



**Waller Funeral Home**  
"An Oxford Tradition"

# SEASONS

Don and Patsy Waller, Owners  
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## "GOODBYE" IS NOT EASY

The leaves were falling from the trees, bouncing off the windshield in the car as I drove down the road. I love that. It was a day when twenty or so Canadian geese landed perfectly on the lake in our front yard, cupping and gliding from the north into the wind. Though the butterflies seemed to have left for the season, one would appear later. As the yellow leaves fell from the maple tree, they laid silently on the ground under and around the tree making a perfect picture. Most of the trees have now lost this year's foliage and wait patiently for winter to come. When the trees lose their leaves, there is a silence about the season that makes me cold and lonely. Behind our house lay acres of cotton with all the bolls open and, except for the brown dirt road going through the middle of the fields, looking as if it had snowed in the bottom—a beautiful picture which I hold in my thoughts every year until the next year comes and reproduces this beautiful sight.

It was one of those fall days that we think about all year and wish we could have more of—but, if they were not so few, they would not be as special. I need to stop and thank God for each day like this, but I am often so busy and preoccupied I don't.

As beautiful as the day was, it was also a day of sadness because of the death of my mother-in-law, my wife's mother, my children's grandmother, my father-in-law's best friend, sister to only one, and family and friend to many—Patsy Hardin Waller, "Miss Patsy" to many and "Pat Pat" to her grandchildren and great-grandchild-



In Loving Memory of  
**Patsy Hardin Waller**  
*Our Guiding Light*

January 1, 1932 – November 4, 2009

dren. I just wanted to stop people traveling on the highway hurrying to do whatever they were up to and ask them, "Don't you know what has happened? Do you not see how we are hurting? Slow down and help us—we need your help." But unfortunately life goes on.

Every day we help families that are having these same feelings. We thought we knew what they were feeling, but, when it happened to us, we saw that we did not know as much as we thought we did. Grief is real; losing someone we love is something so hard I cannot put it into words. Thank goodness we were able to have a funeral service that celebrated Miss

Patsy's life and start our family on the path to recovery. If we have family and friends as we go through life, we are blessed because at the end of the day, other than serving our Lord, they are all that matter.

Saying goodbye is not easy. I think sometimes people do not have funeral services to try to shelter others from this pain. But to me this is the reason we need to celebrate people's lives; sure it hurts, but think how much more it will continue to hurt without this celebration.

We found help in dealing with our grief by celebrating Miss Patsy's life. It started at Miss Patsy and Daddy Don's home where we gathered pictures for the video and picture boards. What a special time of reminiscing about Miss Patsy's life and what she meant to each of us! We saw pictures of each of us in younger days—when Pat Pat and Daddy Don, like us, were a few pounds lighter, and I had hair. Miss Patsy was a picture-holic so we had no problem coming up with great pictures. It was a time of stories, laughing, crying, and remembering. Just looking through the pictures with people we love helped us to start the process of celebrating her life. Even though we picked out the pictures and reviewed them many times before the video was made, at the visitation we all stood in silence and amazement as if we had never seen the pictures before as the video was played for the first time.

We gathered at the funeral home to make arrangements—made easier by plans Miss Patsy had made. Songs were selected, pallbearers listed, and other plans made. Friends helped

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## GOODBYE

*(continued from page 1)*

with the work at the funeral home so we could be with our family. Thank God for friends like that! Out of our six employees at the funeral home, five are relatives of Miss Patsy and the other employee is like family.

The family later went in to see Miss Patsy for the first viewing. She looked great. As funeral professionals we realize how important it is for families and friends to have the opportunity to see their family members to say goodbye; this is one of the most important things we do.

Visitation was more than we expected with family and friends from all over coming to say goodbye to Miss Patsy and to say they were thinking about us. Friends and family waited patiently to offer their condolences. It meant so much to us!

The service was simple, and the church where Miss Patsy worshipped and served her Lord all her adult life was overflowing with family and friends. The church was so special to her. I found a note in her Bible before she died that said "I cannot wait to get back to my church home and my Christian friends."

The burial was in the cemetery by the church and only a mile from her house and from our house across the road. Living close and working with us, Miss Patsy and Daddy Don have been like second parents to me for 26

years. The church cemetery is special to me and one day I want to be placed there near Miss Patsy for eternity. During the entire graveside service a single butterfly flew around us, even hovering above the tent as if to make sure everything was ok.

In the South—and I hope elsewhere—we eat after funerals. It is somehow a bonding and comforting ritual. And we did eat. Homemade casseroles, fried chicken, fresh corn, butter beans, cornbread, and salads covered what looked like six tables end to end. Two additional tables were loaded with desserts, which included banana pudding and caramel cake, two of my favorites. There was food enough for everyone including the men working in the cemetery and with the vault. After we all ate, there was still enough food for another trip down the line. People were so special to take the time and effort to take care of our family and friends.

After lunch, we went back to the cemetery. As we approached the gravesite, under the shade of the tent we could see the multitude of flower arrangements that were placed carefully around the grave with the temporary marker rising at the west end of the grave incased by flowers. The single butterfly was still there, flying effortless through the gathering of family members and landing on the flowers. It made me remember the song about Butterfly Kisses. I don't know why, but the butterfly was an

important part of the cemetery experience. Even the small children noticed it. I shall never look at a butterfly the same way as before. The comfort that a single butterfly brought to our family on that special occasion was something I shall remember forever. Thank God for butterflies.

And especially I thank God for Miss Patsy—as a loving, nurturing family member and also as a professional inspiration. She was the best funeral director I have ever known. She started a new way of celebrating lives for families in Mississippi when she opened her funeral home. She made a difference with her presence and her caring. She helped everyone. She had the ability to cross all social barriers, to help everyone that needed help, and to make everyone feel special. That ability is rare in our business. Miss Patsy started and continued for 26 years this newsletter, *Seasons*, that to this day is unique in funeral service and reaches more than 5600 families across the United States. She leaves a void that we do not know how to fill.

To say "Thank you" for what people did to help our family is not enough—how can we ever repay them? Well maybe we can put a hold on our lives one day and be similarly supportive for them.

Miss Patsy, you made it back to your church home and were with your Christian friends. And it was special.

*Bob Rosson*

## BOBBY PHELPS RETIRES

After December 31 a familiar, friendly face and a pair of capable, caring hands will be missing from Waller Funeral Home. Bobby Phelps, licensed embalmer and funeral service practitioner and licensed insurance agent, is retiring.

Bobby has been employed at the funeral home since 1978. As Waller Funeral Home struggled to get established in the community, Bobby and Patsy Waller faithfully watched and waited. Bobby began mortuary school, sold burial insurance, and promoted the funeral home with personal contacts. After a while, the calls began to come, and Bobby adjusted to the increased activity of the days and the on-call nights.

Bobby completed specialized training and received an Associate in



*Bobby and Sue Phelps*

Applied Science Degree at the Northwest Junior College School of Mortuary Science. He served the embalming apprenticeship for licensing under the late C. S. "Crack"

Wilson, passed the State Embalming Board of examination, and received his license on April 12, 1984.

Bobby is active in his church, the Black Jack Presbyterian Church, as an elder, is a member of the O. D. Smith Masonic Lodge, and supports other community activities. His special hobby is his music; he plays in a gospel and country band. No doubt he will find more time for his music and more time to spend with his wife Sue (who has adjusted well through the years to Bobby's irregular schedule) and with the families of their sons Ken and Lee.

Bobby will be missed as a dedicated member of our funeral home family! We thank him for his 31 years of service, and we wish him the very best in retirement!



Sally Kate Rosson Walker accepts congratulations from Charles Riles, President of the Mississippi State Board of Funeral Service, after receiving her License in Funeral Directing at the October 1, 2009, meeting of the Mississippi State Board of Funeral Service. Sally Kate is a member of the third generation of her family to serve at Waller Funeral Home.

We sincerely appreciate the opportunity to serve the families of this community. We are committed to compassionate, professional assistance to all those we serve.

May the holiday season be a time of peace, joy, and love for you and your family!

—Waller Funeral Home Staff

Grief helps focusing on getting through the first holiday season since the death of a family member are being sent to those families we have served since last Christmas. If you know of someone else you feel will benefit from this material, please let us know.

Complimentary inspirational and dashboard calendars are now available at the funeral home as an expression of our appreciation and friendship to you. Drop by and pick up copies.

## GRIEVING AND HEALING THROUGH THE HOLIDAYS

(Excerpt from article in *Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal*, November 6, 2009, by Jamie Grissom, licensed social worker, North Mississippi Medical Center Hospice Bereavement Coordinator)

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Losing a loved one is not easy. It sometimes takes us on a journey which involves a range of emotions. These emotions of grief may include anger, sadness, anxiety, relief, guilt, fear, shock, numbness, regret, joy, etc. Grief is a natural and normal response to loss. Individuals respond to grief differently and may find it troublesome to cope with their loss. Grief can cause physical, emotional, and spiritual struggles, but there are steps that can ease this journey.

It is important to allow appropriate expectations for yourself during the grieving process. Individuals usually find that grief lasts longer and requires more energy than expected. Some believe grief has a time limit or that one will eventually just get over it, but this is not true.

Grief does not magically end. There

is no time limit where grief is involved, and the loss of a loved one is a life-changing experience. The difficult periods should become less intense and shorter as time goes by, but it does take work. Working through grief allows a person to recognize the impact of their loss and reinvest in self. Some ways to accomplish this include keeping a journal of your feelings, exercising daily, joining support groups, and adding new activities and people to your life. Sharing memories is often rewarding and allows the legacy of our loved ones to remain over time.

With the holidays approaching, it is of value to know feelings of grief over the loss of your loved one may return. Holidays or other special dates can trigger the pain of your loss again and again. Missing your loved one does not have to be considered a setback in the grieving process, but rather a reflection of a life that was important to you.

These dates often reawaken the feelings you faced when you were first bereaved. You can use this as an opportunity to continue to heal in a healthy manner. Holidays or other

special dates will not be as stressful if you are prepared. Try to focus on the good things currently in your life. Rather than avoiding your friends and family, draw close to them. Reminders can be anywhere, not just on special dates, but in sights, sounds, smells, or television. Any of these can suddenly flood you with emotion. If your grief does become too intense or painful and interferes with your ability to function in your daily life, you should follow up with your doctor.

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### MISSING YOU

A million times we'll miss you,  
 A million times we'll cry.  
 If love alone would have saved you,  
 You would have never died.  
 In life we loved you dearly,  
 In death we love you still.  
 In our hearts you hold a place,  
 No other one can fill.

- Copied

# In Memoriam

We dedicate this issue of *Seasons* to those who died and whose families we served from September 3, 2009, to November 20, 2009.

- Miss Sarita Lenore Pollock.....September 3, 2009
- Mr. Sherwood Harris .....September 7, 2009
- Mr. Walter E. Cleland, Sr..... September 9, 2009
- Mr. Ted L. Patterson.....September 11, 2009
- Mrs. Daisy Perkins Owens.....September 12, 2009
- Dr. Jack Edward Fielden, Sr.....September 13, 2009
- Mrs. Barbara Ann Vaughn Jaco.....September 13, 2009
- Mr. Horace Eugene Upchurch.....September 14, 2009
- Dr. Mack A. Breazeale .....September 14, 2009
- Mr. Robin Owen Cotten, Sr.....September 27, 2009
- Mrs. Vaddie Lavern James .....September 27, 2009
- Mr. Paul Eugene Weeks.....September 28, 2009
- Logan Charles Rawson.....September 30, 2009
- Chandler Eugene Rawson.....September 30, 2009
- Mr. Samuel Emerson Knight .....October 2, 2009
- Dr. Joseph Sam .....October 3, 2009
- Mrs. Lois "Ydell" Sappington Smith .....October 5, 2009
- Mr. William Peter Copple.....October 11, 2009
- Mr. Dwight Montgomery Archer.....October 14, 2009
- Mrs. Jane Farrar Lusk .....October 15, 2009
- Mrs. Beverly Chastain Larroux.....October 20, 2009
- Mr. Norwood Lynn Jones.....October 24, 2009
- Mr. Loyd Richard Carwyle.....October 24, 2009
- Mrs. Ruth Buchmeyer Else.....October 25, 2009
- Mrs. Corine Reaves Ross.....October 26, 2009

- Mr. Robert Marvin "Boots" Durham.....October 29, 2009
- Mr. Arnold Harvey "Sal" Stanford.....October 30, 2009
- Mrs. Flora May McElreath Tucker.....October 30, 2009
- Mrs. Elizabeth Tilghman Carpenter .....November 3, 2009
- Mrs. Patsy Hardin Waller .....November 4, 2009
- Mrs. Clara Mae McLarty.....November 12, 2009
- Mrs. Christine Mooney Varner .....November 15, 2009
- Mrs. Mary Rose Mitchener Wilds.....November 20, 2009

## MEMORIAL CHRISTMAS TREE

You are cordially invited to participate in the annual Memorial Christmas Tree Service sponsored jointly by North Oxford Baptist Church, North Mississippi Hospice, and Waller Funeral Home on Sunday, December 6, at 5 p.m., in the Family Life Center of North Oxford Baptist Church.

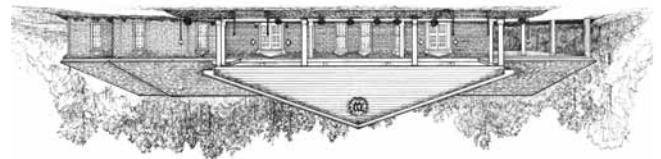
The service will include the opportunity to celebrate the lives of deceased family members and friends by placing personalized ornaments on a Christmas tree. You can bring an ornament or you can personalize one of the ornaments provided. People sometimes bring photographs of those to be memorialized.

The service will also include carol singing, special music, prayer, and a spiritual message. Refreshments will be provided but you can bring treats to share if you desire.

Participants in the past have expressed appreciation for this meaningful time of reflection and encouragement during the holiday season. Some come back every year.

This is a community-wide event for people of all denominations. We encourage you to come. If you have any questions, please give us a call, 234-7971.

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NFDA Pursuit of Excellence Awards



Return Service Requested

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