



## Wanda Faye Smith

September 5, 1939 - June 1, 2025

"Gramma Wanda"

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Wanda Faye Maddox Smith, lovingly known as Gramma Wanda, age 85, of Center Hill, Alabama, passed away peacefully in her home and surrounded by family, on June 1st, 2025.

A Celebration of Life will be held on Saturday, June 7th, 2025, at 12:00 p.m. at The Methodist Church in Holly Pond.

Her Life & Legacy;

Wanda was born on September 5, 1939, in Vinemont, Alabama, to Ralph Thomas Maddox and Dollie Arnice Maddox. The oldest of five girls, Wanda's sisters included Joyce Tennesen, Melba Kesting, Cheri Johnson, and baby Donia, who sadly passed away at just nine months old.

Wanda's extraordinary life spanned continents and generations. At 19 years old she married Robert Harry Smith Sr. and bravely followed him wherever he and The Lord led. She spent years in Germany and France while he was in the Army, and this is where she began what she always called her life's greatest adventure: being a wife to Robert and a mother. Never one to do anything halfway, she learned both French and German—partly to communicate with locals and partly because, as she'd joke, she needed a new set of sheets.

Her first child, Robert Jr., was born in Verdun, France. Then came a chapter in California, where she and Robert welcomed Duane and Danita. After a brief

interim move to Indiana, where their son Devin was born—less than a year after Danita—the family returned to California. Their family blossomed alongside her sisters' families, creating a beautiful, interwoven bond where cousins felt more like siblings and every story became part of a larger shared adventure.

Wanda's life grew even more adventurous when the family moved to the snowy wilderness of Stewart, British Columbia, Canada, where Desiree and Darilyn were born. The original goal was to homestead, but upon arrival, they discovered the rules had changed. Though Wanda would have followed Robert anywhere, they instead settled in town rather than in the bush as planned. During their time in Stewart, the film *Bear Island* was shot in the area in 1979. Wanda and Robert had the opportunity to socialize with movie stars such as Christopher Lee, Donald Sutherland, Lloyd Bridges, Richard Widmark, and Vanessa Redgrave.

Though they eventually divorced and each remarried, she never stopped loving him—and he never stopped loving her. Their love expanded to new children, and both embraced a blended family with open arms. Wanda lovingly claimed Vicki Smith, Phillip Blackwood, Timothy Blackwood, and Robin Donald as her own, calling them some of her life's greatest blessings.

A passion for learning and A Heart for People;

Wanda earned her degree in Applied Science from Wallace State Community College at age 54, completing the education she had paused to follow love to Germany at 19 years old. As she told the registrar, "I'll be 54 either way. I can choose to be 54 with a degree, or without one. I would like to finish what I started years ago" She had a long, fulfilling career as a paralegal and secretary, working with attorneys across California and Alabama. The pinnacle of her professional life was her time at Drinkard Development Inc., where she worked alongside Judy and Helen. She especially admired Mr. Roy Drinkard for his kindness and professionalism—never forgetting the day he added "Please" and "Thank you" in different color ink to the top and bottom of the page of a proposal.

### A Spiritual Legacy;

Wanda was a gifted storyteller and poet, but her legacy is praying for anyone she encountered and people who were hurting. Every Monday for several years, she'd pick up a "Just Busted" newspaper from the Pitt Stop gas station—using it as her prayer list for the week. If she found a shiny penny, she'd slip it in her pocket to give to the next person she saw, telling them, "This is for you. The Lord loves you."

She was not ashamed of the Gospel and made it her mission to ensure everyone she met knew they were loved—by God, and by her. She was the first caller to the Christian radio station WXJC in Alabama and often listened to their late-night prayer line, offering prayers for strangers in need. She had several friends who were shut ins that were lonely. Wanda made a point to call them each week and read the Bible with them to keep them company. She will be missed by many!

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### Family;

Wanda was preceded in death by her first husband Robert Harry Smith Sr., her parents Ralph and Dollie Maddox, her baby sister Donia, and her beloved grandson Devin Thomas Smith.

She is survived by her children: Robert Harry Smith Jr., Duane Smith, Danita Quattlebaum, Devin Smith, Desiree Horton, Darilyn Pownall, Vicki Smith, Phillip Blackwood, Timothy Blackwood, and Robin Donald. She leaves behind 25 "cool grandchildren", 16 great-grandchildren, and countless others who knew her simply as "Gramma Wanda."

### An Eternal Reunion;

In a letter, Robert once wrote to Wanda about standing on an overpass above the Tennessee River. He watched the river divide around an island, then raced on his bike to find where the waters converged again. Realizing how much he still loved her, he prayed their paths would follow the same fate—that even

after separation, they would come back together. And now, they have.

Wanda and Robert Harry Smith Sr., will be laid together in rest, just as they always hoped at Eastside Point Cumberland Cemetery.

# Cemetery Details

**Eastside Point Cumberland Cemetery**

# Previous Events

## **Celebration of Life**

JUN 7. 12:00 PM (CT)

Holly Pond Methodist Church  
37861 AL Hwy 91  
Cullman, AL 35055

# Tribute Wall

YF

“ *Your Midgardian Friends purchased the Beautiful Heart Bouquet for the family of Wanda Faye Smith.*



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**Your Midgardian Friends** - June 06, 2025 at 04:14 PM

LJ

“ *Larry & Dianne, & Jannet purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Wanda Faye Smith.*



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**Larry & Dianne, & Jannet** - June 06, 2025 at 10:52 AM

KL

“ *Kestings, Wills, Lightfoots and Lacys purchased the Full Heart for the family of Wanda Faye Smith.*



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**Kestings, Wills, Lightfoots and Lacys** - June 06, 2025 at 10:40 AM

KL

“ *Kestings, Wills, Lightfoots and Lacys planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Wanda Faye Smith.*

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**Kestings, Wills, Lightfoots and Lacys** - June 06, 2025 at 10:40 AM

CC

“ I was 14 when my brother, Bob, married Wanda in AL and then brought her home to Valparaiso, IN to meet our family. She'll always be remembered for her kind and loving ways! My love and condolences to my nieces, nephews and their families! ❤️ Aunt Claire

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**Claire Cavanaugh** - June 05, 2025 at 07:49 PM

JS

“ Judy Smith purchased the Lavender Reflections Spray for the family of Wanda Faye Smith.



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**Judy Smith** - June 04, 2025 at 09:32 PM

BH

“ My condolences to Duane and the Smith family.

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**Barton Harper** - June 04, 2025 at 10:40 AM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Wanda Faye Smith.



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June 04, 2025 at 09:35 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Wanda Faye Smith.

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June 04, 2025 at 09:35 AM

RA

“ Rodney Alexander purchased the Basket of Memories for the family of Wanda Faye Smith.



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**Rodney Alexander** - June 03, 2025 at 09:17 PM

RA

“ Rodney Alexander planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Wanda Faye Smith.

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**Rodney Alexander** - June 03, 2025 at 09:17 PM