



Betty Sue Smith

June 22, 1924 - December 4, 2017

Betty Sue Zimmerman Smith was my beloved Grandmother. She was always proud to tell you she was born and raised in Angola, Indiana. Among the more interesting facts she shared from her youth was that her family was the first on her street to have electricity. She remembers how neighbors would stand outside her family's house, waiting for nighttime, just so they could see the lights come on inside her house. But growing up wasn't always easy. Her father left her mother, brother and sister when they were children, though she never spoke much of that.

When she was old enough, she joined the US Coast Guard during WWII. She worked as a candy striper and was stationed in Mobile, Alabama. There, she lived in a beautiful antebellum home on Dauphine Street which once housed the Mayor of Mobile. Those were the kinds of things Grandma enjoyed.

It was there in Mobile that she was first approached by a young man named Aubrey Smith who asked her to go on a date with him to church. Though she felt it was an unusual location for a first date, she was very intrigued thought he was certainly handsome, so she said "yes." So PawPaw took Grandma on their first date to church, and then to lunch afterward. Not long after that, they fell in love and were married two months after the war ended in 1945 in Daphne, AL and honeymooned in Gulfport, MS. And that is how their 68 and a half-year long marriage began.

Two years later, they welcomed their only child, a beautiful, sweet blonde beauty, Betsy Jane, whom they loved with all their hearts. They lived in Texas for a few years before moving to Cincinnati, Ohio where PawPaw worked for General Electric. After a few years, he took a job with NASA and the family moved to Huntsville, Alabama before being transferred to Pasadena, California.

They lived in Pasadena for the next 25 years as PawPaw helped send the Apollo missions to the moon. Grandma so loved living near the beach in Pasadena, and she made lifelong friends while they were there. Eventually, PawPaw retired from NASA and they returned to Alabama to live in their quiet country lakeside cabin on Lake Guntersville. Grandma also loved their little home by the lake.

Eventually, she settled into volunteering with the Daughters of the American Revolution because her ancestor, Michael Boyer, was a Captain in the American Revolution, and she was very proud of that heritage. She attended DAR monthly meetings, she served on the Board, helped plan their Christmas parties, and had the DAR ladies over to her house for games of bridge. She genuinely loved being a part of the local community.

She loved gardening, and spring and summertime at the cabin were always filled with the sights and wonderful smells of azaleas and gardenias.

She loved to travel, and together, she and PawPaw enjoyed their times together visiting places like the Bahamas, Mexico, Spain, Ireland, and many cruises. Her favorite travel spot was always the beach, and her favorite beach was Destin, Florida because she felt it was the prettiest. Grandma was diagnosed with Rheumatoid Arthritis as she aged, and she said that just laying by the water made her arthritis go away.

She also loved spending time with my brother and I, her grandchildren. Whenever came to visit over the weekend, she always made sure there was a gallon of chocolate milk in the fridge and a fresh box of ice cream in the freezer for us. As family issues arose later in life, Grandma and PawPaw took me in to live with them at the age of 13. That influential time in my life forged a special bond with both of them.

My Grandmother was my chauffeur, my chef, my housekeeper, my caretaker, and my teacher. Not only that, but she went above and beyond those roles in many ways. She taught me all about good manners and how to write a proper Thank You Note. She provided all my clothes, and she even made sure I knew how to set a table for a 5-course meal. Grandma also signed me up with the Jr. Daughters of the American Revolution and she made sure that I attended every meeting, even after I graduated college.

With Grandma's help, I was also accepted to the University of Alabama. Every weekend I came home Grandma, without me asking, would always wash and fold my laundry. And she always, always placed a small bouquet of gardenias in my car when I came home on Fridays so that wonderful gardenia fragrance would permeate the car and smell wonderful on my drives back to Tuscaloosa on Sunday.

Grandma and PawPaw supported me through college, and even after. After I graduated, Grandma sent me a bill for everything they had paid for over the past 4 years and wrote at the bottom "FORGIVEN." That was just how she was. I continued to live with them through my early 20's and I will always think of "the cabin" and the smell of gardenias as "home."

This time of year, I'm always flooded with memories of Grandma's under-the-

counter kitchen radio playing Christmas music, the sight of fresh mixed nuts waiting to be cracked in a bowl on the coffee table, those chili pepper Christmas lights stretched across the mantle, and a hot pot of coffee waiting for a good conversation between my Grandma and I over breakfast.

Grandma is survived by her daughter, Jane, and Jane's husband Tommy, whom she considered a son. Her granddaughter Julia and her husband Hayden. Her grandson, Allen. And her great-grand children, Chelsea, Asher, Wyatt, and Adley, and her great-great grandchildren, Alexis and Conner. Mrs. Betty Sue Smith age 93 of Huntsville, formally of Grant passed away Monday December 4, 2017.

She is survived by her daughter Betsy Jane Cross (Tommy), Sister; Delores May Bennett, Grandchildren; Mark Allen Murphy(Robin), Julia Kelly Wreyford(Hayden),Great Grandchildren; Chelsie Megan Murphy, Asher Wreyford, Wyatt Wreyford, and Adley Wreyford.

Mrs.Smith was a member of The Daughters of American Revolution, and a Coast Guard veteran.

Vistation is set for Saturday December 9, 2017 from 1-2pm. Funeral Service at 2pm at Grant Memorial Chapel. Burial will follow in Maple Hill Cemetery in Huntsville.

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC **9**. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Grant Memorial Chapel
4930 Main Street
P.O. Box 484
Grant, AL 35747
(256) 728-2000
grantmemorial@nehp.net
<https://www.grantmemorialchapel.com>

Funeral Service

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Tribute Wall



“ 23 files added to the album *LifeTributes*



Grant Memorial Chapel - December 09, 2017 at 10:49 AM

SA

“ To Jane and Family,

My deepest condolence on the passing of your Mother, Grandmother and my Aunt Betty. She was always a very "classy" lady and on the arm of my handsome Uncle Aubrey, they made quite an impressive couple. I miss them both and treasure the memories of summer days at the cabin at the lake enjoying their "southern" hospitality and sweet company.

*Susan Ashville (niece to Betty Sue)
San Francisco, California*

Susan Ashville - December 07, 2017 at 03:23 PM