



Betty Lou Smith

March 26, 1927 - March 31, 2018

Betty Lou Smith (formerly Byers) was born in Cherryville, North Carolina on March 26th, 1927 to the late Hood Bishop Byers and Vivian Erwin Byers. She was the fourth of six siblings. As a child, Betty attended public school in North Carolina, and she learned to play the piano from her mother, who was the pianist at the church where the family attended.

In 1939, the Great Depression forced Hood to close his dry cleaning business and move the family to Washington D.C, where he found employment at the Wardman Park Hotel. Betty continued her education in the D.C. Public School System. She graduated from Cardozo High School in 1946. She had impeccable typing and shorthand skills, which helped her to land a job as a Secretary with the Federal Communications Commission. She later worked as a Legal Secretary for other government agencies, and at Harvard Law School when she lived in the Boston area.

Betty enjoyed music and she loved to harmonize. In her early 20's, she formed a singing group with two of her friends from high school. They called themselves The Melodaires. The trio performed at venues around town and even performed during Amateur Night at the Apollo Theater in Harlem, New York City.

On July 10, 1954, Betty married the late Lt. Colonel Alonzo Smith, Jr. (they

first met as teenagers at a concert in Meridian Hill Park). She joined her husband in Germany, where he was stationed at Ramstein Air Force Base. While in Europe, they traveled to England, France, and Spain. Upon returning to the U.S., they were stationed in Boston, MA, State College, PA (where Betty briefly attended Pennsylvania State University), and Cheyenne, WY before returning to the D.C. area where they raised their three daughters.

Betty loved the Lord, and she was a longtime member of Trinity A.M.E. Zion Church in Washington, DC. Over the years, she sang in the choir, taught Sunday School, and helped direct Christmas and Easter 'Buds of Promise' stage plays. Outside of church, she participated in community Bible study and Christian fellowship groups.

Throughout her life, Betty displayed a servant's heart and possessed a passion for helping the most vulnerable among us, "the least of these" (Matthew 25:40). For over three decades, she volunteered at various places: the Montgomery County Correctional Facility; So Others Might Eat (SOME); St. Elizabeth's Hospital; Springfield Mental Hospital; Good News Mission at Montgomery County Detention Center; The American Red Cross at Walter Reed Medical Center; Stepping Stones Women's Shelter of Montgomery County; and Samaritan Ministry of Washington, DC. Even in her later years, Betty volunteered by visiting patients in the healthcare facility located at the retirement community where she lived.

To understand more about social welfare, Betty enrolled in the Mental Health Program at Montgomery College in 1987. While there, she wrote, "The Neglected Harvest" which was based on her experience volunteering at SOME's soup kitchen. In her paper, Betty shared her thoughts about what she saw as a lack of compassion and legislation from the government in how it approached the homeless. She stated, "I am a very caring person and reaching out to my fellowmen comes high on my priority list...I believe that

every human being is entitled to be treated with uncompromised respect.”

Betty enjoyed many hobbies including golf and bowling. She loved to cook, and she often hosted family and friends at her home for dinners and cookouts in her backyard. She was also a spiritual warrior who used the power of daily prayer as her weapon. As a devoted wife for 45 years, she participated in many social activities with her husband. They also grew together in Christ.

On Saturday, March 31, 2018, Betty was called to the foot of the throne to hear her Heavenly Father say, “Well done thy good and faithful servant.” To cherish her memory and carry on her legacy, she leaves behind her daughters: Yvona Williams, Teresa Holley, and Kelly Porter; three sons-in-law; seven grandchildren, and a host of other relatives and friends.

Cemetery Details

Arlington National Cemetery

Arlington, VA

Previous Events

Service

MAY 2. 11:00 AM (ET)

Marshall-March Funeral Homes - Prince George's County
4308 Suitland Road
Suitland, MD 20746
(301) 736-1616
info@marchfh.com
<https://www.marshallmarchfh.com>

Tribute Wall



“ *Betty Lou Smith*

October 23, 2023 at 08:15 AM



“ *Sorry For Your Loss!*



Thomas & Libby Widgeon - May 05, 2018 at 12:01 PM



“ *We the March Family and Marshall-March Staff wish to extend our deepest and heartfelt sympathy in the passing of your loved one. Our prayers go out to you and your family in your time of loss. We know and understand that you have received many expressions of love and we will continue to lift you up in prayer. May the memories you cherish of brighter and happier days help to ease your sorrow and comfort you always.*

Marshall-March Funeral Homes - May 04, 2018 at 11:10 AM