



Pearline Mae Singleton

September 8, 1947 - September 10, 2026

Columbia, South Carolina

Pearline Mae Singleton died in Columbia on September 10, 2026, at seventy-nine. She was born there on September 8, 1947, in a house that sat close enough to a hospital that children learned a siren before they learned a hymn. Her mother pressed uniforms for other women. Pearline learned that a hot plate left on a porch is a form of keeping people upright.

Twenty-four years of her life went into wards that smelled of bleach and coffee. She started making beds. She ended as the woman who could tell, from the sound of a call bell, whether a night would hold. She kept extra socks for the patient whose morning had already been too long. She would not let a chart invent a portion that made the tray a liar.

She married Howard Singleton in 1968. They raised a son and a daughter in a bungalow that needed a new roof more often than the paycheck admitted. After Howard died in 2006 she kept his saucer on the drainboard for a season, then gave it to a granddaughter. She sang alto in a choir that rehearsed whether anyone new showed up or not.

People on her block remember a woman who froze extra cornbread in coffee cans and left them after a funeral. She disliked a speech, loved a clean linen closet, and could tell you which year the hall switched from square pizza to the round kind the students would actually finish. She died in Columbia, in heat she had always said was honest. The ward still opens.

Services

A gathering at her church hall in Columbia. Friends may bring a covered dish. A gift to a hospital-aide fund is

welcome.

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