

AUSTIN, Texas — Margaret Berry, B.A. '37, a former dean and historian at The University of Texas at Austin, died early Sunday morning. She was 101 years old.

The university's main Tower will be darkened tonight in her honor. A recipient of the Texas Exes Distinguished Alumnus Award in 1996, Berry served the university in multiple capacities.

"Margaret Berry touched the lives of tens of thousands of people in the UT Austin community," university President Gregory L.

Fenves said. "As a history graduate who become a beloved teacher, a dean who mentored hundreds of students, and later a university historian and adviser, she made the Forty Acres a better place. Our thoughts are with her family as we remember and celebrate her rich, accomplished life."

Berry was born Aug. 8, 1915, and raised in Dawson, Texas. She graduated from UT Austin with a B.A. in history in 1937, going on to earn a master's degree and doctorate in history from Columbia University. While enrolled in graduate school, she also taught at elementary schools in El Campo, Galveston and Freeport, Texas. She was dean and history instructor at Navarro Junior College and became the dean at East Texas State University in 1950.

Berry moved to Austin in 1961 to write a dissertation on student life and UT campus traditions. She became the university's associate dean of women in 1962, the first of many administrative posts she held at UT Austin.

Her first history of the university, published in 1974, was "UT Austin: Traditions and Nostalgia." Others included "The University of Texas: A Pictorial Account of Its First Century," "Brick by Golden Brick: A History of University of Texas Campus Buildings," "UT History 101: Highlights in the History of The University of Texas" and "Scottish Rite Dormitory: A History: 1920-2007."

Berry officially retired in 1980 but remained involved with university life. She taught freshman seminars about university history and served on the Commission of 125, a strategic advisory group of students, faculty members, staff members and alumni.

In 2015, UT Austin and the Texas Exes marked the occasion of her 100th birthday with an event at the Alumni Center attended by nearly 300 admirers. As the Alcalde reported, stories of Berry's influence filled the room: "How she inspired students to become leaders, how she taught a class with a perfect attendance record, and how she even played a matchmaker to a 60-year marriage. She is often described as both a 'legend and a treasure,' and it's safe to say that the hundreds of sentimental attendees at the celebration agreed."

"When in her presence, students absorbed her combined passion for them as individuals and for her beloved University of Texas, producing better human beings, a better university, a better world," said Berry's friend and former student Clare Buie Chaney. "She inspired confidence in them that their unique attributes could live up to any challenge; and they'd be having an adventure in the process. Indeed, as one of Dr. Berry's tsunami of surrogate children, I know only too well that 'What starts' with Dr. Berry 'changes the world.'"

The atrium of the Student Activity Center was named in her honor in 2012. In 2015, friends created a \$100,000 Endowed Presidential Scholarship in honor of her parents, Lillian and Winfred Berry. Funeral arrangements have not yet been made. This page will be updated as more information becomes available.

For more information, contact: [University Communications](#), Office of the President, 512-471-3151.