



## Willa Dean Robinson

November 27, 1934 - April 21, 2020

Willa Dean Tiller Robinson, 85, of Inez, entered into her heavenly home on April 21, 2020 at her residence, surrounded by her loving daughter and son-in-law. She was born on November 27, 1934 to the late Hiram & Alice (Parsley) Tiller in Little Petercave, KY. The third of seven children, Willa Dean learned the value of hard work, became an expert cook, and developed her caring nature at an early age, as she tended to the family farm and helped care for her siblings.

She proudly became the first in her family to graduate high school in 1954, and then the first to attend college. As a young 19-year-old, she began her 34-year teaching career in a one-room school building in Caney. Simultaneously attending her own classes while teaching, she graduated from the former Pikeville College in 1959.

She met and married the love of her life, Earnest Robinson, in 1957. Together, they had a daughter, Lelia Irene, and built a home on Wolf Creek. They were happily married for 22 years until Earnest's death in 1980. Shortly after, Willa Dean gained a son-in-law, Mike Goble, and together she, her mother Alice, Irene, and Mike moved to Coldwater, where she lived the rest of her life.

Once her granddaughter, Ernay, was born and her mother began aging, Willa Dean retired from her long teaching career in 1988 to assume the role of a loyal and full-time caregiver. She had served hundreds of children in Martin County at Warfield Elementary, Pigeon Roost Elementary, Warfield High School, and Sheldon Clark High School. It was rare for "Mrs. Robinson" to be

in public and not be greeted by a warm smile, hug, and fond memories from a former student or coworker. Many students commented that she was always fair and made them all feel equal, and she was proud of that.

Her retirement days were filled with trips to downtown Inez with Ernay to get the mail from the post office, groceries from Inez ShopRite, and hotdogs from Maynard's Restaurant. She often referred to those days as her best. She also cared for her mother, Alice, until her death in 1993. She was a very active member of the Martin County Retired Teachers Association, serving many roles to include president. She was also on the board of directors for the Martin County Senior Citizens Center. She joined the Goble family on many vacations to the beach, Colonial Williamsburg, and other places, and she rarely missed a game or competition in which Ernay was participating. To say she had a full life would be an understatement, and it all revolved around a family that she fervently loved and defended, even if they were wrong. Willa Dean was the epitome of a matriarch.

Willa Dean is preceded in death by her parents, Hiram & Alice, siblings Arthur Tiller, Irene Tiller, Dennis "Buster" Tiller, Rebecca Jane Tiller, Avonell (Tiller) Jude, and Thelma (Tiller) Johnson, and her spouse, Earnest Robinson.

Survivors include her daughter, Irene Goble and son-in-law, Mike, of Inez, KY, and granddaughter, Ernay Adams, her husband, Josh, and great-grandsons William & Brendan Adams, all of Huntington, WV. Though she was growing tired, weak, and restless, "Mawmaw's" final days were filled with great joy, as she got to see her great-grandsons daily, greeting them with arms spread wide, and she enjoyed watching them play. She leaves a great void in the hearts of her family that can truly never be filled, but the memories and legacy she leaves will continue. She was also blessed with a host of family, friends, and students that will miss her phone conversations, warm smile, and hugs. In her final months when Irene & Ernay knew the time was drawing near, Willa Dean made her wishes for her final earthly moments clearly known. The family fulfilled her wishes of only having a private graveside service on Saturday, April 25, 2020, where she was laid to rest beside of Earnest and her

parents at Mountain View Memory Gardens in Maher, WV. Speakers included Mike Goble, Terry Spence, and Will Adams. Arrangements were under the direction of Callaham Funeral Home in Inez, KY. The family would like to extend its warmest gratitude to Dr. Melissa Fletcher and staff, Three Rivers Home Health, & Community Hospice for their care & support during a very difficult time.

# Tribute Wall

SB

“ I was Willa Deans teacher aid at Sheldon Clark High School. I never saw her get upset. Even when a student flipped her lunch tray onto her. She loved and cared deeply about her students. I loved the times we spent together. The last time i saw her was at Inez Shoprite. She always asked about our family, and i ask about hers. I can just hear her say" You know thats just about how it is theses days". Rest In Peace My Dear Friend.

*Sue Baldrige*

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**Sue Baldrige** - April 29, 2020 at 12:38 PM

BJ

“ She was my 8th Grade Teacher, that was, without a doubt, my most enjoyable year. She was a good teacher and became a good friend. I loved her and will miss her.



*Betty Collier Jacobs*

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**Betty Collier Jacobs** - April 29, 2020 at 12:22 PM

ZH

“ One of my favorite teachers. She loved her students and we loved her. It was always a pleasure to be in her classroom, The relationships carried on throughout our lives. She never lost interest in the people she cared about and would always take time to have a nice chat. She was a beautiful soul and has gone on to her heavenly reward. You will be missed Mrs. Robinson.

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**Zola Howell** - April 29, 2020 at 10:22 AM

AS

“ I am so sad to hear of Willa Dean’s passing. She was an inspiration with her caring, kind ways and always a smile and hug waiting. She was my high school teacher who was always fair, firm and kind. I remember her visits to the nursing home while Mom was there. It was always an occasion to stop and chat. I loved Mrs. Robinson. My heart goes out to my friends Mike and Irene at this time of great loss.



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**Anna Stepp** - April 28, 2020 at 12:32 PM

HC

“ Hazel And Letitia Campbell lit a candle in memory of Willa Dean Robinson



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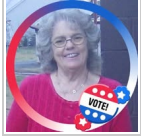
**hazel and letitia campbell** - April 28, 2020 at 09:29 AM

TS

“ She was one of the best teachers I can remember, she was one of my high school teachers her last year of teaching I have a plaque that she gave me her last day and it still hangs in my house today.

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**Thomas Stacy** - April 28, 2020 at 04:31 AM



“ *May God comfort you as only He can on the loss of your precious loved one. We would see each other at the nursing home while visiting there. She will be dearly missed. Keep all your memories close to your heart.*



*Ursula Maynard Dingess*

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**Tito Dingess** - April 27, 2020 at 11:58 PM

GF

“ *Greathel Fields sent a virtual gift in memory of Willa Dean Robinson*



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**greathel Fields** - April 27, 2020 at 09:17 PM

GF

“ *So sorry she was a great person*

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**Geneva maynard Fleming** - April 27, 2020 at 08:26 PM

CP

“ *I loved Mrs Robinson, she was a sweet person and teacher. RIP <3*

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**Carol Preece** - April 27, 2020 at 08:06 PM

CP

“ *Carol Preece lit a candle in memory of Willa Dean Robinson*



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**Carol Preece** - April 27, 2020 at 08:04 PM

NM

“ *Nyok A Maynard lit a candle in memory of Willa Dean Robinson*



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**Nyok A Maynard** - April 27, 2020 at 07:09 PM

LW

“ *Leslie Williamson lit a candle in memory of Willa Dean Robinson*



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**leslie williamson** - April 27, 2020 at 05:49 PM

LW

*this is so sad, she was always so sweet she would hug me no matter were i seen her and she allways say i love u sis i sure will miss seeing that pretty face of her ,R.I.P WILA DEAN ROBINSON*

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**leslie williamson** - April 27, 2020 at 05:54 PM

LL

“ My thoughts and prayers are with the family, I always consider the Tiller girls as family and friends. There are so many memories of us at the store, drinking Hiram's strong coffee. Dean was such a great person, whom Aunt Judy loved very much. I have memories of her and Thel coming to the house and helping feed a church crowd from Buck Creek church. Such nice recollections of her and the family. So sorry to hear of her passing. She is happy and healthy now. Love Lyda Pauley Leach.

lyda leach - April 27, 2020 at 05:12 PM

RS

“ My prayers are with all the family. She truly was a very special lady. I hadn't seen her in quite a while, but have wonderful memories of her. I was one of those hundreds of kids who were blessed to have had her for a teacher.

You never dreaded going to her class. Always pleasant and welcoming. A great atmosphere for learning. I pray God will give you His peace and strength at this time and for the many times ahead of you. Let all the wonderful memories serve you well. They do help. I thank God you were blessed with many. Rest In Peace, Mrs. Robinson. My love to you all. Rosemary Salmons



Rosemary Salmons - April 27, 2020 at 02:21 PM

DC

“ Willa Dean (Mrs. Robinson) was always a caring and loving person. I worked with her and shared joy and heartache, but through it all she became a stronger individual. She Loved her God and family more than anything. She supported the Martin County Retired Teachers faithfully and when she didn't attend a meeting you knew something was wrong. She was loved by many and will be missed.



Darrell Clark - April 27, 2020 at 12:56 PM

MP

“ I remember “Ms Robinson “ best at Warfield High School where she was my English Teacher.. she always called me, Lola, Patty, and Debbie her pets...❤️ Willa Dean was a great lady and she will be sadly missed 😞. Mary Sparks Pack

Mary Pack - April 27, 2020 at 12:33 PM

MA

“ Willa Dean and I were Special Friends from the first time I walked through her classroom!! We Meet up at lga everytime we went each other was there. She Always said God let us meet like that so we could catch up. We would talk for an hour! She always asked about my Family! She always hugged me give me a kiss on the Cheek and told me she Loved me. We shared a love for Purses she would show me her newest purse and I'd tell her how pretty it was. , she loved Her Family said that's what kept her Going. R.I.P. My Beautiful Friend ! Love you Hug & my kiss on the Cheek. Fly High

marcella - April 27, 2020 at 12:21 PM

DS

“ So sorry for your loss. Willa Dean will be missed. Prayers.



Donald Setser - April 27, 2020 at 12:08 PM

J(

“ So sorry for your loss love this lady prayers for you all.  
Joann(Howell)Chapman

Joann (Howell)Chapman - April 27, 2020 at 11:54 AM

JF

“ So sad to hear the passing of one of my very best teachers. She was faithful to come see Mom, when she was sick at the nursing home. We always loved to spend time with her as she held Mom’s hand and chatted with us. We will all miss our dear Ms. Robinson.

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**Judy Fletcher** - April 27, 2020 at 11:33 AM