



Broadcast Pioneer Agnes Simpson passes

Agnes Westervelt Dowling Simpson of Dothan passed away yesterday at the age of 87. She served a term as ABA President in 1979-80 and in 1987, became the first female Broadcaster of the Year. She attended the University of Alabama; was a member of Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority and served in the Navy during World War II.

Funeral services will be held 11 am Saturday, April 28, 2012 at the Episcopal Church of the Nativity with Rev. Jim Flowers officiating. Graveside services will follow in Memory Hill Cemetery with Robert Byrd directing. In lieu of flowers memorial donations may be made to your favorite charity.

Agnes Simpson was been a pioneer of advertising in Southeast Alabama ever since she, along with her late husband, R.A. Dowling, put a 5,000 watt (WOOF-AM 560) station on the air in 1947. Independently she had the foresight in 1963, to file for the first FM stereo in the state and signed it on, WOOF-FM99.7, in the fall of 1964. Through the years, Agnes sold commercials, broadcast on-air and remained a fixture at the stations until recently.

Not only did Agnes Simpson play a significant part in the broadcasting industry, she was involved with numerous organizations, working to make her community a better place to live. A partial list of those organizations includes: Chamber of Commerce, Kiwanis Club, Salvation Army, Dothan-Houston County Substance Abuse Board, Friends of the Opera House, Eclectas Club, and the Dothan Advertising Federation (now AAF Dothan).

She was the mother of five children: Britt, Brian, Jeannie, Hart and Leigh. In addition, she had six grandchildren.

Accomplishments:

-PAST PRESIDENT, ALABAMA BROADCASTER'S ASSOCIATION

-DOTHAN ADVERTISING FEDERATION'S HIGHEST AWARD, THE SILVER MEDAL AWARD RECIPIENT

-ALABAMA BROADCASTER OF THE YEAR (1987) (FIRST FEMALE)

-WOMAN OF THE YEAR, DOTHAN, AL (1961)

-HUMANINTARIAN OF THE YEAR, ARTHRITIS FOUNDATION (1996)

-SOUTHEAST ALABAMA ADVERTISING FEDERATION'S 1ST EVER ADVERTISING PIONEER AWARD (2003)

-DOTHAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP AWARD (2003)

-SERVED AS MEMBER OF THE GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

-ATTENDED THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA, MEMBER OF KAPPA KAPPA GAMMA SORORITY

-ALONG WITH LATE HUSBAND R.A. DOWLING, PUT 5,000 WATT AM STATION ON THE AIR IN 1947 (WOOF AT 560 kw)

-BY HERSELF IN 1963 FILED FOR THE FIRST FM STEREO RADIO STATION IN DOTHAN, AND ONE OF THE FIRST IN THE STATE (WOOF FM 99.7 WENT ON THE AIR IN SEPTEMBER 1964).

-SOLD COMMERCIALS AND BROADCAST IN PERSON ON BOTH AM AND FM, WINNING STATE AWARDS FOR HER NEWSCASTING. PRESENTLY SHE SERVES AS PRESIDENT OF WOOF INC. WHERE SHE STILL GOES IN TO WORK 7 DAYS A WEEK AND CONTINUES TO PLAY A VITAL PART IN WOOF'S SUCCESS.

-SERVED IN THE NAVY DURING WORLD WAR II

-WITH HER LATE HUSBAND R.A. DOWLING, COMPILED AND PUBLISHED THE GENEALOGY OF THE DOWLING FAMILY OF THE SOUTH IN 1960.

-HAS SERVED ON THE BOARDS OF OR AS PRESIDENT OF MANY ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING:

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PTA

SALVATION ARMY ALABAMA AIR FAIR

DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
DOTHAN COUNTRY CLUB

FINE ARTS CLUB ECLECTAS CLUB

BOOK REVIEW CLUB HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DOTHAN HOUSTON CO. SUBSTANCE ABUSE

BOARD S.E.D.A.C. BOARD

FRIENDS OF THE OPERA HOUSE CHEROKEE
GARDEN CLUB

BRIDGE CLUB KIWANIS CLUB

DOTHAN ADVERTISING FEDERATION

(JUST TO NAME A FEW!)

-LIFETIME SERVICE TO THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY, INCLUDING BEING THE FIRST WOMAN TO SERVE ON THE VESTRY AND TO BE ELECTED BY PARISHIONERS TO BE JUNIOR WARDEN AND SENIOR WARDEN. SHE HAS BEEN A MEMBER IN THE CHOIR AND THE ALTAR GUILD FOR OVER 50 YEARS. SHE HAS TAUGHT SUNDAY SCHOOL AND IS A GRADUATE OF THE FIRST THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION BY EXTENSION COURSE AT CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY.

-INDUCTEE IN FIRST DOTHAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BUSINESS HALL OF FAME (2011)

-INDUCTEE IN FIRST ALABAMA BROADCASTERS HALL OF FAME (2008)

