

## **Roberta M. Copenhaver**

Roberta M. Copenhaver, 103, passed away on Sunday, September 13, 2015, at the Hermitage in Roanoke, Va. Ms. Copenhaver was born in Marion on June 17, 1912, the daughter of Robert M. Copenhaver Sr. and Martha Matilda Kelly Copenhaver. She was the youngest of eight children all of whom predeceased her.

In 1927, when Roberta was 15 years old, a visit with her sister, Martha, provided her with an experience which determined her career path. That of social work. She attended The College of William & Mary for two years. She attended a special course in the School for Social Work of the Richmond Professional Institute, a division of William & Mary. Later she completed a B.S. Degree from the Institute and then a Master of Social Science Degree from the Smith College School for Social Work in Northhampton, Mass. In 1957, she returned to the Smith College School for Social Work for a program for advanced studies.

Roberta began her career as a Farm Referral Work in the 1930s. After she completed the special course at RPI she became a social worker for the Southwestern State Hospital. Upon completing both her Bachelor's and Master's degrees, she was on the staff of the Northern New Jersey Mental Hygiene Clinics. At the end of World War II she became the Supervisor of Psychiatric Social Service for Virginia. Following her time with the Program for Advanced Studies, she worked for the Down River Family Service Agency just south of Detroit. In 1963 she went to Community Service Society in New York City. Her last two positions were with the Haverford State Hospital near Philadelphia, and Dixmont State Hospital.

Roberta was an avid traveler having been to many sights across the country. She made several trips to England and one to Russia. She once said she always wanted to ride a camel, so where else to go, but Egypt! The family has a picture of her on top of a camel wearing her very proper suit and high heels.

Saturday, June 16, 2012, was proclaimed by the Mayor of Roanoke as Roberta M. Copenhaver Day in celebration of her 100th birthday on June 17, 2012.

She is survived by her nephews, F. Joseph Copenhaver Jr. (Karen) of Marion, and Julian V. Copenhaver Jr. (Barbara) formerly of Marion; niece, Lucile Stinson (Ed) also formerly of Marion; cousin, Kitty Kelly Coxe Koomen of Brandon Oaks in Roanoke; and numerous other nieces and nephews spanning four generations.

A memorial service was held at the Hermitage in Roanoke & at the First United Methodist Church in Marion, Va., at a later date. Expressions of sympathy can be sent to the family at [www.bradleysfh.com](http://www.bradleysfh.com). Bradley's Funeral Home of Marion is serving the Copenhaver family.