



Mrs. Jean Dawkins  
...death sudden

## Mrs. Dawkins

NEWARK, N.J. — Both the local and national jazz world were stunned when it was learned last week that death had come to Mrs. Jean Dawkins, who has operated one of the top spots catering to the jazz idiom, the famous Key Club at Halsey and William Sts., downtown Newark.

The great Al Hibbler, who has performed at the club on many occasions after leaving the famed Duke Ellington Orchestra, delivered a stirring solo at her final services held on Tuesday, March 21, at the Whigham Funeral Home.

While scores of musicians in the area who have played numerous engagements at the Key Club, were among the mourners, a telegram was received from Newark Singer Lu Elliott, one of her closest friends who had just returned to

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# —Jean Dawkins.

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Los Angeles, Calif after a nationwide government tour

Among those attending were Irene Reid, Joe Thomas, Charlie Earland and his band that had just closed a Key Club engagement; Sam Williams, and many other local and national stars.

Mrs. Dawkins, called "Jean" though her name was Eugenia, formerly Byrd, was a native of Belleville, N.J., and the family resided for several years in Bloomfield.

The Key Club has been at the William St. site for 20 years, and Jean has managed the famed jazz spot since 1973, when her life was touched by tragedy. Her late husband, Walter Dawkins, Sr., fatally shot himself inside the club after a period of despondency.

It was announced last week also, that the Key Club will remain open under the management of

her son, Walter C. Dawkins, Jr., 22, who is among her survivors.

She also leaves her father, David Byrd and stepmother, Marion Byrd of East Orange and two sisters, Emilie Larkins and Stephany Jones, both of East Orange.

Mrs. Dawkins died at her East Orange home suddenly, around 2 a.m., March 18.

Services were under direction of the Whigham Funeral Home on High Street, Newark.

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