



Mary Alford Helms
1935 - 1996

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 Jul 14 1935 - Feb 21 1996
 AAFA# 0407

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Mary Alford Helms
 Richmond, VA, 1994

ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE
 Little Rock, AR—Friday, 23 Feb 1996

Mary Edna Helms, of Little Rock, passed away February 21, 1996. She was a homemaker, a member of the Baptist faith, a graduate of Baptist School of Nursing, a volunteer with American Lung Association of Arkansas and CARTI. Her survivors include her husband A. Leon Helms; one son, Alan L. Helms of Bryant; a daughter, Gail Helms Smart of

Springfield, MO; and five grandchildren. Funeral service will be Saturday, at 11 a.m., at Griffin Leggett Healey & Roth Chapel. Graveside service will be at Richland Cemetery at Arkadelphia on Saturday at 2:30 p.m. Visitation will be today, from 5 to 7 p.m., at the funeral home. Memorials may be made to American Lung Associations of Arkansas or one's favorite charity.

AAFA NOTE: Mary Alford Helms was born July 14, 1935 in Hot Springs, Garland County, Arkansas. She was the daughter of Robert Warren Alford and Edna Mae Williams. She traced her Alford ancestry back through great great grandfather Madison Ewing Alford, born about 1816 in Alabama through David Alford to Robert Alford born about 1760 in England. She married Leon Helms, Jr. May 19, 1957 in Hot Springs. Mary and Leon had two children: Alan Helms and Gail Helms Smart. Before her retirement Mary was a nurse. She was also a staunch Republican—though I stay strictly out of politics, especially in AAFA, Mary lectured me more than once regarding the positive aspects of the Republicans!

Over the years we've published several articles and poems that Mary sent about her feelings for AAFA and its members. Those who knew Mary will miss her optimism and enthusiasm, and all of us will miss her contributions to AAFA ACTION. She died on a Wednesday, and as late as Monday of that week she was still talking about going to the 1996 AAFA meeting in Springfield. She will be remembered and missed at the meeting.—Gil

REMEMBERING MARY
 HELMS

Contributed by Lodwick Alford,
 AAFA #11

When Gilbert Alford and others of us first began to exchange correspondence with Mary Helms, we knew she was somebody special. Then when she joined AAFA and later came to one of our annual meetings for the first time, we were doubly sure she was very, very, extra special. The thing that most impressed me was her enthusiasm and sheer delight in being around and among Alford's. She positively glowed in a natural way without the slightest hint of affectation. It didn't seem to matter whether any of us were close kin, kissing cousins or of very distant lines, she was warm and disarming to all. She herself wrote of her pleasure and delight in belonging to AAFA and how she felt so at home at our annual reunions. Several times I wrote about this in my comments and editorials appearing in AAFA ACTION. To me she was the epitome of an AAFA member.

When I first heard she was very ill, I could not help shedding a tear. I alerted every prayer group I could find and we sent Christian love her way. Oh Lord, how we will miss her! I am sure her loved ones will be comforted secure in the knowledge she is now with the Master. May she rest in heavenly peace.

It's Fun Being an Alford

By Mary Alford Helms, Member #407

How many other "families" do you know that are organized? The Mafia, yes—anyone else? There must be some besides the Mafia and the Alford's, but do you know any? Several of my friends, who, when I mention our "family organization," are very envious. "How did that happen?" they ask. "We have family members who cared," is my reply.

I have learned through my immediate family, the convention, telephone conversations, and visits with other "family members" that no matter where we come from, we share some of the same character traits.

We have often been described as "people persons" and/or having a somewhat "off-the-wall" wit. Being a shy, modest, humble Alford, I totally agree! We also possess effervescent personalities, and in most cases have tempers that make the atom bombs seem more like 4th of July fireworks. Looking for a good argument, find an Alford, any Alford, pick a subject, any subject, it doesn't matter! If there was an Arguing Event at the Olympics, we Alford's would win the Gold Medal, the Silver Medal, the Bronze Medal, and if more medals were awarded, we'd win those, too!

We Alford's are the first in line to help others, be it family, neighbors or community service. We are "people persons." If we weren't "people persons," it's doubtful that anyone would have cared whether we had an organization!

A friend once made the statement, "He who toots not his own horn, will not get it tooted." I think I've done a terrific job of tooting our collective "horn." Toot, toot!!!

Since last year, I have met many great "kin", and I hope to meet many more as we all travel down this Road of Alford Genealogy. As I said, "It's fun being an Alford!" ❖



My Priceless Cup

By Mary Alford Helms

It was late—our conversation was brief. He handed to me the last two colorful plastic cups he had brought from his beloved Tangipahoa Parish, LA, and walked away. That was at the Jackson meeting, 1991.

Marian [Alford Hodges] and I brought the cups home. After all, how many folks in Arkansas have cups from Tangipahoa Parish, LA?

My cup became my beverage cup. I can't help but smile every time I use it. It reminds me of Jackson and the "kin" who gave it to me.

He wasn't at the meeting last year. I was looking forward to seeing him at St. Francisville in October.

The latest *AAFA ACTION* came today. I sat down at the table and sipped my coke as I looked through it. There on page thirteen was Eulon Alfred Alford's obituary. Through tears, I caught a glimpse of my cup. Suddenly, it had become as priceless as a piece of my antique china.

I'll remember Eulon. ❖



Mary Alford Helms 0407
b. Jul 14 1935 & d. Feb 21 1996
Lived in Little Rock, AR
Family DAV785VA/ROB760EN
Attended 4 meeting(s).



Thanks for the Memories

*By Mary Alford Helms, with
apologies to the author of "Thanks
for the Memories"*

Thanks for the memories of
Reunion AAFA
In St. Francisville, LA.
As always, it was a blast
And as always it went too fast.

And thanks to Don and to Joan—
Riding with them, a non-stop
laugh zone
All too soon at my house,
Greeting my spouse.

Thanks to Alicia, my "roomie"
Her knowledge really threw me.
Her disposition is very sunny
And her wit is quite funny.

And thanks to Gil and the rest
Who did their dead level best
To see that we had a great time.
I'm trying hard to make this verse
rhyme.

Thanks for the memories
Of a weekend of adventure.
Lots of info and fun, that's for sure.
I'm looking forward to Richmond,
VA
And another great time with
AAFA!

Mary Alford Helms Memorial Scholarship

Mary Edna Alford Helms, AAFA #407, died on 21 February, 1996. A tribute to her appeared in "In Remembrance of AAFA Members," AAFA ACTION, Spring 1996.

In July 1996 the Mary Alford Helms Memorial Scholarship Fund was established in memory of Mrs. Helms, a 1956 graduate of the Baptist Nursing School in Little Rock, Arkansas. The \$25,000 initial gift will provide nursing students with much needed scholarships for years to come.

The purpose of the fund is to provide, on an annual basis, interest from the gift in the form of a scholarship to a student nurse. The fund will be invested and the interest earned on the principal will be used to make the scholarship awards. A portion of the interest money will be reinvested in the principal to insure the perpetuity of this scholarship. The scholarship will make it possible for deserving students to continue their education in the School of Nursing. It will provide students who demonstrate scholastic ability, nursing competence and a sincere desire for increased knowledge of nursing with the means to meet their student obligations for tuition expenses.

The family of Mrs. Helms will be notified each year of the recipient and will be given the opportunity to meet the student. The scholarship can be presented at the awards ceremony by a member of her family.

The criteria can be set by Mrs. Helms' family. Below are examples of the criteria used for scholarship recipient selections:

1. The student must be a graduate of an accredited

Arkansas High School or have received their GED.

2. The student must have a 3.0 or above grade average.

3. The student must have met the standard requirements for admission to the Baptist School of Nursing.

4. The student must be enrolled full-time in the Baptist School of Nursing as an RN candidate and have completed Level 1.

5. The student must complete an application and submit along with documentation of their financial need to the Scholarship Committee.

6. The Scholarship Committee will review applications, student records and will make a report to Baptist Health Foundation for issuance of the scholarship.

When the student who receives the scholarship becomes a productive member of the nursing profession, he/she will be encouraged to provide an education for others as a way to express his/her appreciation for the opportunity given to him/her by Mrs. Helms' family.

Your donation can be mailed to:

Baptist Health Foundation
9601 Interstate 630, Exit 7
Little Rock, AR 72205-7299

Please note that you wish your donation to be applied to Mrs. Helms' fund. If you'd like an acknowledgment sent to her family, please let that be known, too.

Upon receiving your donation, the Foundation will mail you a tax receipt.

'Dear Alford "Kin,"

As you may know, I had breast cancer six years ago. I went in for a routine bone scan 10118-19193; the oncologist called and told me that it had come back a rib and a femur (thigh bone) and the blood.

The oncologist is very optimistic. She told me that people can live "for years and years and years with this" and added, "but with YOUR attitude

I don't accept it coming back! I plan to live forever and then some!

I ask for your prayers for healing.

Marian [Alford Hodges] and I have often discussed attitude. We feel like "the Alford Attitude" can put down anything.

So please send your prayers towards Heaven and your attitude my way. I KNOW that with prayers, attitude, vitamins, diet, visualization, exercise, and chemo, I'll be fine!

May I also ask you to include Amanda Blake in your prayers. She is fighting lymphoma. I met her at the doctor's office. She is 36 years old.

Thank you so much, and I look forward to seeing everyone in Richmond.

*Sincerely,
Mary Alford Helms*

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