



## Helen Rhodes Putnam

January 22, 1923 - September 17, 2019

Helen attended Memphis College of Art and was a graphic artist, calligrapher, and crafts teacher during her long professional life. She was a lifetime member of the Memphis Calligraphy Guild, as well as a founding member of the Memphis Herb Society, and she remained active in art by teaching altered book classes at the Botanic Garden until this year. In 2017 Helen was honored at the opening of Crosstown Concourse for being the first female advertising artist at Sears in that location in 1942, stepping in when all the male artists had left to join the war effort. Later she was the local illustrator of Mr. Bingle, a beloved cartoon snowman with holly leaf wings and an ice cream cone hat, who was featured in Lowenstein's Department Store ads at Christmas during the 1950's and 1960's. She also created newspaper ads for Sears, Bry's, Lowenstein's, Phil A. Halle, Memphis Furniture Company, and Aeolian Piano Company at a time when graphic artists used pens, brushes, and ink, not computers. Helen gave back to the community in her later years as a volunteer nursing home visitor, regularly handing out fruit and offering good conversation to residents in several nursing homes throughout Memphis. She was known for a lovely smile and always a kind word. She was a voracious reader and loved to work with children in her church library. She adored her pet dogs and cats down through the years and most recently enjoyed sitting on her patio watching birds visit her feeders.

Helen was predeceased by her husband of 60 years, A. O. (Al) Putnam. She leaves two daughters, Sharon Grinspan (Lee) of Germantown and Charlotte

Myers (Don) of Madison, Mississippi, one granddaughter, Claire Myers of Madison, Mississippi, cousins, Cherry Jones (Sophie Huber) of New York City, Susan Jones (John Nichols) of Paris, TN, and a multitude of friends. The family especially wishes to thank Elias Savage, Frances Brock, Becky Deaux, Perry Uffelman, Peggy Carroll, and Debra Lofties for all the loving care they provided Helen over the years.

A celebration of Helen's life will be held at Second Baptist Church, 4680 Walnut Grove Road, on Sunday, October 6, where visitation will be held at 1:30 p.m. with a service at 2:30 p.m. Honorariums can be sent to the Humane Society of Memphis and Shelby County, the Memphis Public Libraries, or Second Baptist Church.