



Naomi Merchant

January 7, 1930 - July 23, 2017

Naomi (Nan) Turner Merchant passed away Sunday, July 23, 2017 in Hot Springs.

Nan was born January 7, 1930 to John Marion and Nannie Lee Hill Turner in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Her family moved to Hot Springs when she was 9 months old. She graduated from Hot Springs High School, attended the University of Central Arkansas, and later, the University of Houston and Houston Community College.

She moved to Houston as a young girl and met and married her husband there. They both worked and raised their son in Houston. She retired to her home town of Hot Springs in 1990 and rejoined her childhood church, Oaklawn United Methodist Church, where she became an active member of the Mary Clifton Sunday School class and the Wednesday Bible study. Nan and a good friend, because of their interest and encouragement in the building of the Family Life Center, became chairpersons while in the planning stage of the project.

Inspired by her artist mother, Nan learned the basic of oil painting as a small child. This remained a lifelong passion and she enjoyed a few lessons and produced a few paintings over the years, but for the most part, it was put on hold until retirement. She became very active in the arts community in Hot

Springs and was a member of the Artist Workshop Gallery for almost 24 years. She had a special feeling for downtown and her painting interest were mainly of the old buildings and landmarks of Hot Springs and the National Park. Although Nan considered her work just a hobby, she sold many paintings over the years and many are in private and corporate collections around the county, including the permanent collection in the Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock, First United Methodist Church, Hot Springs, Garland County Court House and many other historic buildings. She also studied art at the National Park Community College and took workshops from many local and national fine artist. Nan was a member of the Fine Arts Center of Hot Springs and the Traditional Art Guild, started in 1963.

Another of Nan's foremost interest was the Garland County Historical Society where she spent many hours working on the files of historical facts about Garland County.

Nan was predeceased by her parents; husband, Jack E. Merchant; sisters, Marguerite Turner Johnson (Ralph), Betty Sue Turner Evans (Robert), Frances Lee Turner Westerman (Norman), and special friend, Art Wellinger.

She is survived by her son Jack Merchant and friend Cree of Grand Junction, Colorado; nieces, Bobbie Sue McKelvey (Michael) of San Diego, California and Kathi Frieberg (Brad) of Fayetteville, Arkansas; nephews, Gilbert Lee Evans of Los Angeles and Eric Westermann of Dallas, Texas. Also surviving are great nieces and nephews, cousins, her church family and many friends.

Services will be held 10:00 A.M. Saturday, August 26, 2017 at Oaklawn Methodist Church, burial at Memorial Gardens
Date and time to be announced

Tribute Wall

FK

“Nan was a very good friend of mine and her dear friend Art Wellinger was also a good friend of mine and a fellow member of the Veterans Memorial committee. Nan supported and made several generous donations to the Veterans Memorial in Hot Springs, Arkansas. Her 2 oil paintings of the Veterans Memorial are hanging in our house. One in day time and one at night time. Nan was going to send me some WW II Veterans information about cousins of her's that she wanted to place bricks in the walkway of the Veterans Memorial. She sent me a text message on July 20th and said somebody had sent her the info and wanted to know how much the bricks cost. I replied to her text but she apparently fell ill then and passed away 3 days later on July 23rd. If that family person that gave Nan that info on those 2 WW II Veterans, will give me that info I will pay for the bricks and have them placed at the Veterans Memorial. Buddy Johnson at Hot Springs Funeral Home is a good friend of mine and can give that person my phone number about this.

Fred Kelsay
Hot Springs, Arkansas

Fred Kelsay - August 01, 2017 at 11:13 PM

JW

“Nan was our best friend in Mary Clifton Sunday School Class. Shean was a worker at Oaklawn UMC. For years, she procured name badges for new members. We'll always remember her cheerful smile.

Doris & Jim Wenner

Jim Wenner - July 28, 2017 at 12:29 PM

JL

“ Am so sorry that Nan has left us all. I enjoyed making her laugh. What fun we had.

June Lamoureux

June Lamoureux - July 28, 2017 at 11:01 AM

SA

“ We are so sorry for the loss of Nan. Nan was a wonderful lady. I respected and admired her for all her accomplishments. She was a friend to me and my Dad when I was caring for him. She will be missed. Shirley Anderson

Shirley Anderson - July 28, 2017 at 10:49 AM

NB

“ So sorry to hear about Nan, she was in the Hot Springs of Arkansas, DAR chapter, very talented and sweet lady, she will be missed by all. Nena Butler, Treasurer

Nena Butler - July 27, 2017 at 07:38 PM



“ Nan was a beautiful lady and bright light. She will be dearly missed.

Beth Gipe

Beth Gipe - July 27, 2017 at 04:46 PM

JB

“ We were so sorry to hear about Nan. (We went to school together) Our thoughts and prayers are with the family .
Jack and Polly Bales

jack and polly bales - July 27, 2017 at 12:38 PM



“ *Nan wa always encouraging. I'm truly sorry for the loss to your family.
She always shared --whether it was interesting info on the city or interest I. your art. I admired her giving nature as the paintings she gave to the AME Church & the Historical Society.*

Jan Briggs - July 27, 2017 at 12:08 PM



“ *Nan Merchant was one of my mentors for inspiring others to create art. She enjoyed sharing her enthusiasm for painting with anyone who visited The Fine Arts Center Of Hot Springs, Tradional Art Guild, or the Artist Workshop Gallery. Nan participated in the Plein air events and created beautiful paintings of her beloved Hot Springs. She donated her time, money, and talent to the art organizations in her community.
Nan, we will miss you. Thank you for the wonderful memories.*

Donna Dunnahoe - July 27, 2017 at 08:06 AM



“ *I am heart broken I have lost a loving art friend
She loved Hot Springs and the gallery more than life itself
I will miss her*

Patricia Langewis - July 27, 2017 at 08:00 AM

CM

“Nan became my friend almost 30 years ago when she became our new neighbor. Nan always had a smile and warm heart to share. Her passion for art was always part of the neighborhood potluck story telling~ she inspired others to appreciate art and life. She raised a wonderful son to carry on these passions for others. Prayers and thoughts to all those who were blessed to know her.
Carol McKeever

Carol McKeever - July 25, 2017 at 03:11 PM

EM

i am so sorry about nan. a lovely bright soul has gone out of the world

eileen manees - July 31, 2017 at 12:20 AM

JD

What a loss to the art community and Historical Society in Hot Springs. She was a dear, sweet soul and I miss her.
Jean Dillon

Jean Dillon - August 04, 2017 at 11:40 AM