

A Tribute to Dorothy Boone McDaniel

Written by Anne Roberts

Wednesday, 26 October 2011 08:05

On the Occasion of her 90th Birthday



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I wish I had known Dottie sooner. As she is about to celebrate nine decades on this good earth, I realize that I have not known Dottie long enough.

Fortunately there is no lack of amazing memories of times together and times past: singing Christmas carols around the piano with brass candle sticks alight, and holly, and the warmth of so many friends packed together inside her gracious Craven Street home.

Another Christmas gathering in the Carteret Street townhouse with a candlelit reading of “A Christmas Carol” and budding ballerinas performing “Nutcracker” improvisations for Miss Dottie.

Music, books and good company: Dottie practicing sight reading at her piano, dancing at the Old Commons Neighborhood’s spring concert, waving as the Marine Corps band passes by at the start of parades. Dottie stops at the library to explore things digital but usually ends up with

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a curious classic. She holds court under the yellow umbrellas at the Best Western's sidewalk tables, sometimes stopping at the Bay Street Trading Company for book talk with Will, or going on to Emily's for she crab soup.

Dottie loves Beaufort – its gardens, its people and its happenings. From the high, pillared



porch on Craven Street, she greeted friends, natives, and interesting “come heres.” Some were favored with an invitation for tea and scones in the magically landscaped back garden. Swimming in the Creek is a summertime tradition for Chloe, Mary, Helen, Dottie and friends. The red wagon is loaded with boiled peanuts, fruit, delectables, and towed out to the pavilion at the end of Chloe's dock. The tides are figured precisely. There are “noodles” for youngsters, but the intrepid founding foursome seldom use them.

Dottie and I have similar political leanings, yet are not always on the same page. We do enjoy learning the issues from neighbors Fred Washington, Mike McFee, Donnie Beer and Mayor Billy. Dottie listens attentively, shows up for City Council meetings and charrettes – and then votes her own mind. Many of us believe that Dottie single-handedly saved us from proposals of hot metal benches and expanses of concrete for the Waterfront Park's renovations. After she gave up her VW convertible, Dottie rode her bicycle to these civic gatherings. Now she goes on foot but graciously accepts the offer of a ride from those with wheels. On the hottest, coldest or on thundershower days, she might stop at the specially designated “Dot's Spot” on Rebecca Davenport's porch.

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