

Ruth "Ruthie" Derrick Mellor, 75, of Clayton and Dublin, died Friday, Oct. 5, 2007, in the cardiac care unit of the Medical Center of Central Georgia in Macon.

She was born May 16, 1932, at Emory University Hospital in Decatur to Claud Lester and Rose Cochran Derrick. She grew up at her home on "The Hill" in Clayton, where she graduated as valedictorian from Rabun County High School. She then graduated magna cum laude from Salem College and taught for a number of years in Rabun County and Florida.

She left teaching and married Phil Mellor of Albuquerque, N.M. His Air Force unit had received orders to Germany, so the young couple decided to be married in Germany. Three years later, the Mellors returned home, having traveled all over Europe and bringing their infant son, Claud Derrick Mellor, to meet their families.

The Mellors lived in Huntsville, Ala., Titusville, Fla., Lawrenceville and Brunswick. She divorced and returned to her childhood home in Clayton in the 1980s. In recent years, she divided her time between Clayton and Dublin, where son Philip and his family settled. She attended many Christian writing conferences and enjoyed being a guest columnist for The Tribune. She will be long remembered for her humorous tales and passion for life.

She was preceded in death by her son, Claud Derrick Mellor.

Survivors include: a son, Philip F. Mellor Jr. of Macon; a sister and brother-in-law, Claudia Derrick and Robert Westerfeldt of Huntsville, Ala.; two granddaughters, Rebekah Mellor Ketterman and husband Clay of Statesboro and Sarah Mellor of Dudley; and many other relatives.

Funeral services were held Oct. 9 at Hunter Funeral Home with her first cousin, the Rev. Gene Cochran, officiating. A private committal service, led by Lloyd Hunter, followed at Clayton Cemetery, where she is buried between her parents and son.

Memorial donations may be made to the American Heart Association or to the charity of one's choice.

Hunter Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements.

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