

Margaret Ruth Layfield Graham
March 27, 1913 — August 14, 2010

Surely the angels sang on August 14, 2010 when they welcomed Ruth Layfield Graham into Heaven and the company of saints. Ruth spent 97 1/2 years brightening the lives of others here on Earth. "Well done good and faithful servant."

Ruth was born March 27, 1913 in Atlanta, GA to Zachary Taylor Layfield and Margaret Ruth Williams Layfield. She was the first of three children.

Ruth graduated from Woodberry Hall Preparatory School for Girls, where she was an honor student, president of the student body and yearbook editor. She attended Oglethorpe University in Atlanta until the Great Depression when she left college to work for her father at Layfield Motors in downtown Atlanta. During that time Ruth became the national president of Tau Phi, a sorority for business women.

On March 9, 1941 Ruth married Gerald Jefferson Graham, a dashing young Army lieutenant who was a skilled polo player and horseman. While her husband served overseas in WWII, much of the time as Gen. Douglas MacArthur's aide de camp, Ruth began what would remain one of the great loves of her life, working with children. She taught at Fritz Orr School and day camp in Atlanta. As the family moved, Ruth worked as a recreational and arts and crafts director in Statesboro, Georgia and at Rockbrook Camp in Brevard, NC. From 1957 until retirement, Ruth touched the lives of countless young men, providing a home away from home for the cadets of Culver Military Academy in Indiana where then Col. Graham was director of Culver's famed Black Horse Troop.

When the couple retired to Gainesville GA, Ruth, a woman of deep and abiding faith, made many new friends through her church there. She had a servant's heart and lived by the Golden Rule. She found beauty in the ordinary and was quick to thank God for her many blessings. A woman of great compassion, she often was referred to as "That sweet Ruth Graham". She will be remembered as a lovely, gracious Southern lady.

A victim of Alzheimer's disease, Ruth spent the last 7 1/2 years of her life being lovingly cared for by the wonderful staff at Edgewood Vista in Belgrade, MT. As her health declined, Bozeman Deaconess/Hospice of Southwest Montana joined Ruth's family and Edgewood Vista in caring for her and loving her through death into eternal life.

Ruth was preceded in death by her husband of 65 years, Gerald Jefferson Graham, who died August 11, 2006. She is survived by her daughters Gerry Margaret (Wallace Dunbar 'Bill') Gram of Bozeman, MT and Eley Layfield (Alexander Aubrey) Kuchar of Crown Point, IN; five grandchildren, Dr. Wallace Dunbar Gram Jr., Virginia Beach, VA; Jeffery Beecher Gram, Atlanta, GA; Timothy Taylor Gram, Bozeman, MT; Aubrey Graham Kuchar, Indianapolis, IN; Charles Jefferson Kuchar, Atlanta, GA; and five great-grandchildren, Wallace Dunbar Gram III and Megan Elizabeth Gram, both of Virginia Beach, VA; Sarah Kathleen Gram of Atlanta, GA; and William Wallace Gram and Georgia May Gram, both of Bozeman, MT.

The world is a better place because Ruth lived.

A garden party celebrating Ruth's life will be held at Edgewood Vista and a family service honoring both Ruth and Gerald will be held at a later date. Donations may be made to The Alzheimer's Association Memory Walk by supporting the Edgewood Vista Team in its fundraising efforts for the Bozeman Walk to be held at Bogert Park on Sept. 11, 2010. Please call Edgewood Vista managers Renee or Crystal at 406-388-9439 for information on how to donate.