



## Sarah Wilson Estes

July 20, 1933 - December 10, 2016

Sarah Wilson Estes, 83, of Southborough, MA (formerly and forever of Newnan, GA), passed away on Sunday, December 4, 2016 as the result of a short yet fierce battle with brain cancer. Her son was heard saying, "The cancer may have taken mom's life, however, that wiry little redhead got in quite a few good licks letting those tumors know she would not go down without a fight... she taught 'em a lesson or two." Sarah's proudest accomplishments in life were being a mother and a history teacher (and sometimes embarrassed by her children's antics).

Sarah was born in the front bedroom of her childhood home at 9 Nimmons Street in Newnan, GA on July 20, 1933. The home is located across the street from Atkinson Elementary where so far 5 generations of her family would attend beginning with her father and most recently Heather and Christian Estes. The foundation for this home was started on Black Thursday (October 24, 1929). These facts need to be remembered as there will be a quiz on Friday. Her father, King, owned and ran the Phillips 66 Service Station (not to be confused with a Filling Station) on Greenville Street where her mother, Clara, started as the bookkeeper before passing that on to a young Virginia Knox.

Sarah loved to skate, play the piano and played in the Newnan High School band with her clarinet alongside her lifetime friend, Thuryza White McClure. It

was while she was in high school when her brother, Tillman, died a hero in the Army Air Corp having saved the lives of a plane load of paratroopers in a C-119 before crashing into the countryside. That event alone shaped Sarah more than any in her lifetime for she loved her brother. Sarah continued her ballet well into college, where she also played the organ for the LaGrange College chapel and graduated with a dual degree in Chemistry and History; not to forget Sarah also met and married Hilton Estes very soon thereafter. Sarah's wedding was the event of the season, from her bridal shower at the newly opened Cherokee Country Club in Buckhead to the hugo-mongo wedding in the old chapel at First Baptist Church in Newnan.

However, I digress. Sarah Estes wanted to teach at Newnan High School more than anything in her life. And teach she did. Sarah taught all over Coweta County before making it to NHS. Over Sarah's career, she taught 2 generations and even 3 generations of some families. During this time, Sarah went back to LaGrange College to get her Masters of Education earning her lifetime certificate in Georgia thus keeping her at NHS. She was well known as a strict teacher who could weave a great story and control a classroom as large as 45 students at a time. Sarah's students recall how she handed out zeros as a daily grade for sleeping, chewing gum or eating in her classrooms. Many know of her famous metal ruler used to emphasize she meant business. Her classroom persona was captured with names handed down from student to student of Swamp Witch, Sexy Sarah and thanks to Kirk Roberts, the Battle-Axe. More than any science or history lessons, Sarah would annually scare her classes with her knowledge of the local haunted houses. These stories were told long after she retired and have been repeated, often. The stories that are mostly unknown, are those of her compassion.

Sarah Estes loved her students. There are many stories that can be told, but, I will share two. At one time, she had a set of twins in one of her 5th grade classes. These two boys were often both not in school on the same day. While

Sarah at first thought they were pulling a fast one, it turned out that these boys only had a single pair of shoes between them. With her meager earnings, Sarah bought a second pair of shoes for them to come to school. From that experience, Sarah helped others get assistance from available programs and friends in Newnan. While at Newnan High School, Sarah went as far as to break her 'no eating in class rule' for her Zero Period students as she knew many of them only had school meals as their daily meals. Sarah was a kind and gentle person for those in need. Yes, Sarah Estes was a strict teacher. But, Sarah Estes understood the bigger picture of what mattered in education, the hardships of life and that we are all children of God.

After Sarah retired, Alzheimers Disease appeared and robbed her of most of her cherished memories. She loved to be recognized around town by former students. A visit to the grocery store was indeed an event for Sarah. Nothing gave her more joy in life than a past student to say a kind word to her even as simple as recognition (this is a call for anyone reading this to find an past teacher and thank her or him). When it was too difficult to live alone, Sarah moved to New England to live with her son, Tillman, before moving into an Alzheimers care facility, Whitney Place of Westboro, MA. It was at Whitney Place where she was still known as "Teacher" by her caregivers. Sarah exclaimed that each of her PCA's were indeed her students!

Sarah was preceded in death by her parents, King Tillman Wilson and Clara Roebuck Wilson, by her brother, King Tillman Wilson, Jr, by her son, James Hilton Estes and by the father of her children, Hilton Clark Estes. Sarah is survived by her daughter, Anne Estes Clark (Damon) of Bangor, ME, her son Tillman Estes (Rose) of Southborough, MA, 11 grandchildren and 20+ great-grandchildren, and many cousins including but not limited to Cindy Burnham Schian of Newnan, GA and Lisa Burnham Lowell of Woodstock, GA. Sarah Estes is survived by hundreds if not a thousand of her students, each of whom

she claimed and loved dearly.

A service of remembrance will be held on Friday, December 16, 2016 at 4:00 PM in the McKoon Funeral Home chapel led by Reverend JoAn Kinrade. She will be buried beside her parents in Oak Hill Cemetery. For those who wish to honor Sarah's memory, memorial contributions may be made in her memory to The Alzheimer's Association [www.ALZ.org](http://www.ALZ.org). McKoon Funeral Home 770-253-4580

# Cemetery Details

## Oak Hill Cemetery

96 Jefferson Street  
Newnan, GA 30263  
(770) 253-3744

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC 16. 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

McKoon Funeral Home  
38 Jackson Street  
Newnan, GA 30263  
(770) 253-4580  
care@mckoon.com

## Service

DEC 16. 4:00 PM (ET)

McKoon Funeral Home  
38 Jackson Street  
Newnan, GA 30263  
(770) 253-4580  
care@mckoon.com

# Tribute Wall

AW

“ Her recount of US History, Georgia History & Coweta County History made it truly memorable for me. Truly missed.

Anquinas Raquel Woods - March 12, 2022 at 12:16 PM



Carolina Lou

“ Mimi, I miss you so much. i wish we could talk right now and maybe you could tutor me i college. I wish you were here to watch LouisaDove... she is so smart. I know you would prefer if I typed every part of your memory grammatically correct... but My heart is to heavy to be concerned with that.

Louisa is SO smart, you would be proud of her. I am sure you know she has an undeniable love for chocolate and music and shoes. She is only two and already loves learning. I miss you. Stay close, okay?



Carolina Lou - June 07, 2019 at 07:48 PM

JG

“ Mrs. Estes taught me science in the 5th grade at Arnco-Sargent Junior High...and boy, I can attest to the fact that she was strict! I will never forget the times that she caught this one boy named Danny sleeping in class. She was walking around the class teaching her lesson plan and when she got to his seat, she took her science book and **SLAMMED** it shut right beside his head! Of course, he jumped straight up and the desk turned over while rest of us nearly died laughing, and she didn't miss a beat, just kept on with her train of thought and kept walking. She was known to toss erasers, chalk chucks, and even a shoe once when someone was talking in her class. And we *\*hated\** her pop quizzes! But do you know what? We learned so much from her that year.



*I was one of the students who always spoke to her whenever I saw her around town. We may be adults but when we see a beloved former teacher of ours out and about, we seem to revert to those grade school feelings. She always had a ready hug and always knew who I was regardless of how much time had passed from the last time I saw her.*

*I know that she is busy teaching everyone SOMETHING in heaven. I don't think she was ever idle a second in her life. Teach on, Mrs. Estes...there were few who could hold a candle to you.*

*With love to her family,  
Jennie Pursley Stone-Gillihan*

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**Jennie Gillihan** - December 19, 2016 at 02:48 PM

JF

“ *Jo Farmer lit a candle in memory of Sarah Wilson Estes*



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**Jo Farmer** - December 16, 2016 at 08:42 PM

D(

“ *I took every single class she taught. Without question the very best teacher EVER!!*

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**Donna Smith (Wright)** - December 15, 2016 at 11:59 AM



“ *Magnificent Life Spray was purchased for the family of Sarah Wilson Estes.*



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December 14, 2016 at 12:16 PM

KW

“ *I've known Sarah and her Mother, Father, and husband all my life. They were good friends with my family. Sarah was always full of fun. I remember her getting me to talk to one of her classes when I came back from Vietnam. The best thing I can say about Sarah - she was a true friend.*  
*Kirby White*

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**Kirby White** - December 13, 2016 at 09:52 PM

KB

“ I had the pleasure and honor of being one of her students. She was an awesome lady and teacher, and she danced a mean Charleston! As an educator, I hope my students remember me as fondly as I remember her. My condolences to her family.

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**Kimberly Reese Barnettt** - December 13, 2016 at 09:19 PM

JB

“ She sounds like a great person. I always hear nice things about her and her family. I live in 9 Nimmons St today, with my wife. It is a honor to live in her family's home. We love it!

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**Jess Barron** - December 13, 2016 at 08:35 PM



Russell  
Estes

I grew up in that home too. Third generation of our family to live there. Hope it serves you well

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**Russell Estes** - December 14, 2016 at 11:59 AM

VC

“ Sarah Anne and I went to school from 1st grade at Nimmons St, then Grammar School. We graduated from both Newnan High School and LaGrange College the same year. A long history of experiences we shared. We were in the and together Prayers for the family. It was a treasure growing up and growing old with Sarah Anne. Cherish the memories!

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**Virginia S. Cox** - December 13, 2016 at 12:09 PM

DR

“ Mrs. Estes was one of my all time favorite teachers at Newnan High School in 1979. She made learning fun and had a way of explaining things that made it very interesting. My heart goes out to her family during this very sad time, but always remember that she is in a much better place than we are and you will see her again someday. Prayers are with the family, I am so sorry for your loss.

Donna Arrington Robards - December 13, 2016 at 11:54 AM

JN

Mrs Estes was one of my favorite high school teachers. It was in her class at NHS, I learned not only US History, but a love for history. Prayers for the family.

Jana Thigpen Norton - December 13, 2016 at 04:57 PM



“ Basket of Memories was purchased for the family of Sarah Wilson Estes.



December 13, 2016 at 11:16 AM

GL

“ Because of an error in my advising, I had to take American history as a senior among juniors. Ms. Estes used to pick on me, but she allowed me to pick back. She was a great teacher who loved her area of expertise. She was strict, but funny and genuinely wanted her students to succeed. She was cut from a rare cloth and we will not see many like her. Godspeed. (P.S. I still think you were a professional wrestler earlier in life.)

Gary Leftwich - December 13, 2016 at 07:55 AM

JW

*Ms. Estes was one of my favorite teachers at NHS. Prayers for the family.*

**Jeffrey Westbrook** - December 13, 2016 at 09:19 AM

BW

“ *Our son Jonathan Welch always admired Sara and always asked about her. Our thoughts are with you at this sad time. My husband Bobby Welch taught with her at Elm Street years ago.*

**Bobby and Geraldine Welch** - December 12, 2016 at 06:24 PM

SH

“ *Sara Hunter lit a candle in memory of Sarah Wilson Estes*



**Sara Hunter** - December 12, 2016 at 03:34 PM

DR

“ *Ms. Estes was an amazing teacher when I was at Newnan High. Tillman, you and the family are in my prayers.*



**Donna Rainey** - December 12, 2016 at 02:16 PM

TS

“ *One of my best teachers. I know you are in a better place*



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**Traci Shearer** - December 12, 2016 at 02:06 PM



“ *Connie McLendon lit a candle in memory of Sarah Wilson Estes*



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**Connie McLendon** - December 12, 2016 at 01:47 PM

JA

*Mrs. Estes was my most favorite teacher and thankfully I was able to tell her this several years ago. She expected a lot of you and that was exactly what we needed. I loved her dearly and I still look at her house every time that I pass it and would wonder what happened to her. Rest in Peace Miss Sara.*

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**Judy (Norton) Anderson** - December 13, 2016 at 09:09 AM

HN

*Mrs. Estes was one of the best teachers I've ever had - not just for history. My prayers go out to her and her family. May she Rest In Peace.*

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**Homira Nassery** - March 15, 2017 at 08:00 PM



“ *Karen Hubbard lit a candle in memory of Sarah Wilson Estes*



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**Karen Hubbard** - December 12, 2016 at 12:42 PM



*She was my World History teacher at NHS and she was always nice to me and always enjoyed talking to her in the grocery store when I saw her she will be missed my prayers are with you during this time*

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**Karen Hubbard** - December 12, 2016 at 12:45 PM



“ *RIP Sarah. Great friend and colleague. Many years we haunted the halls of NHS.*

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**Andy Peryam** - December 12, 2016 at 11:19 AM



“ *Mrs. Sarah, taught history right across from me at NHS. I also taught history. I often enjoyed listening to her tales and stories on my "planning period.". She often used humor to keep her students involved and interested. She will be sorely missed by generations of students and her co-workers. She felt honored to teach, and this benefited so many. I am so sorry for her family's loss. Linda Terhune Armour.*

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**Linda Terhune Armour** - December 12, 2016 at 10:55 AM