



## Jewell Thomas Dunaway

February 27, 2026

Jewell Thomas Dunaway was born in the Lake community of Laurel County to Nell Rowland Thomas and Orie Thomas. She had two older brothers, Eugene and Vascoe, and a younger sister, Betty Lou, all of whom she adored. When she was 14 her family moved “to town” to the little white house just across the railroad tracks on East 4th Street. It wasn’t long until she met a handsome, dark-haired young man, Keith Dunaway, whose family operated a restaurant and House Funeral Home, close to where she lived. Soon they were both smitten and were married when he was 18 and she was 16.

The Army and the Korean War came calling, taking him away from her for a short time while he served in Germany. After he returned daughter Debra was born and became the apple of their eyes! In 1958 they built their house on McFadden Lane on the family farm which remained as their only home. Soon daughter Bridget was added to the family.

While Keith worked away for the L & N Railroad during the week, she took care of her two girls and managed the home. For years she would only see Keith on the weekends, but in the 1970's he was able to get a position with the L & N that kept him home. After Keith retired in the 1980's they and Keith’s sister Luann Parsons and daughter Debbie operated a floral business. Unfortunately, Keith passed from cancer in 1992, leaving her heartbroken. He was her one and only.

She kept busy with her grandchildren, Jennifer and Ashton, attending their school and other activities. They spent a lot of time with their “Little Mom” who they dearly loved. She was delighted when the great-grandchildren came along and relished the time she spent with them.

She also enjoyed being a greeter at House & Rawlings Funeral Home, where she carried on the family business as part-owner.

She also liked to travel with her family. She took several girls’ trips with Debbie, sister-in-law Elsie Thomas, and nieces Jeanne Thomas Smith and Judy Thomas Phelps. Her last big trip was in an RV to Oregon with Bridget, Debbie, and Brianna to visit her brother Vascoe and his family.

She had a servant’s heart. She kept the nursery at Calvary Baptist Church for many years. She loved babies, children, and “old people” and they loved her. She always had a bright smile for friends, family, and strangers. While at Laurel Heights nursing home she would sit out in the 2nd floor lobby and greet everyone she saw.

She kept an immaculate house. She loved dogs. She taught her family the importance and meaning of honesty and hard work. She lived the life of a Christian and always saw that her children and grandchildren were involved in church. She loved her nieces and nephews as if they were her own children. She always made sure her appearance was classy; and she was always proud that she didn’t look her age. She made her girls promise not to put her date of birth on her obituary. She liked to say she was “39 and holding.”

She was preceded in death by her husband Daniel Keith Dunaway, parents Nell Rowland Thomas and Orie Thomas, brothers Eugene Thomas and Vascoe Thomas, son-in-law Felix York, brother-in-law Randolph Byrley,

sisters-in-law Elsie Thomas, Luann Parsons, and Sylvia McKenzie.

She is survived by her sister Betty Lou Byrley, daughters Debra Lou York and Bridget Leigh Dunaway; her grandchildren Jennifer York and Ashton York; her great-grandchildren Brianna Jewell Bowling, Daniel Keith Hibbitts, Dean Thomas Curry, and Clayton River Curry; and her great-great grandchildren, Greyson Blain Bowling and Hudson Lee Bowling, plus a host of nieces, nephews and other family and friends.

The family wishes to thank her care givers and the nurses and staff at Laurel Heights Nursing Home.

A funeral service honoring Jewell Thomas Dunaway will be held on Thursday, March 5, 2026 at 1:00 p.m. in the chapel of House-Rawlings Funeral Home with Claude Maggard officiating. Interment will follow at A. R. Dyche Memorial Park in London, Kentucky. The family will receive friends on Thursday beginning at 11:00 a.m. until the service hour, also at the funeral home. The family has entrusted House-Rawlings Funeral Home with the arrangements.

The family has requested that the funeral service be Livestreamed:

Click here to view Livestream of Funeral Service (<https://together.oneroomstreaming.com/JQH5JE>)

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAR 5. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (ET)

House-Rawlings Funeral Home  
510 East 4th Street  
London, KY 40741  
(606) 864-2158  
info@houserawlings.com  
<https://houserawlings.com>

## Funeral Service

MAR 5. 1:00 PM (ET)

House-Rawlings Funeral Home  
510 East 4th Street  
London, KY 40741  
(606) 864-2158  
info@houserawlings.com  
<https://houserawlings.com>

# Tribute Wall

SM

“ Beautiful tribute and photos! Prayers for strength in the days ahead and peace in knowing she is in a better place and having a wonderful reunion with her one and only!!

Sharon McCauley - March 05 at 11:56 AM

KB

“ My sweet beautiful Aunt Jewel. I love you so dearly. Thank you for making your shy niece feel so special. I will always cherish you. Thank you for my first cup of coffee, first pair of jeans ( Mother loved putting me in dresses and black patent)....for my pup tent. Thank you for all the talks we had. Thank you for helping me maneuver this world without my Daddy (Randolph Byrley). I would not have made it without you. I will visit your grave soon. I will see you in Heaven one day.



Kimberly Byrley - March 05 at 09:52 AM

JM

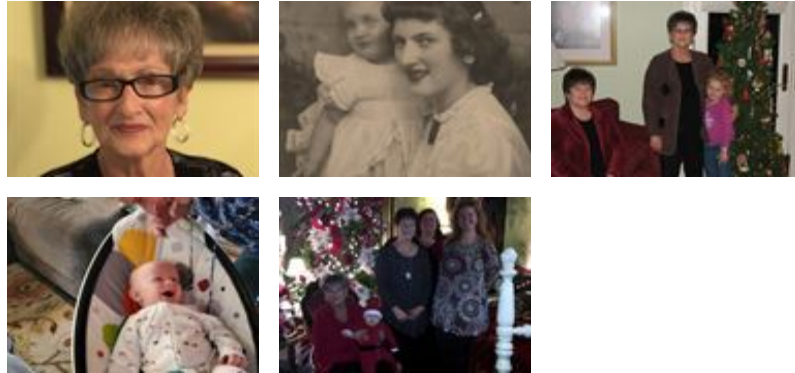
“ Joe & Trudy Mcknight lit a candle in memory of Jewell Thomas Dunaway



Joe & Trudy Mcknight - March 04 at 09:35 PM



“ 131 files added to the album *LifeTributes*



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**House-Rawlings Funeral Home** - March 04 at 11:06 AM

JM

“ *Joe & Trudy Mcknight lit a candle in memory of Jewell Thomas Dunaway*



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**Joe & Trudy Mcknight** - March 04 at 12:04 AM

CJ

“ *I don't ever remember seeing her without a smile on her face. She was such a sweet lady. I am so very sorry for your family's loss.*

*Crystal Hoskins Johnson*

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**Crystal Johnson** - March 03 at 10:09 PM

JC

“*Jewel and I were classmates at Lake Elementary School. Prayers for her family.*”



**Joyce Deaton Chesnut** - March 03 at 08:24 PM

PS

“*We spent so much time at her home growing up, we raised tobacco on her land, put up hay, had ponies there. She was so good to us and she just became part of my childhood. Bridgette and BB, the great dane were always the too. So many good memories happened there for me. Her presence will be sorely missed.*”

**Peggy Sherman** - March 02 at 03:41 PM

HY

“*Bridget, I am sorry for your loss. Thinking of you and your family.*”

**Hayley Young** - March 02 at 02:29 PM

GI

*Debbie and Bridget, we loved Jewell. She was sweet and kind to all of us but especially our children Tyler and Tessa. She was the perfect example of kindness, grace, and class with a great sense of humor. Praying for you all.*

**Gloria & Chuck Inman** - March 02 at 09:19 PM