

The IFOPA proudly presents to you a Legacy Member . . .
Margaret Jean Jones – Founding Legacy Member
by Nancy Sando



Margaret Jean Jones was our oldest founding member who joined the IFOPA at 53 years of age. Born March 27, 1936 in Baileyton, Alabama, Margaret Jean was a prolific and accomplished writer and encourager. She became “bedfast” (a term she created) shortly after her high school graduation, due to the severity of F.O.P. limitations. Although Margaret was bedfast, F.O.P. did not stop her from participating in the world around her. By using her hand mirror to look out her bedroom window, the ingenious and warm-hearted young lady brought the world to her. Today we are fortunate Margaret Jean learned to use a typewriter and home computers once they became available to connect with our world.

She was a newspaper columnist, magazine writer, and author of three published books, including *Combing Cullman County*, *Cullman County Across The Years*, and her autobiography, *The World In My Mirror*. Margaret Jean was the recipient of two awards from the Freedoms Foundation for published essays, one of which was published in the *Congressional Record*.

Several historical awards were given to her from various civic organizations for outstanding contributions toward the preservation of local history. She was a charter member of the Board of Directors of Ideal Industries and served as president of the new facility from 1973-75. In a surprise move, the charter board members of the sheltered-workshop type facility for the mentally and physically challenged clients, was re-named the Margaret Jean Jones Adult Activities Center in her honor at the grand opening in 1975. She never had a part in the daily staff operation of the facility but, by staff request, she wrote an inspirational and motivational-type article called “Musings” for the monthly newsletter from the facility’s beginning.

In a 1998 interview with her local paper, Margaret Jean was quoted as saying, “There are probably things I would have done differently, but all in all I’ve had a blessed and fulfilling life. I can’t look back and be bitter. I have made a conscious effort not to be bitter, but to concentrate on the things I have done that I’ve enjoyed.”

Margaret Jean was a Christian who very much believed that Christ was the best model to follow. She stated in a previous interview that she always tried to live her life by what Paul wrote in the book of Philippians, chapter 4, verse 19. The verse reads, “And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”

On March 16, 2009, Margaret Jean passed away. She was challenged not only with F.O.P. but with a very rare and deadly type of skin cancer diagnosed in 2008 as merkel cell carcinoma. Because of all the lives Margaret Jean touched by her kind and expressive words, she will truly live on in each one of us – far beyond her 72 years of life.