

A black and white portrait of a woman with dark, wavy hair, looking slightly to the right. She is wearing a light-colored, possibly striped, top. The background is a plain, light color.

LIFE

Stories

ELSIE LESTER
EPITOMY OF SOUTHERN CHARM

BORN

OCTOBER 5, 1929

This gracious lady has a radiant smile, never meets a stranger, and counts her blessings every day!

Of all her achievements, Elsie is most proud of her 4 children. Jimmy, Richard, Steven and Donna all adore their Mom!



Happily married to Richard for 53 years, she became a role model for many people from many walks of life.



As a successful business woman, she won many awards and received numerous commendations. In this photo, the Honorable Andrew Young, then Mayor of Atlanta, formally recognizes her contributions to the city.



Elsie grew up in a loving and close-knit family who always stayed in close contact. She had one brother and three sisters, two of which are still living in the metro Atlanta area.

The photo below was taken on Elsie's 85th birthday. She is surrounded by her kids, grandkids and great grandchildren. Everyone loves and admires her so!



after Pearl Harbor her little town was devoid of men after they all went off to fight the war. She often tells about being one of three young people in her town at that time, not including her siblings.

A Lifelong Love Story

After the war, the Yancey family moved to Atlanta, and Elsie got a job in a cafe. One of her regular lunch customers was a handsome young blonde man who worked across the street at the Atlanta Post Office. He took her to the movies, and a lifelong love story was begun with Richard Lester, who passed away in 2003 after 53 years of marriage. They leave a legacy of four children, three sons and a daughter, ten grandchildren, and six great grandchildren.

A Passion to Serve

Elsie worked as a luncheon dining room waitress after her children began school. She thought she had retired after 18 years at the same tea room, but found that she had too much energy to stop working. She found a job waitressing at a hotel restaurant, and within a few years had

worked her way up from waitress to restaurant manager. After going back to college in her fifties to study hotel/motel management, she moved from restaurant manager to hotel manager, and then on to become a Regional Manager for several hotels in the Atlanta area. At one of her hotels, she regularly fed and housed the Atlanta Braves and became a loyal fan. Ms. Elsie, as she is affectionately known, loves to watch the Braves on television, and her favorite player is Freddie Freeman.

A True Moral Compass

Throughout her hotel career, she received numerous accolades and met many wonderful people. She is especially proud of a photo of herself with then Mayor of Atlanta, Andrew Young. She often says that one of the things she is most grateful for is the improved civil rights relations and the many other causes she was involved in throughout her lifetime.

Elsie Marie Yancey was the second of five children born to a loving couple in the small town of Oakland, Tennessee on October 4, 1929. Just three weeks after her arrival, the stock market crashed, beginning the period of time we now know as the "great depression." While she was a young child, her mother completely lost her hearing due to a nerve illness, and her father had to take jobs driving trucks across the country to provide for his family. These events impacted Elsie greatly in that she and her siblings became very responsible, closely knit and very frugal. She can still be heard in her common areas at Camellia Place telling folks to turn off the extra lights. Her father eventually joined the Navy to provide for his family and serve his country. In 1941, when she was 12 years old, her father was stationed at Pearl Harbor when it was bombed. Thankfully, he was not harmed other than some lingering back pains. However, she tells that

Quick Facts about Elsie Lester

Born:

- October 5, 1929
- Named Elsie Marie Yancey
- In Oakland Tennessee (a rural farming community outside of Memphis)
- To Howell and Elsie Mae Yancey
- Had one brother and three sisters (two who are still living and visit her at Camellia Place)

Married:

- Richard Ansel Lester (now deceased)
- January, 1950
- Married 53 years

Children:

- James Murray
- Richard Ansel Jr.
- Steven Paul
- Donna Jane

Grandchildren:

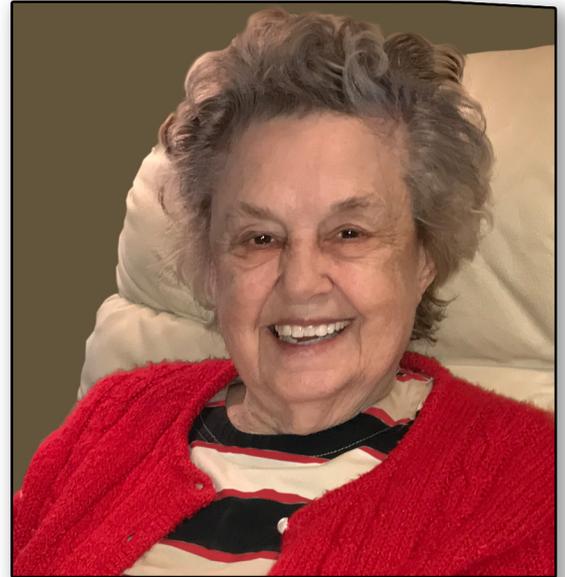
- Ten (one deceased)

Great Grandchildren:

- Five and one on the way

Little known facts:

- Is a strong Christian and still reads her devotions every day
- Likes to watch Wheel of Fortune and Jeopardy on TV
- Is a big fan of the Atlanta Braves and especially Freddy Freeman
- She has always been a very positive person and tells everyone how we all need to be thankful for what we have.
- She is in excellent health and has never been hospitalized (other than having her babies).

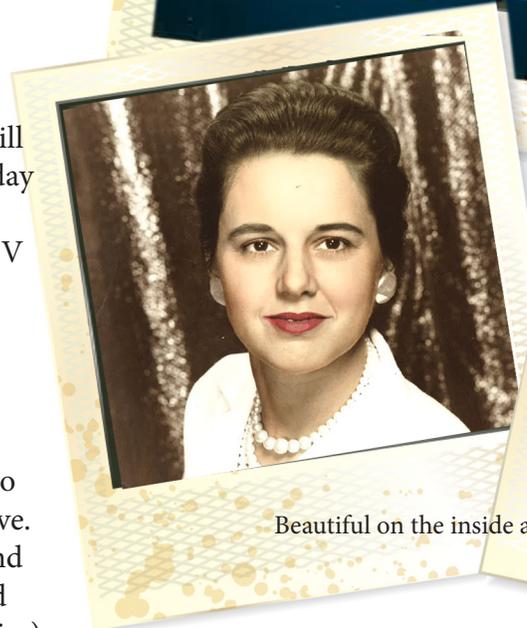


Elsie Marie Yancey

Camellia Place resident since January,

Elsie with her Dad in a convertible corvette.

Elsie was a savvy business woman and garnered many awards and accolades.



Beautiful on the inside and the outside!