sherrill. She also has four grandchildren: James H. Hurley III of

Woodland Hills, California; Lisa Hurley Baker and husband David Baker of Manhattan Beach, California; Amy Cupples of Lafayette, California; Alison Cupples-Archila and husband Juan Carlos Archila of Boston. She has four great grandchildren: Jackson Cupples Rubiano, Samantha Cupples Rubiano, Matthew Baker and Natalia Baker. She is also survived by many members of her extended Brice family and the Sherrill family, all of whom she loved dearly. The family asks that donations be made to the Bowdon First United Methodist Church's Memorial Fund in memory of Mary Lea Sherrill. Services will be held at 11 AM on Saturday January 9, 2016 at the Bowdon First United Methodist Church at 302 Wedowee Street, Bowdon, GA 30108. The family will be at the church to receive visitors one hour prior to the service.

# Cemetery Details

## Bowdon First Methodist Cemetery

302 Wedowee Street  
Bowdon, GA 30108

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JAN 9. 10:30 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Bowdon First Methodist Church  
302 Wedowee Street  
Bowdon, GA 30108

## Funeral Service

JAN 9. 11:00 AM (ET)

Bowdon First Methodist Church  
302 Wedowee Street  
Bowdon, GA 30108