



Katherine Healan Brown Baker

March 17, 1913 - September 28, 2010

BAKER, Katherine Healan Brown – Age 97 of Springfield, died September 28, 2010. Born on March 17, 1913 to George Henry Brown and Annie D. Hardy, she was valedictorian of her class at Springfield High School. She attended Randolph-Macon College for three years and her senior year transferred to Vanderbilt University where she was an outstanding basketball player. In 1937, she married Thomas Burl Baker, Jr., a broadcaster, business, and civic leader who founded WKDA radio and Channel 5 television. Their Favorite pastime was exploring the region's rivers and lakes in a succession of boats named the "Healan B." They took the last of these on the Grand Loop down the Cumberland and the Ohio, up the Mississippi, across the Great Lakes and through the Trent-Severn canal, down the Hudson River and along the intracoastal waterway to Owl Creek Marina on Florida's west coast. She loved western history and frequently traveled out West, once persuading her husband to accompany her down the Grand Canyon on mules. A descendant of Henry, Donelson and Woodard pioneers; she enjoyed drives exploring the byways of Middle Tennessee and Southern Kentucky. After her husband's death in 1984 she continued to live in Nashville until returning to Springfield in 1998. She was also predeceased by her siblings, James Woodard Brown, Louise Brown Wagner, and Anne Hardy Brown Curtis. She is survived by two children, Kay Baker Gaston (Joe V.W. Gaston) of Springfield and Thomas Burl Baker III (Lynne Rudder Baker) of Amherst, MA; two grandchildren, Katherine Healan Gaston (Andrew John Jewett) of Cambridge, MA and Josephine

Gaston Larson (Andrew Leroy Larson) of Cottontown, TN; and four great-grandchildren, Erika Lee Larson, Emma Katherine Larson, Thomas Elijah Larson, and Joseph Mercer Jewett. She is also survived by nieces and nephews Anne Brown Haynes, Betty Brown Tune, Anna Marie Bomar (Jack), Olivia Wagner Harrell (Jim), Martha Wagner, Kathy Sellers Emerson (Frank), Bo Wagner (Donna), and William T. Baker (Carolyn). The family will receive friends at Austin & Bell in Springfield from 4 to 8 p.m. on Friday. A graveside service will be held at 11 a.m. Sat. at Mt Olivet Cemetery in Nashville. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the First United Methodist Church, 511 S. Oak St., Springfield 37172; Northcrest Hospice, 101 Moorland Dr., Ste E, Springfield 37172; or The Hermitage, 4580 Rachel's Lane, Nashville, TN 37076