



Lillian Faulkner Baggett

June 28, 2013

Lillian Faulkner Baggett-the first child of Edward and Hortense Faulkner-was born in New Holland, Georgia, now a part of Gainesville. At New Holland Lillian was nurtured by the love of an extended family and a close-knit community. She learned good penmanship, excellent posture (from imitating a teacher), acquired piano skills, and professed her faith in Christ.

Early on Lillian found compassion from her mother, as she suffered from asthma late into the night; companionship from her sister, Eugenia, the family's second child, whose own family later followed Lillian to Fort Worth; and she found encouragement from her father (increasingly a self-made man) who supported her dreams. Lillian's mother, Hortense, gave birth to three more children, Sandra (later a long time resident of Macon), Edward ("Sonny," the long-awaited son"), and much later in Miami, Pamela (Pam). All the children called Lillian "Jo," from her middle name Josephine, a name ultimately replaced with her family name of Faulkner.

Lillian attended high school in Demorest, where she played on the basketball team, before transferring to Jordan Vocational High School in Columbus, Georgia, a town where her father had accepted an executive position. In Columbus on June 6, 1953 Lillian married James Alex Baggett (Jimmy to family and Jim to friends), a future historian and college administrator. For the next few years they resided in Florida and Georgia. Lillian and Jimmy continued their formal education for years. Lillian completed most of her undergraduate studies at the University of North Texas and her graduate work

at Vanderbilt University and Middle Tennessee State University. From the mid-1950s to the early 1970s, the Baggetts resided mostly in Fort Worth; then until 1976 in Laredo, followed by Jackson, Tennessee until 1998; afterwards in Dacula, Georgia, northeast of Atlanta.

Mrs. Baggett became a prolific letter writer. Often her letters brought satisfying results. After a visit with students to William Faulkner's Rowan Oaks in Oxford, Mississippi, she found herself in the forefront of a successful editorial campaign to preserve the home. From 1991 to 1997 Lillian corresponded with Pulitzer Prize winning poet Gwendolyn Brooks. In October 1997 Gwen (as her friends called her) mailed Lillian the following note: "Lillian Baggett! WHAT a writer you are! You simply must put your clear talent to some public account. PLEASE PUBLISH!"

After being employed as a secretary for years, Mrs. Baggett (an experienced Sunday school teacher) followed her husband into school teaching in the early 1970s at Laredo, Texas. There she taught high school English and speech and directed the drama program. After teaching for fifteen years in public and private schools, several as head of the upper school at Episcopal Day School (EDS) in Jackson, Tennessee, Mrs. Baggett taught for one year at Lane College, a traditionally black college, for a faculty member on a leave. Next Mrs. Baggett joined the faculty of Union University (where Jim served as an administrator), as a member of the English Department. She also chaired the university's Lyceum Committee. When retiring Mrs. Baggett said there were two decisions in life she had never regretted: marrying the man she did and choosing the profession of teaching.

Mrs. Baggett belonged to many organizations. She served a term as president of the Tuesday Music and Literature Club of Laredo. She also was a member of Laredo's Civil Music Association. While in Jackson, Lillian and Jim were both appointed to a six-year term as associates by the Danforth foundation. Mrs. Baggett was also a strong supporter of the Tennessee Humanities Council. She often moderated sections of the Council's Southern Festival of Books in Nashville.

Mrs. Baggett served for one term as president of the Union University's Women's Club. She belonged to the century-old Joseph E. Martin Shakespeare Society. For several years she also taught as one of a four-person rotating teacher team of the Holland Sunday School Class of Jackson's First Baptist Church. Mrs. Baggett's situation allowed her time to travel and engage in further study. At EDS, she accompanied students to New York to see Broadway shows. In the summer of 1976, she went there with Jimmy, while he served as a delegate from Texas to the National Democratic Convention. Some of the Baggetts's favorite convention cities were Boston, Chicago, New Orleans and San Francisco. Some summers were spent at such places as New Orleans, Nashville, Ann Arbor and Charlottesville. Some of Lillian's favorite vacations were spent with her parents (who she dearly loved).

The Baggetts traveled three times to Europe in the 1990s: on a tour to ten major cities, on a fortieth anniversary trip to Paris and on a study at Keble College of the University of Oxford, followed by a tour of England and Scotland. Thanksgiving, Christmas, special family occasions and a week during the summer were usually reserved for visiting family in Georgia, Alabama and Florida. In retirement the Baggetts moved to Dacula, Georgia, north of Atlanta near Eugenia and her adult children, Jonathan Waller and Dana Kashlan. Fortunately for Lillian, Ed ("Sonny") and his wife, Joyce, resided near Eugenia for several years. In 2003, the Baggetts celebrated their 50th anniversary.

Before retirement Professor Baggett's published works were letters, reviews, essays and articles. After retirement Lillian wrote a novel entitled *Out of Eden: A Sage of the South*, in which, according to one reviewer: "Her protagonist Rose struggles with issues of class, gender, and faith as her world crumbles from a romanticized Eden to a living Hell." During early retirement Lillian had the privilege of assisting her mother, who was suffering with dementia. Unfortunately for the last few years Lillian slumbered to the effects of

dementia herself. Jimmy undertook for Lily (as he called her in retirement) much of what she had done for her mother.

Lillian Faulkner Baggett was a beautiful woman. Her best features included her thick hair (good enough to be a model in hair contests in the 1960s), her peaches and cream complexion, her light blue eyes, the cleft in her chin, and her lovely smile. During her early twenties Lillian overcame the effects of childhood asthma to grow into a beautiful young woman. Thereafter she overcame her depression of being childless to become an outstanding teacher, writer, mentor, and wife. She also overcame the age-old prejudices related to color, class, and gender to become an independent thinker. But as Lillian knew-at least in this life-to quote a line from her favorite musical, *Les Misérables*:

There are some dreams that are not to be.

There are some storms that cannot be weathered.

Survivors include Lillian Faulkner Baggett's husband, James Alex Baggett, of Dacula, Georgia and the families of Lillian's sisters and her brother, as well as her husband's sister and the families of her sister-in-law's sons: Eugenia Waller and her son, Jonathan Waller of Sugar Hill, Georgia, Dana and Muhammad Kashlan of Alpharetta, Georgia, and Ramsey Kashlan and Ronny Kashlan of Atlanta; Sandra and Benton Gunter of Marietta, Georgia, Tracy and Patrick Guerry also of Marietta, and Matthew and Lindsay Gunter of Winston-Salem, North Carolina; Edward and Joyce Faulkner of Jacksonville, Florida, Amy Faulkner of Melbourne, Florida, and Adam and Shelly Faulkner of Jacksonville; Pamela and Anthony Logsdon of Jacksonville, Alabama, Meagan Logsdon of Birmingham, and David Logsdon of Nashville; Gloria Downes of Huntsville, Alabama, Thomas and Janet Downes of Guntersville, Alabama, and Gregory and Vicki Downes of Huntsville. Graveside service will be held on Monday, July 1, 2013 at 1:00 p.m. at Parkhill Cemetery, 4161 Macon Rd., Columbus, GA 31907 with Rev. Ed Hampton officiating. The family will receive friends at Flanigan Funeral Home on Sunday from 4:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Evercare

Hospice.

Tribute Wall



“ *Lillian Faulkner Baggett*

November 08, 2022 at 07:37 PM



“ *Dear Uncle Jimmy,*

I want to share with you something that Aunt Jo shared with me on your fiftieth wedding celebration and I will cherish forever. She talks about one of her favorite poems, author Elizabeth Barrett Browning, "How Do I Love Thee" in which she tells her husband how much she loves him and closes with "I love thee with the breath, / Smiles, tears of all my life! - and, if God chooses, / I shall but love thee better after death." Aunt Jo stated those lines encapsulated how she felt about you. Endless love has such a very special meaning for both of you and is truly an inspiration for others to follow. My Jo has always been a part of my life from the day I came into this world and will continue to be a vivid memory for the rest of my life. Uncle Jimmy I know the steps that follow will be hard to take but you will be rewarded for the devotion, commitment and endless love you showed to my favorite, one and only, Jo, who will be missed more than words can say. Thank you for giving meaning to her life.

Love, your niece, Dana

Dana Kashlan - July 07, 2013 at 12:00 AM

PS

“ Dear Jim and family,

We are saddened to hear of dear Lillian's death. I loved teaching with her and I know my deceased mother, Betty Foellinger, enjoyed so much her kind spirit and graciousness in our English Dept. I also want to tell Jim that his history book about Union was terrific and he did a beautiful job with it. After Lambuth Univ. closed, I am now adjunct teaching at Union in the Communication Arts Dept. I helped build in the 1980's, and I am also teaching in the Continuing Studies program (BSOL degree) to the night students. I remember you Jim with very fond memories. You were always an ethical administrator and you and Lillian were a huge and great addition to the Union Family when you were here. Blessings to the family.

Patty and George Smith

Patty and George Smith - July 02, 2013 at 12:00 AM

MW

“ *Mr. Baggett, I am so so sorry for your loss, she was an amazing woman, she was very lucky to have you. I enjoyed seeing you to spend time together over the short time that I was honored to know her. Bless your heart I will keep you in my thoughts and prayers always.*

Mishelle Walker - July 01, 2013 at 12:00 AM

JJ

“ *On behalf of the Episcopal Day School Class of 1983 our sincerest condolences on the passing of our beloved teacher. A true lady who bettered the lives of all she met. God Bless, Mrs. Baggett.*

Jonathan Jordan - June 30, 2013 at 12:00 AM

LB

“It's not the length of the life, but the depth of the life.” Ralph Waldo Emerson. This is a perfect heading for Lillian's life. Her belief in God was her foundation. Through this love she found her soul mate, "her Jimmy." During their 60 years of marriage they touched the lives of many in the Union family. Gracious Lillian always stood at the door of her classroom at Union and as each student arrived she would greet them. Once she had been shopping for clothes and told me "all my new dresses have flowers on them." No pants for this woman. This loving role model of Christian living will for greatly missed.

Linda barber - June 30, 2013 at 12:00 AM

CM

“ My Father is Clayton Todd Baggett of Upson County Georgia & Midwest City,OK I Am His Oldest Son. My Grandparent are Clayton E.& Glenda Lee Baggett of Upson County Georgia, I Live in Oakfield,TN With My Mother Phebe Rene Burroughs, And I Four Brothers and My Youngest Brother Jeremiah Lee Baggett & Wife Jessica Live in Lexington, TN, Jeremiah is a Police Officer & Work For The Lexington Police Department on The Night Shift.

I Kind All The Baggetts in Tennessee & Georgia & Florida & Alabama Area, You Guys Find Me On Facebook, Google, Wordpress, Instagram, Youtube, Twitter.

www.claytonbaggett.wordpress.com.

*Clayton M.Baggett
Oakfield, TN*

Clayton M.Baggett - June 29, 2013 at 12:00 AM

JJ

“ I was saddened by the news of Lillian Baggett's death, but encouraged by the belief that she's experiencing a wonderful, spirit-filled life of complete joy now.

I had the incredible fortune of studying under Professor Baggett during the late 1980's at Union University and although I was initially hesitant to take her class (her reputation as a challenging instructor was well-known and, as it turned out, well-deserved), but I never regretted the decision. She was an enormously gifted educator, demanding, but fair, and she challenged each of us in her class to excel. I learned more in her class than I ever imagined possible and she inspired me in ways that no instructor before or since managed to do. I fondly remember her as the most brilliant and beloved of all my university professors and I mourn her loss for her family, friend and all of us she touched. Our world has grown dimmer by her absence, but I'm sure her light will shine brightly within all of those whose lives she lovingly touched.

James E. Dowd, Jr.

James E. Dowd, Jr. - June 29, 2013 at 12:00 AM

MB

“ Dear Dr. Baggett and family,
I was saddened to read of your loss. Lillian was truly a beautiful person who contributed so much to the betterment of this world. My life was enriched by her during your days at Union University. My deepest sympathy and prayers,
Maggie Nell Brewer

Maggie Nell Brewer - June 29, 2013 at 12:00 AM