



## Laura Smith Pettis

September 27, 1920 - November 22, 2014

Mrs. Laura Elizabeth Smith Pettis passed away November 22, 2014 at Bethany House in Auburn, Alabama. Mrs. Pettis was born on September 27, 1920 in Burnsville, Mississippi. She was the oldest of three children born to Nancy Edna Twitty Smith and Leonidas Houston Smith, Sr.

Mrs. Pettis grew up in Moscow Tennessee, where her father was a Southern Railway Agent and her mother was a homemaker. While in Moscow, she played to play the piano at the Methodist Church at the young age of ten years. While she was still in high school, the family moved to Scottsboro, Alabama. Laura graduated with honors from Jackson County High School with honors in 1938. She then attended Athens College in Athens, Alabama and Auburn University.

In addition to her music, she was a beauty. She was selected as the most attractive while a student at Athens College. A talented musician, she accompanied the Athens Glee Club and other music events at Athens. Her beauty was again recognized at Auburn University where she was selected a class favorite in her sophomore class.

After leaving Auburn, she moved back to Scottsboro and worked in the Jackson County Agent's office. It is there that she met her future husband, Pierce Rayvon Pettis, Jr., who was working as Assistant County Agent. They were married in Scottsboro on December 23, 1940.

Shortly after the beginning of World War II, they moved to Bay Minette, Alabama where Rayvon, learning he was soon to be drafted, enlisted in the United States Navy and was accepted into Navy Midshipman School in Chicago, Illinois.

Their first child, Nancy Virginia, was born in Mobile in 1942. In August of 1943, Rayvon left Laura and Nancy Virginia with his parents in Fayette, Alabama and reported for duty. At the end of Rayvon's military service, the family moved to Andalusia, Alabama. However, their second child, Laura Sophia, was born in Fayette in 1946. In 1950, Rayvon and Laura purchased the Western Auto Store in Fort Payne, and later purchased one in Collinsville and south Florida. In 1954, their third and last child, Pierce Rayvon Pettis, III was born in

Fort Payne.

Rayvon and Laura were members of the First United Methodist Church in Fort Payne. Laura served as President of the United Methodist Women, and volunteered with many organizations such as the March of Dimes, meals on wheels, and blood drives. In 1974, Rayvon and Laura built Cherokee Apartments in Fort Payne. Nearing retirement; they sold the Western Auto in 1978 and the apartments in 1983. In 2005, they moved to Auburn, Alabama to be closer to their two daughters. She resided there until her death.

Mrs. Pettis is survived by her three children: Nancy Pettis Gardner (Dan), Sophia Pettis McCay (James), and Pierce Pettis, III; nine grandchildren, and thirteen great-grandchildren, to whom she was known as "Lala". She was preceded in death by her parents, husband: Pierce Rayvon Pettis, Jr., sister: Mary Frieda Smith Van Metre; and brother: Leonidas Houston Smith, Jr.

Funeral services will be 11:00am Friday, November 28, 2014, at the Wilson Funeral Home Chapel with Laura's Grandson, Chaplin Roger McCay, D.Min officiating and Rev. Ricky Smith and organist Ronnie Campbell assisting. Burial will follow in the Glenwood Cemetery. The family will receive friends on Friday morning from 10:00am until the 11:00am hour of service. In lieu of flowers, the family request that donations be sent to the First United Methodist Church, 206 Grand Avenue NW, Fort Payne, Alabama or to your favorite charity.

# Cemetery Details

## Glenwood Cemetery

1002 Grand Avenue SW  
Fort Payne, AL 35967

# Previous Events

## Visitation

NOV 28. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Wilson Funeral Home  
3801 Gault Ave. N  
Fort Payne, AL 35967

## Funeral Service

NOV 28. 11:00 AM (CT)

Wilson Funeral Home Chapel  
3801 Gault Avenue North  
Fort Payne, AL 35967  
(256) 845-9150  
wilsonfuneralhome@bellsouth.net  
<http://www.wilsonfhinc.com>

# Tribute Wall



“ *Laura Smith Pettis*

---

January 12, 2023 at 10:45 AM



“ *Sophia, Nancy, and Pierce,*

*I thought a lot of your mother and daddy. They were great friends with my parents as well. Daddy spoke so highly of Ray. Sophia and I placed flowers on your dad's grave and on my parents' graves in late April. It was a meaningful experience sharing our remembrances with good friends. Next year we will place flowers on Laura's grave too.*

*I send my deepest sympathy to each of you. It is so difficult to lose a parent, but, as time goes by, I began to feel that they are ever present in my life and the lives of all who love them. If you don't already, you will feel that way soon, I am sure. We great friends felt as if each of our parents were all of our parents. We were and are so blessed!*

*Please know that your friends are remembering Laura. I always see her in her pew at church with your daddy, as she is now. What better way to be remembered? I am also thinking of you and wishing you all the best during these weeks and months as you think of your mom and make peace with the questions that inevitably arise when we lose a loved one. I hope you discover some of the answers. You will be in my prayers.*

*Marla Davis Holbrook*

---

**Marla Davis Holbrook** - November 29, 2014 at 02:54 AM



“ *Nancy, I have observed in recent years how much you loved and cared for your Mom. May God grant you peace and warm memories of you Mother in the days ahead.*

---

**Gerald Killian** - November 26, 2014 at 07:58 PM

TK

“ Nancy, Sophie and Pierce: As your former next door neighbor in Fort Payne, I am so sorry to hear of your mother's passing and also the recent passing of your father. As you may remember, I also worked as a sales person and delivery man for Ray at Western Auto in Fort Payne at Christmas while I was at Auburn. It is just so fitting that they are now together. As one who lost his partner five (5) years ago, you just don't ever get over that loss. My best to each of you and my wish for a fitting celebration of Laura's life. Tommy Kuykendall, Nashville, Tennessee

---

Tom Kuykendall - November 26, 2014 at 02:09 PM



“ Cherished Memories was purchased for the family of Laura Smith Pettis.



---

November 26, 2014 at 02:08 PM

SA

“ Pierce, your are in my thoughts and prayers. Your mom was a lovely person.

---

Steven Ables - November 25, 2014 at 05:56 AM