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## **Last known survivor of Rosewood Massacre dies at 98**

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The last known survivor of Rosewood Massacre died Wednesday with family members by her side in a Jacksonville hospital.

Mary Hall Daniels, 98, was just 3 years old when she experienced the mass killing of black people in her hometown of Rosewood in Levy County.

She was believed to have escaped the region by being carried by her mother, Mary Davis Hall, and older sister, Margie Hall, through a swamp and onto a train that traveled into Gainesville.

The Sun visited with Hall Daniels and family members Wednesday hours before her death.

“She’s a very proud woman, and she taught me to be a very proud person,” said her grandson Carlous Hall. “She really stood up for what she believed in, whether she was right or wrong.”

In January 1923, a white mob formed in Rosewood following a false claim that a black man sexually assaulted a white woman. The city of Rosewood was all but burned to the ground as people attempted to escape. At least six black people and two white people were believed to be killed, though it is speculated that more than 100 black people were killed.

The next month, a Bronson jury found insufficient evidence to charge anyone involved in the massacre.

Sherry DuPree, of the Rosewood Heritage Foundation, who was also present Wednesday, has been teaching others the history of the 1923 tragedy. DuPree and family say Hall Daniels was the last living survivor from the tragedy.

Hall Daniels was diagnosed with lung cancer last month and admitted into Hospice at the University of Florida Health Jacksonville hospital on Friday. Hall Daniels previously worked at the hospital when it was under different ownership. She was one of nine siblings, all of whom have also passed away.

Those who knew Hall Daniels paint her as a colorful, independent person who often was the best dressed at Sunday service.

“Growing up with my grandmother she was everything,” the grandson said. “Seeing her like this is tough, because I’m used to seeing her as a strong-willed independent person who would do anything for you.”

Hall Daniels’ only daughter, Azelda Daniel Harrell, said she remembers that her mother couldn’t stand people lying to her, a pet peeve that stemmed back to the Rosewood Massacre.

“A lie is the part of what started the whole thing, a lie, just one person creating a lie and it created all that,” Harrell said.

Harrell, who worked in the medical field, said her mother wasn't a smoker and was shocked to hear the diagnosis.

“I just wanted her to have peace and I know Hospice offered that care,” she said.