

Mary Blackburn Deans, 83, of Venice, Fla., died Thursday, Jan. 31, 2008.

She was born July 28, 1924, in Osprey, Fla., to Walter D. and Eulalee Blackburn. She graduated from Old Sarasota (Fla.) High School in 1942. She worked as a telephone operator for many years in Sarasota. She also was a homemaker. She and her husband, Stephen T. Deans Sr., owned and operated Deans Produce on Albee Farm Road in Venice during the past 25 years. She was a longtime member of First Baptist Church of Venice, where she taught Sunday school. She also was treasurer of Fidelas Sunday school class.

She was preceded in death by two brothers, John Henry Blackburn and William D. Blackburn.

Survivors include: her husband of 62 years, Stephen T. Deans Sr. of Venice; three sons, Stephen T. Deans Jr., Walter C. Deans and James T. Deans, all of Venice; three daughters, Pat A. Hill of Tiger and Venice and Linda M. Schaper and Mary D. Young, both of Venice; 16 grandchildren, including James A. Hill of Clayton, Jackie Joe Hill of Lakemont, John W. Hill Jr. of Colorado Springs, Colo., and Patti Jo Ferraro of Venice; 32 great-grandchildren; and various cousins, including Joanne Darnell of Clayton and Earl and Elaine Blackburn of Clayton and Venice.

A funeral service was held Monday at First Baptist Church of Venice. Burial followed at Venice Memorial Gardens.

Memorial donations can be made to First Baptist Church of Venice, 312 W. Miami Ave., Venice, FL 34285. An online guestbook is available at www.farleyfuneralhome.com.

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