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In Memoriam

Howell A. McKay

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Tampa lost one of its best-loved citizens in March 1983 with the death of Rhoda Fraleigh Knight. 'Girlie' as she was known to her friend of all ages, though not a native Tampan became a vital part of the community with her marriage to Peter O. Knight, Jr. in 1925. Small in stature but a giant in warmth and sincerity, she soon won her place in the hearts of Tampans.

Born June 5, 1904, Mrs. Knight received her early education in her home town, Madison, Florida, and was graduated from Florida State College for Women with degrees in English and history.

Mrs. Knight was long active in religious, civic and social life in Tampa. Her greatest love was her church, St. Andrew’s Episcopal, where she was active in many of its organizations. For 38 years she was a member of the Board of Governors of the Home Association (the first floor west parlor of the Home has been named in her honor), and held memberships in the Junior League of Tampa, the Colonial Dames of America and the
Chislers. At one time she served on the City of Tampa Park Board.

Along with her husband, Mrs. Knight continued the philanthropies of her father-in-law, Colonel Peter O. Knight, Sr. The University of Tampa and the Performing Arts Center were both recent recipients of sizeable contributions from the Knights. Their generosity helped make possible the purchase of his parents’ honeymoon cottage as headquarters for Tampa Historical Society.

There were no detractors of Girlie Knight. Those who knew her loved her for her vibrant spirit and for her genuine devotion to her God, her family, her friends and her community. Her delightful presence long will be remembered.

HOWELL A. McKAY is a native Tampan and a general insurance agent. He will serve as incoming treasurer for Tampa Historical Society for 1984.