Miss Joette Clark

Miss Joette Clark, 85, of 16th Street, passed this life Wednesday, December 13, 2000, in her home. She was born to the union of the late Washington Clark and Vera McGlendon-Clark, in Grenada, MS. She came to Toledo with her family at the age of eight and attended Gunckel Elementary and Libbey High Schools. Miss Clark was a 1958 graduate of the Maumee Valley Hospital School of Nursing, worked one year there as a staff nurse before moving to Cleveland to work at the Cleveland Division of Health. After earning her bachelor’s degree in nursing from the Case Western Reserve University in 1956, she began her teaching career as an assistant nursing instructor at the Cleveland Metropolitan General Hospital. In 1964, she began working on her master’s degree in nursing at the University of Pennsylvania, where she worked as an instructor. She continued working there and by 1973 was named the director of the undergraduate nursing program at the Ivy League School. She moved to Detroit in 1977, where she became the assistant director of the Master’s Outreach Program at Wayne State University’s Nursing School. In 1988, she was named Assistant Dean of the Nursing School until 1993. She returned to Case Western in 1993 to work at the school’s Medical Center for International Health. She traveled to Africa regularly for seven years with programs in Uganda and Zimbabwe on behalf of the university. She was a member of the Mt. Zion M.B. Church since childhood. After moving to Cleveland, she became a member of the Olivet Institutional Baptist Church. Upon returning to Toledo, she became a member of the United M.B. Church. She was a member of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and the Women’s Christian Education Commission.

Surviving are her loving brother, Henry “Poor Clark” Clark; aunt, Mrs. Courtney Tucker of Lorain, OH, and a host of other loving relatives and kind friends.

Visitation will be 5-7 p.m. Thursday in the C. Brown Funeral Home Inc., Chapel, 1629 Nebraska Avenue (255-7682). Funeral Services will be 12 noon Friday in the United M.B. Church, 2701 Monroe Street with Family Hour preceding at 11 a.m. The Reverend Ernest Jackson, Jr., Officiant. Cfuneral-Hm@aol.com
Nurse headed panel on minority health

Joette Clark, a longtime nurse and nursing instructor whom Mayor Carty Finkbeiner appointed this summer as project manager of his Commission on Minority Health, died Wednesday in her near-downtown home. She was 65.

She died of complications of an asthma attack, her brother, Henry, said.

Miss Clark spent much of her career in Cleveland and Detroit and traveled the world as part of her work. But Toledo was always home, and she told The Blade in September she was pleased to accept Mr. Finkbeiner's appointment.

"This was a chance to continue to help people," Miss Clark said then. "I never saw a doctor or a dentist until I was an adult. I've lived through what we're talking about."

The commission's focus is disparities between minority and white residents of Lucas County in such areas as childhood immunization and rates of infant mortality, cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and HIV/AIDS.

"She was doing an excellent job as a public servant," the mayor said in a statement. "I admired her intellect, her compassion, and her desire to make a meaningful contribution to the people of Toledo."

Miss Clark's job officially was part time, but she "put full-time work to it," Mary Gregory, commission co-chairwoman, said last night. "She was very organized," Ms. Gregory said. "These topics and issues she was as familiar with as the back of your hand. We were really moving right along."

Miss Clark was born in rural Mississippi, in a home without running water, and was 8 when she and her brother moved to Toledo to live with their father and his wife.

Later, she said her background allowed her to relate to conditions in Africa, where she worked for more than six years, and to know first-hand the disparities in health care at home.

"People would ask me all the time, 'How could you have worked in those conditions?'" Miss Clark recalled in September. "I would tell them I was born in somewhat similar conditions in Mississippi. I wondered, 'How can we live in a land with so much and have health care be limited to so few?'"

Miss Clark was a graduate of Libbey High School and the former Maumee Valley Hospital school of nursing. She received a bachelor's degree from Frances Payne Bolton school of nursing at Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, and taught at the then-Cleveland Metropolitan General Hospital.

She received a master's degree from the University of Pennsylvania and became director of undergraduate nursing there. She later was assistant director of the master's in nursing program and assistant dean of nursing at Wayne State University, Detroit.

She returned to Case in 1993 and became coordinator of African programs. She spent much of the 1990s traveling throughout Africa.

Miss Clark retired and returned to Toledo about a year ago to be near her brother.

Surviving is her brother, Henry.

The body will be in the C. Brown Mortuary from 5 to 7 p.m. Thursday. Funeral services will be at noon Friday in United Missionary Baptist Church, where a family hour will be at 11 a.m. Friday and Alpha Kappa Alpha services at 11:30 a.m. The family requests tributes to the Joette Clark scholarship fund in care of Julia Holt, treasurer of Alpha Kappa Alpha's Zeta Alpha Omega chapter.