



1st Lt. Josephine Wright
U.S. Army 804th MAES,
first in the SW Pacific

web
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Josephine Wright Murley



MURLEY Josephine Wright Murley, 91, died peacefully in her Orange Park home on Saturday, March 12, with family members present. She was born on February 27, 1920, at her grandmother's home at Loreto, near Mandarin, just before the family moved to St. Augustine. She was fourth among the ten children of Lucy Lourcey and Samuel Abner Wright. She leaves behind to remember and celebrate her life three sisters and one sister-in-law, three daughters, two sons, two daughters-in-law, seven grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren, and many dear nieces and nephews. Josephine graduated from Ketterlinus High School in St. Augustine and then St. Luke's Hospital nursing program in Jacksonville. She and a friend from nursing school worked at a hospital in Miami before joining the U.S. Army in February 1942. Lt. Wright and five other young nurses pioneered medical air evacuation of Allied troops on the north coast of New Guinea, taking the wounded from battlefields to Brisbane, Australia, on C-47 aircraft. After the war ended, Jo married H.D. Murley in Memphis, and in 1959 they moved the family to Texas. He died in March 1991, and she moved back to northeast Florida to be near her beloved brothers and sisters. She

enjoyed family occasions including bowling and lunch on Wednesdays, which she last attended in February. From an early age Jo loved reading and the beach. As a young mom she sewed clothes for her daughters and later used these talents as an accomplished quilter; among her charitable gifts are several children's quilts she designed, made, and gave to a local police program for traumatized children. As a final gift, Jo arranged years ago to donate her body to the University of Florida College of Medicine for the benefit of students' practical education. The family will soon hold a commemoration of her life. The last lines in the undated, handwritten letter to her children that was discovered the morning after she died say: "Don't be sad. I've had a great life and a lot of wonderful memories."

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