



## Gail Nicholson Royal

August 8, 1938 - July 5, 2023

Mrs. Gail Nicholson Royal passed away on 7/5/2023 at Piedmont Newnan Hospital. She was born on 8/8/1938 in Hiawassee, Georgia to William Ray, Sr. and Margie Hedden Nicholson.

Her life was one of selfless sacrifice, service to God and family, and determined survival. She was salutatorian of the Towns County High, class of 1956. She was also a guard on the varsity basketball team. As a young Christian girl from rural Georgia, she traveled to the western United States to serve in church missions and was a counselor at Camp Crestridge for Girls of Billy Graham ministries.

Gail obtained her associates degree from Young Harris College as an Alpha Honors Society graduate and continued her education at Mercer in Macon where she received her bachelor's degree in education. Her student teaching curriculum led her to Newnan High School where she would later teach English for 20 years and where she met the love of her life, Thomas Butler Royal, Jr. In the early days of her teaching career, Gail served as the NHS girls' basketball coach. Later, Gail completed her master's degree in education at West Georgia College.

Tom was the announcer for the NHS Tigers (later Cougars) and a sports reporter at WCOH in Newnan. The two married in 1963 and had two children,

Scott and Kelly, who were born in Newnan. For their 40 years of marriage, Gail willfully cared for, comforted, and cherished Tom who was a childhood survivor of Polio. Tom and Gail were members of First Baptist Church in Newnan.

Gail's level of service and sacrifice intensified in 1990 when her son Scott was diagnosed with malignant brain cancer. This demanded the time, attention, and patience that only a loving mother could give. She drove Scott to Carrollton so that he could complete his master's degree in psychology at West Georgia College.

Her life story took a dramatic turn when Gail was stricken with breast cancer in 1992. She endured through surgeries, chemo, and eventually a bone marrow transplant. After an extended battle, she returned to teaching at Newnan High School while also serving as the primary caregiver and provider for both Tom and Scott. Family, friends, and many members of First Baptist came to her side very often.

In 1999 two joyful blessings brightened her life with the birth of her twin grandchildren Thomas and Sophie Touchstone. Soon after their birth she became known as "Nama" to family and many friends. The moniker Nama will fondly endure as her name to most of her surviving family.

As a proud and doting wife, mother, and grandmother, Nama armed herself with her disposable Fuji camera, the "Namacam". With the stealthy swiftness of a professional photographer, Nama captured boxfuls of memories of her family and friends regardless of its importance and well into the digital age.

This remarkable woman's sharp wit, enormously kind heart, and fun-loving spirit will never be forgotten. Her photos, recipes, and teaching legacy will be cherished for generations.

A memorial service will be held at McKoon Funeral Home at 2 PM on Tuesday, July 11, 2023, with visitation beginning at 1 PM that day. Condolences can be expressed online at [www.mckoon.com](http://www.mckoon.com). In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial contributions to The American Cancer Society.

Survivors include her daughter Kelly Touchstone (Tom), granddaughter Sophie and grandson Thomas; brothers Lanier Nicholson (Freddie) and Bill Nicholson (Mary Ann); many cousins, nephews, and dear niece Julie.

McKoon Funeral Home & Crematory 770-253-4580

# Cemetery Details

## McKoon Funeral Home & Crematory

38 Jackson Street  
Newnan, GA 30263  
care@mckoon.com  
<http://www.mckoon.com>

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JUL 11. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (ET)

McKoon Funeral Home  
38 Jackson Street  
Newnan, GA 30263

## Funeral Service

JUL 11. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

McKoon Funeral Home Chapel  
38 Jackson Street  
Newnan, GA 30263

# Tribute Wall



“ *McKoon Funeral Home & Crematory created a Tribute Video in memory of Gail Nicholson Royal*



-----  
**McKoon Funeral Home & Crematory** - July 11, 2023 at 12:06 PM



“ *McKoon Funeral Home & Crematory created a Webcast in memory of Gail Nicholson Royal*



-----  
**McKoon Funeral Home & Crematory** - July 11, 2023 at 10:25 AM

DB

“ *Dwight And Martha Berrong lit a candle in memory of Gail Nicholson Royal*



-----  
**Dwight and Martha Berrong** - July 11, 2023 at 12:04 PM

SS

“ So sorry to hear of the loss of our cousin, Gail. She was a remarkable woman, and her loss will be felt by us all. May God wrap His loving arms around you all and may the memories of times together bring you comfort.

Sandra Schumann - July 10, 2023 at 10:07 PM

JW

“ I am sorry to hear about Mrs. Royal's passing. Thinking of you all.

Jennifer Welch - July 10, 2023 at 03:03 PM

GW

“ Gail and I taught together at Newnan High School in the early 1960's. She and I were good friends and later after she and Tom married, we enjoy many good times at their home. Gail will always be remembered as happy and fun loving and completely selfless in the care of her family. May she rest in eternal peace.



Geraldine Welch - July 09, 2023 at 12:12 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Gail Nicholson Royal.



July 09, 2023 at 11:10 AM