

Flossie Dedmond, 93, English professor, administrator at Coppin State College

By **Frank D. Roylance**

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Flossie McLain Dedmond, a poet, writer and for more than three decades an English professor and revered administrator at Coppin State College, died Friday of cancer at her West Baltimore home. She was 93.

"She was without a doubt one of the most dedicated and staunch supporters Coppin has ever known," said the college's president, Calvin W. Burnett. "I, and the entire Coppin family, are deeply saddened."

The Rev. Harold A. Carter, pastor of New Shiloh Baptist Church in West Baltimore, where she was a member, described Mrs. Dedmond as "a genuine Sojourner Truth in matters related to the advancement of Afro-Americans and all people in general. She drew strength from a deep spirituality and faith in God. She was a doer and made things happen."

Mrs. Dedmond was born in Nashville, Tenn. A precocious child, she learned to read and write music at an early age. She would later compose the school song for **Allen University** in **Columbia, S.C.**

She earned a bachelor's degree in English at **Fisk University** in the 1930s and a master's degree in speech arts at Columbia University in the late 1930s. She pursued post-graduate studies in English and speech at **Ohio State University**, and later received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from Allen.

Before taking her first post at Coppin, Mrs. Dedmond served in teaching and administrative positions at Allen; **Benedict College** in Columbia, S.C.; **Knoxville College** in Tennessee; and Morgan State University.

In 1947, she was hired to teach English at Coppin. She later became head of the English Department and chaired numerous committees on curriculum, salary and promotional issues, counseling and accreditation.

She later became director of the Summer/Evening College and retired as dean of the Arts and Sciences Division.

"The college, and the country for that matter, will not soon see an educator and educational leader whose skills and dedication compare with those of Dr. Dedmond," Mr. Burnett said.

In recognition of her long service, Mrs. Dedmond was named dean emeritus when she retired in 1978.

In 1993, the school named its first residence hall The Flossie M. Dedmond Center for Living and Learning. Before her death, she established an endowment to support the needs of students who live there.

Mrs. Dedmond's poetry, book reviews, critical essays and radio scripts have been published in literary magazines. She was the author of a Guide to Public Relations, used by the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, of which she was a member for more than 50 years.

Among her many service positions, she was a member of the governor's Appellate Judicial Nominating Commission for more than six years. She was also a former national vice president of the National Council for Negro Women, and a life member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

In 1970, Mrs. Dedmond was named one of the Outstanding Educators of America. She was inducted into the Baltimore City Commission for Women's Hall of Fame this year.

Memorial services will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday at New Shiloh, 2100 Monroe St. and at noon Oct. 2 at Coppin State College, 2500 W. North Ave.

Mrs. Dedmond's husband, Frederick H. Dedmond, a longtime head of the Foreign Language Department at Morgan State University, died in 1981.

She is survived by a sister, Alice M. Newkirk of Mount Vernon, N.Y.

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