



Tootie (Helen) H. Haskins

November 13, 1946 - November 14, 2021

Tootie (Helen) H. Haskins passed away November 14, 2021, peacefully at home in Nashville, TN. Throughout her lifetime, Tootie richly blessed the lives of countless fortunate friends by giving so generously her loving support in so many ways.

Tootie served the State of Tennessee as one of the first professional staff members hired by the State Senate in 1971, working with Senators Halbert Harvill, Bill Baird, and Reagor Motlow. Beginning in 1980 until her retirement in 2004, she worked as the Executive Leadership Assistant to Republican Leader Senator Ben Atchley of Knox County, TN.

Following retirement, Tootie continued to serve the state as a welcoming and knowledgeable presence at the information desk at the Tennessee General Assembly, as a docent at the Executive Residence under Governor Bill Haslam and First Lady Crissy Haslam, and as an appointed member of the State Capitol Commission.

Tootie gave tirelessly to officeholders, campaigns, and potential candidates, and has been a close friend, advisor, and confidante to elected officials, staff, and the numerous people who had interests in Tennessee government and politics.

Tootie has received a multitude of recognitions for her exemplary service to the State of Tennessee and the Tennessee Republican Party but perhaps her greatest legacy is her open and welcoming nature to everyone she met and her unwavering loyalty, support, and love for the many, many people in her life.

Born November 13, 1946, Tootie was raised in Centerville, TN, Nashville, TN, and Mobile, AL. Tootie was a graduate of Harpeth Hall and Sophie Newcomb College, the women's college of Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana, where she was President of Phi Mu, as well as serving as a national officer for the sorority. Tootie lived for many years at The Continental on West End Avenue, serving on the Board of Directors and as President of the Board.

A graveside service will be held at 1:00 p.m. Saturday, November 20th at Centerville Cemetery. McDonald Funeral Home is overseeing the arrangements. In lieu of flowers, memorials are requested to the Salvation Army Nashville, Alive Hospice, and Ascension St. Thomas Foundation.

Cemetery Details

Centerville Cemetery

194 Briggs Street
Centerville, TN 37033

Previous Events

Graveside Service

NOV 20. 1:00 PM (CT)

Centerville Cemetery
194 Briggs Street
Centerville, TN 37033

Tribute Wall

JD

“ My first memory of Tootie is from 1966 when I was a freshman at Newcomb College in New Orleans. I joined Phi Mu sorority that year, and my Big Sister in sorority was non other than Tootie Haskins.

How lucky I was to have this lovely, kind, intelligent young woman come into my life. I have many, many fun memories of Tootie from those carefree college days. I'll share two here.

The first is a memory of having dinner with Tootie at the Newcomb dining hall on campus where Tootie showed me how to eat a banana with a knife and fork. :)

The second memory is the story of the green purse. Now, I think everyone reading here knows that Tootie was very well-to-do in her own right in the mid-60s. I, on the other hand was from a simple, middle-class Cajun family in southwest Louisiana.

So one day Tootie asked me to go along with her to run an errand at Gus Mayer, an upscale department store. While Tootie went off on her errand, I browsed around and came upon the most fabulous purse I'd ever seen. It was made of wooden beads which were dyed a gorgeous green color. I was smitten. The price was \$14...WAY beyond my modest student budget. In today's money the \$14 would be more like \$140. I pointed the purse out to Tootie, but she didn't much care for it.

The next afternoon Tootie asked me to go for a ride with her again. When I got into the car, I noticed a plain brown bag between us on the front seat. Tootie pushed it toward me saying it was for me. When I looked inside the bag, I was floored. Yes, it was the green purse.

I lost touch with Tootie way back in the 80s, but I have never forgotten her. In more recent years I would check on Tootie online to see what she was up to. Last week when I googled her, I was just

*devastated to find this news of her passing. I am heartbroken.
Tootie was an incredibly special lady I will never, ever forget.*

Joan Dugas - April 04, 2022 at 03:09 PM



“ *A very lovely lady. Ahead of her time.* ”



Carla Herbison - November 21, 2021 at 12:50 PM

PD

“ *I was a young lobbyist, Tootie was always willing to help. She was a very sweet lady. May you RIP.* ”

Pete Dickson - November 20, 2021 at 04:08 PM

CG

“ *Though Miss Tootie retired from her full-time service on the Hill just before I became a staffer, it never showed. She was a regular presence and positive counsel there, and I was so blessed to get to know her. She made people feel like they mattered in a place where that feeling was sometimes weak. A few years ago, when Gov. Winfield Dunn and his wife were unable to make it to the TNGOP Statesmen’s Dinner, Miss Tootie invited me to fill one of their spots at her table. At the dinner, being at Tootie’s table made me one of “the cool kids.” What a treat! Rest In Peace and rise in glory, my friend.* ”

Chuck Grimes - November 20, 2021 at 11:24 AM

JY

“ Tootie was a wonderful friend and had such a generous spirit. Whenever we saw her, whether at the General Assembly’s welcome desk or other event, she unfailingly greeted us with her warm smile and kind words. She made you feel as if you were so special. We miss you Tootie!

Jane and Bill Young

Jane Young - November 19, 2021 at 01:09 PM

HT

“ Tootie was one of a kind. She was always a ray of sunshine, and I honestly never saw her have a bad day. Seeing posts from treasured friends in the late 70's and 80's brings back so many good memories of Tootie, Senator Harvill, LP 8, WMB and senators and legislative staff who were/are high quality people. Tootie was always courteous and helpful, even after I left LP and worked for the Regents. The picture captures Tootie well.....always well coiffed, dressed to the hilt, and infectious smile. RIP, friend.
Howell Todd

Howell Todd - November 19, 2021 at 10:17 AM

JJ

“ *Julius Johnson lit a candle in memory of Tootie (Helen) H. Haskins*



Julius Johnson - November 18, 2021 at 09:54 PM

KR

“ I had the pleasure of getting to know Tootie as a very young child at the Legislature with my mom Janice Fischer Yates. I use to stay and out with Tootie and walk around in her papagallos shoes. Heaven has gained an angel with a heart of gold. RIP Tootie.



Kimberly (Fischer) Raybourn - November 18, 2021 at 02:26 PM

CM

“ What a wonderful and generous lady! While I was employed at the Tennessee Health Facilities Commission in the mid-80s, Tootie hosted a private "Christmas" tea for the Commission's staff. We were surprised to find that we both were native Hickman Countians. She always exhibited her high principles and knowledge of day-to-day political life at the Capitol. Condolences to all who knew her.

Carolyn Moss - November 18, 2021 at 01:15 PM

BH

“ Tootie and I were life long friends since 1963. We've stayed in contact over the years. She was so gracious and loving. I'll greatly miss her. She loved God and hundreds of people. This is a portrait Tootie gave me a very long time ago. I'll love her forever!



Bob Hawley - November 18, 2021 at 11:35 AM

JD

Bob, I dimly remember you from college days at Newcomb/Tulane. You were a friend of Tootie's. I wondered if you could tell me Tootie's cause of death? You can text me anytime (or call) at 508-494-3394.

Joan Dugas - April 04, 2022 at 03:24 PM

LB

“ Tootsie and I were very good friends growing up in Centerville. When I worked in Nashville I would occasionally run into her. She always had such a kind heart and beautiful smile. I cherish all the memories of the times we spent together.

Linda Bates - November 18, 2021 at 12:40 AM

SC

“ Sheila Chance sent a virtual gift in memory of Tootie (Helen) H. Haskins



Sheila Chance - November 17, 2021 at 09:30 PM

MR

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Marion Rochelle - November 17, 2021 at 06:57 PM

JB

“ Tootie was a wonderful lady, who made everyone feel welcome. She was a kind and gentle spirit that loved to help people. Her kindness will be missed.



JC Bowman - November 17, 2021 at 06:35 PM

MB

“ Miss Tootie was a warm and welcoming smile, most single every day in the War Memorial Plaza. Her southern hospitality and amazing Capitol connections make her a true Tennessee Treasure.

*Kevin Brooks, Mayor
City of Cleveland, TN
State Rep 2006-2018*

Mayor Kevin Brooks - November 17, 2021 at 05:28 PM

JD

“ Tootsie never failed to greet me and say nice things when I would show for a photo session. I never failed to get every photo she asked for, we worked good together.

Jed DeKalb - November 17, 2021 at 04:49 PM

CB

“ Connie Bowen lit a candle in memory of Tootie (Helen) H. Haskins



Connie Bowen - November 17, 2021 at 02:58 PM

SD

“ My mother, Frances O’Dell, lived at the Continental and was one of Tootie’s closest friends. I got to know Tootie and considered her one of my dearest friends. We traveled together and played many fun hands of bridge with Tootie and Pop. My husband ,E.B., and I will truly miss a very kind and gracious lady.
Sarah O’Dell Dyer

Sarah Dyer - November 17, 2021 at 01:03 PM

AC

“ Tootie was a consummate professional at the General Assembly - so knowledgeable about the process and all the personalities involved. Unfailingly kind, perceptive, and willing to share her knowledge. She was also always impeccably dressed and absolutely lovely. And she was so supportive of the young women who gradually invaded the ranks of the “good old boys” over the years. Thank you, Miss Tootie, for everything.

Anne Carr - November 17, 2021 at 12:54 PM

EH

“ Tootie was such a wonderful person. She loved being in The Plaza and the Capitol. She never forgot my birthday, she ate a Snickers bar at 3:00 every day. She loved Christmas parties and her calendar filled almost every month. So many things I could write about Tootie but there is not enough pages. She was a very special lady. ❤️

Edna Claire Holland - November 17, 2021 at 12:51 PM

JA

Edna this is so true! There will never be another one like her.

Joan Achuff - November 17, 2021 at 08:55 PM

JA

I worked with sweet Tootie in the Legislative Plaza in the Senate in the 70's and learned so much from her.

Joan Achuff - November 17, 2021 at 08:57 PM

NR

“ *The great French philosopher Abelard wrote on friendship:*

Reflections on Friendship

A tried and true friend surpasses every good gift of God's giving. and ought to be valued above all riches and this world's goods.

No man is poor who possesses a treasure of value past telling, one all the more precious for being a golden rarity."

Abelard 1100

Tootie was truly our "good gift of God's giving" and we will miss her in our lives every day going forward. Nancy Russell

Nancy Russell - November 17, 2021 at 10:52 AM

DW

“ *We lived next door to Tootie and Honey and Mr. Haskins and Walt and Cora for a few years when I was young. I was always welcome at their house and was included in several activities there. i have not seen or talked to Tootie in several years but have never forgotten our good times.*

Dorinda Wilson - November 17, 2021 at 10:38 AM

BA

“ *Condolences to all who knew and loved Tootie. I had the opportunity to know and work with Tootie for many years. She was always smiling, kind, and more than anything helpful, as she was a reservoir of historic information. She loved her job and it showed. I will always appreciate and benefit from my valuable time with Tootie.*

Betty Anderson - November 17, 2021 at 10:10 AM

 Marion Rochelle

“ *1 file added to the album Honey Haskins early pictures*



Marion Rochelle - November 17, 2021 at 09:43 AM

BC

Thank you for sharing this picture. Obviously she was always a class act! I will miss her so.

becky cantrell - November 17, 2021 at 12:02 PM

CJ

I love this photograph! Thank you for sharing!

Cindy Jones - November 17, 2021 at 12:08 PM

MR

This is actually Tootie Haskins.

Marion Rochelle - November 17, 2021 at 07:01 PM

VY

How in the world do you have this gem?!?!

Valerie Yancey - November 18, 2021 at 05:24 PM

JL

“ *Tootie was a great friend to me through the years. I will miss her. Condolences to all the friends that loved her so. Rip dear friend*

june landrum - November 17, 2021 at 09:38 AM



“ *Condolences to her family*

Carolyn Bennett - November 17, 2021 at 08:04 AM

JT

“ *Jai Templeton lit a candle in memory of Tootie (Helen) H. Haskins*



Jai Templeton - November 17, 2021 at 01:24 AM

PH

“ *I came to know Ms. Tootie six years ago. Her dynamic personality and kind heart stood out in a crowded room. Working with her at The Continental allowed me the opportunity to know her on a personal level and it has been a pleasure. She will be missed by many including me. She had an amazing memory! Pamela*

Pamela Huddleston - November 17, 2021 at 12:13 AM

SK

“ *I walked on Capitol Hill to work for my aunt, Anna Belle Clement, who was just elected to the Senate
We were assigned to the office Tootie was in & it was the foundation of my work on the Hill — she was professional, welcoming & we shared a friendship for years .. I will cherish our times together ..*

Sara Kyle - November 16, 2021 at 10:31 PM

CI

“*Tootie Haskins was one of the most intelligent, caring, and insightful people in Tennessee, and she was a true Southern lady. Her ability to recall names and events was unparalleled, as was her attention to detail. She was a force of nature in the Tennessee Legislature for more than four decades without being abrasive or harsh. She gave tens of thousands of people amazing tours of the Capitol, Legislative Plaza, and the Governor's mansion--even after she retired--and knew history like no other.*

Tootie was generous with her time, knowledge, many talents, and resources, quietly helping many people without drawing attention to herself. If you ever received her political advice or one of her delicious pound cakes, you were truly blessed. She had a strong Christian faith and is no doubt in heaven, but her death leaves holes in the hearts of many, including this friend of 48 years. Rest in peace, Tootie. Carl Koella III

Carl Koella III - November 16, 2021 at 10:06 PM

CJ

Such a beautiful reflection of our friend! Thank you for sharing, I too was blessed by her friendship and her pound cakes.

Cynthia Jones - November 17, 2021 at 02:48 PM

TH

Carl Koella 111, What beautiful words about Tootie. I met her many years ago while visiting my sister, Deana Guenther who also worked in the Capitol, Legislative Plaza. Tootie was such a sweet person & has been a dear friend to my sister. RIP Tootie. Tina Helms

Tina Helms - November 18, 2021 at 11:16 PM

BH

“ *Bob Hawley sent a virtual gift in memory of Tootie (Helen) H. Haskins*



Bob Hawley - November 16, 2021 at 08:56 PM

MG

“ *Marilyn Gilliam lit a candle in memory of Tootie (Helen) H. Haskins*



Marilyn Gilliam - November 16, 2021 at 08:19 PM

BH

“ *Tootie was a good friend to my mother and our family. With her relentless energy, she was unfailingly upbeat and ready to offer a hand no matter what was happening. I can't remember a time when she wasn't wearing her trademark smile. She always had a quick comeback to my supposedly funny comments and loved a good bit of banter back and forth. It was always a joy to see her or talk with her. From the time I was teenager to now, decades later, she always made me feel like she was excited to see me. That is a rare gift. She'll be greatly missed.*

Brad Henderson - November 16, 2021 at 07:21 PM



“ Joyce Mayberry lit a candle in memory of
Tootie (Helen) H. Haskins



Joyce Mayberry - November 16, 2021 at 04:51 PM

NB

Tootie Haskins was a class act. I never saw her treat anyone with anything but respect and kindness. She conducted herself with integrity and grace and always had time for anyone who needed her help. In many ways she was an example of how one should treat others. And if you were her friend, there was nothing she wasn't willing to do to help you. Hers was a life well lived. She taught us how to live and in the end, taught us how to die on your own terms with great dignity and grace. I will miss her girlish laugh and her wonderful friendship.

Tootie, may the choirs of angels come to greet you. May they speed you to paradise.

Nick Bailey

Nick Bailey - November 17, 2021 at 02:27 PM