



Ellen Palmer Muire

August 9, 1931 - March 4, 2026

Ellen Palmer Muire, age 94, passed away peacefully on March 4, 2026. Born August 9, 1931, in Kingsport, Tennessee, she was the oldest of eight children born to Roy Stephenson Palmer and Eliza Rhoton Jenkins Palmer. She was preceded in death by her brother, Earl Palmer. Surviving siblings include Roy Palmer, Jr.; James Palmer; Jessie Craig (Melvin); Judy Haines; Marjorie Morrison (Mike); and Jayne Belton.

Ellen graduated salutatorian from Radford College in 1953 and began her teaching career in the Pulaski County, Virginia school system, where she taught for 10 years. In 1963, she moved to the Burlington City School System in North Carolina, where she taught English and Literature for 32 years. During the last decade of her career, she established a writing competency program at both Hugh M. Cummings and Walter Williams high schools, for which she received the Governor's Award for Excellence in Teaching in 1990. She married Mason Edward "Ned" Muire, Jr. on June 15, 1963, in Pulaski, Virginia, and was widowed on May 18, 1994. She is survived by her only child, Mason Edward Muire III and his wife, Mindy, of Salisbury, North Carolina. Her lasting love lives on in her three granddaughters, whom she cherished deeply: Madison Muire Horton (Brantley); Emily Ann Muire (Chance Bowden); and Piper Elizabeth Muire; as well as her great-grandchildren, Jackson Olin Bowden and Leighton Smith Horton.

Much to her initial chagrin, she became affectionately known as "Meemaw" to many in Salisbury, accepting the moniker first given by her eldest grandchild.

She had a lifelong love of reading—especially the poetry of Emily Dickinson and the Bible—and a passion for documenting family life through photographs. She enjoyed the art of calligraphy, and her handwritten letters and notes beautifully conveyed her sincerity and heartfelt interest in others. She cherished the joy of the written word.

An excellent cook, Ellen made the best cheese straws in the Muire family tradition and relished every opportunity to prepare or participate in family meals. She never tired of traveling to the beach to search for shells or to watch the sunrise and sunset.

Her death leaves a profound hole in the hearts of her family, but her memories—and her treasured photo albums—will provide joy for generations to come.

A graveside service will be conducted at 10 a.m. Monday (March 9) at Alamance Memorial Park. A memorial service will follow at 2 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church, Salisbury.

Memorials may be made in her honor to the Rowan County Literacy Council. Summersett Funeral Home is serving the Muire family. Online condolences may be made at www.summersettfuneralhome.com.

Previous Events

Graveside Service

MAR 9. 10:00 AM (ET)

Alamance Memorial Park
4039 S Church Street
Burlington, NC 27215

Memorial Service

MAR 9. 2:00 PM (ET)

First Presbyterian Church
308 W. Fisher St.
Salisbury, NC 28144

Tribute Wall

MC

“ Ellen was a loyal friend and sister in Christ to my late mother, Sue Huffstetler. My family was blessed by Ellen’s loving support our mother’s last year of life and I am grateful for having been on the receiving end of her graciousness. (Mindy Huffstetler Campbell)

Mindy Campbell - March 28 at 07:07 PM

DJ

“ Ellen Muire was an extraordinary teacher and colleague. She chaired the English Department and taught English and Yearbook. Ellen modeled setting high standards and guiding students, all with caring and a sense of humor. I am blessed to have worked with her, and with many others. My condolences to her family on their loss.

Debbie Johnson - March 08 at 05:56 PM

LM

“ Ellen Muire was a great English teacher at Williams High School. I enjoyed being in her class. She was a delightful teacher with a wonderful sense of humor. She also served as the annual staff advisor at Williams while I was there. She was a great teacher and a beautiful soul. I know her family will miss her easy, gentle spirit every day. I wish all of my teachers had been as wonderful as Ellen Muire. She was a credit to the teaching profession.

Lee Neal Moser - March 07 at 09:17 PM

BC

“ Ellen was always so kind to me. Even though we were not in the same department I felt like she was someone that was supportive of me. I actually was thinking of her a few weeks ago. Sending my thoughts and prayers to the family.

Becky Caison - March 07 at 09:01 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Ellen Palmer Muire.

March 06 at 12:35 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Ellen Palmer Muire.



March 06 at 12:35 PM



“ I will miss you. My dearest Great Aunt Ellen. I will forever cherish the memories at the farm! To Cousin Edward and family im sorry for your loss! Many prayers!



Miranda Lawson (Griffin) - March 05 at 03:25 PM