

Funeral Service
for
Mrs. Marjorie Mae Rowe Belton



May 6, 1917 - September 21, 2000

September 24, 2000
3:00 p.m.

First United Presbyterian Church
201 East Seventh Street
Charlotte, North Carolina

The Reverend Gregory Marc Busby, Sr., Pastor
Officiating

OBITUARY

Marge, or "Mae Rowe" as she was affectionately known by family members and close friends, was born May 6, 1917 in White Plains, NY to the late Charles Edward and Ethel Lowery Rowe. She departed this life Thursday, September 21, 2000 in Charlotte, North Carolina. Her brothers, Charles Edward, Jr. and Gordon "Buddy" Rowe, and her husband, Joseph C. Belton, all precede her in death.

In her early years, tests of ingenuity endowed her with personal characteristics that proved valuable later in life. Destined to excel academically, after graduating as valedictorian from Greenburg High School in White Plains, she earned a full scholarship to Virginia's Hampton University. She served as president of the Hampton Choir before graduating with honors. Later, she attended Columbia University in New York, graduating with a Master's Degree in Education.

Marge's achievement at an early age was only a prelude to a life of distinction as a scholar, classroom teacher, homemaker, personnel director, Y-Teen director, YMCA Executive Director, high school guidance counselor, active church member and community leader. She took to heart the words of Hampton's hymn, "to let her life do the singing and go forth and give service to mankind."

She was employed as a French and History teacher in Currituck County, NC for five years, where she met her husband-to-be, Joseph C. Belton. They married October 7, 1941 in Norfolk, VA and then established residence in Charlotte where they shared a wonderful relationship for over 42 years until his death in 1983. They reared two devoted sons, David C. and Gordon.

Her truest and deepest love was given to her family as a devoted and supportive wife, as a loving and caring mother and grandmother, and as a charming and gracious friend.

A very talented woman with a magnetic personality, Marge was employed in 1944 as a Y-Teen Director of the Phyllis Wheatley YWCA Branch in Charlotte. Many of the former youth teen members fondly remember "Mrs. Belton" as they recalled the genuine love and inspiration she conveyed to them. She became the second Executive Director of the first Black branch in the USA when she was appointed to the position at the Phyllis Wheatley YWCA, where she demonstrated a disciplined yet personable management style. Widely admired for her people skills, she inspired women to do community service through volunteerism throughout 1957.

In 1958, Marge worked as personnel director with Mrs. Marion Cannon at Services Unlimited, a shop specializing in the "hard to find."

She was an active force in the lives of young people who attended both Second Ward High School and West Charlotte Senior High in the 60's and 70's. Marge was characterized as a counselor "par excellence" who motivated students to dream dreams and perform tasks sometimes beyond the range and depth of their own imagination. She retired from the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System in 1979 to care for her husband, Joe, the former principal of J.H. Gunn High School and Marie G. Davis Elementary School.

In 1987, she was chosen "Mother of the Year" at First United Presbyterian Church. During her active years, she regularly attended Sunday School Class and often shared with her club friends the inspiration she derived from the lesson. As long as her health permitted, she made weekly telephone calls to the sick and shut-in. Marge found joy in demonstrating her love for God and her fellowman.

In addition to her church activities, Marge was affiliated with Jack & Jill of America, the Charlotte Chapter of the Links, Inc. the Les Sevantes Social Club, the Monday Nighter's Bridge Club, the McCrorey Heights Neighborhood Association, the Hampton University Alumni, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and those associations related to her profession.

She was a loving mother to sons David C. (Alfreda) and Gordon, and adoring grandmother to Cameron, all of Charlotte; cherished sister-in-law to Hilderene Rowe of Amherst, NY and Mildred Murray of Columbia, SC; devoted aunt to Sheila R. McDowell of Getzville, NY, James D. Belton (Joan) of Vancouver, WA, Joseph A. DeLaine of Charlotte, Ophelia D. Gona (Amos) of Pine Brook, NJ, Brumit B. DeLaine (Edith) of Charlotte, Janice B. Canada (Buddy) of Tolland, CN, Cheryl Belton of Winnsboro, SC, and Cassandra B. Sims of Columbia, SC; beloved cousin to Ruth P. Smith, Jimmy Rowe (Louise), and Marie Smith, of Warrenton, VA, Alice Arrington of Oakton, VA, Madeline Butler of Miami, FL, Marshall Rowe and Virginia Brazington of Philadelphia, PA, and Ann Richardson (Ralph) of Charlotte; treasured relative to a host of other family members, and best friend to many.