



Juanita Tillman Whitney

April 10, 1936 - June 2, 2023

Juanita Tillman Whitney, 87, passed away surrounded by family at her home in Riverview, FL the evening of Friday, June 2, 2023.

Born Wanda Juanita Tillman on April 10, 1936, she was the 12th and last child to parents Irving Berrier and Bertha Lurana (Dyal) Tillman in Starke, FL.

A 6th generation Florida Native, Juanita was raised in the Alachua County/Gainesville area. She graduated from Gainesville High School in 1954.

In 1956, she married William “Bill” Emerson Whitney in Jacksonville. The couple had six children and raised their family in the Venice/Sarasota and Temple Terrace area.

Around 1979, Juanita opened The Remembrance Shop, a floral shop in Brandon. She ran this shop for a few years before switching careers and becoming an accountant for the Hillsborough County Clerk of the Courts.

In 1980, Juanita and her family moved to Riverview, into the home that would become her forever home and a memorable landmark for the Whitney family.

Juanita and Bill’s marriage ended in divorce in 1982, leaving Juanita as matriarch of the house and overseeing all things family oriented. She remained very close with her children, instilling valuable lessons and words of wisdom to them that would be passed on to their children, and their children

thereafter.

The Whitney residence in Riverview became the venue for countless family gatherings and events over the last 4 decades. Within that home, Juanita hosted 30+ Christmas Eves, Christmases, Thanksgivings, Easters, birthday parties, baby showers, graduation parties, retirement parties, bridal showers, and even a couple of weddings!

Juanita retired from the Clerk of the Court's office in April 2000 just before her 64th birthday.

After retirement, Juanita focused on her most favorite job of all time - a loving grandmother. She adored each and every one of her 18 grandchildren and served as a constant support for them whenever and wherever needed. Over the years, she has taken in several grandchildren to stay with her for a period of time, offering guidance and teaching valuable lessons in an often humorous or sassy fashion that only Grandma Whitney has.

Juanita had a knack for sewing, and she enjoyed sewing clothing for her family. She sewed all of the Halloween costumes for her children and grandchildren, many of which are now in circulation with the great grandchildren. Many theatrical and musical performances the children participated in showcased costumes made by Juanita. Everything from blankets to pillow cases, Sunday school dresses to snazzy bonnets and aprons. Grandma Juanita had you covered, literally.

Juanita was a talented musician, which she passed down to her children and grandchildren. She was an exceptional pianist and organist. Many hours were spent gathered around the baby grand piano in her living room, with Juanita churning out tune after tune, her children and grandchildren either singing or playing along with her.

Juanita was a lifelong member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day

Saints and has served as the pianist in her church ward many times over the last 60 years. In addition to church pianist, she also served as Relief Society President twice for the Brandon Ward. She stayed busy in whichever calling she had at the time. She especially enjoyed playing the piano for the Primary (children's organization of the church). She often expressed how she enjoyed teaching the adult Sunday School class.

Juanita is preceded in death by her parents I.B. and Bertha Tillman; Sisters Iona Tillman and Arie Smith; Brothers Irvin Tillman, Vernon "Pete" Tillman, Winfred Tillman, Lloyd Tillman, Ivan Tillman, and Dalton Tillman; Son in law Jeffery Kirby; and granddaughters Jessica Bowden and Emily Chambers.

She is survived by her children Wanda Whitney, Billie Kirby, Cherié (Doug) Bowden, Gretchen (Chris) Davis, Orson (Shauna) Whitney, and Newel Whitney; Sister Geraldine Cowart; Brother Chester (Betty) Tillman; Grandchildren Carl Bowden, Rebekah (Melissa) Chambers, Whit (Caitie) Bowden, Kara (Rodolfo) Rivera; Lauren Kirby, Paige Hernandez, Tessa (Tyler) Hicks, Buggy Bowden, Chase Bowden, Nathan (Brianna) Whitney, Jeffery Kirby, Zak Whitney, Abram Chambers, Dylan Whitney, Callie Whitney, and Melody Chambers; and 12 great grandchildren.

A visitation will be held on Saturday, June 10, 2023 from 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM, followed by funeral service at 12:00 PM, at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Brandon, 1412 John Moore Rd, Brandon, FL 33511. Burial will follow funeral services at Serenity Meadows in Riverview.

For those unable to attend in person, the service will be available to watch live via Zoom, using the following link: <https://zoom.us/j/94150452623>

Cemetery Details

Serenity Meadows Memorial Park

6919 Providence Rd,
Riverview, FL 33578

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN 10. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
1412 John Moore Rd
Brandon, FL 33511

Funeral Service

JUN 10. 12:00 PM (ET)

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
1412 John Moore Rd
Brandon, FL 33511

Tribute Wall



“ *Gentry-Morrison Funeral Homes created a Tribute Video in memory of Juanita Tillman Whitney*



Gentry-Morrison Funeral Homes - June 11, 2023 at 09:09 AM



“ *Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Juanita Tillman Whitney.*



June 09, 2023 at 07:42 PM



“ *Pink Tribute Spray was purchased for the family of Juanita Tillman Whitney.*



June 09, 2023 at 01:20 PM



“ *Enduring Grace was purchased for the family of Juanita Tillman Whitney.*



June 09, 2023 at 02:32 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Juanita Tillman Whitney.

June 09, 2023 at 02:32 AM



“ *Rainbow Of Remembrance Spray was purchased for the family of Juanita Tillman Whitney.*



June 08, 2023 at 05:53 PM

KA

“ I want so many more Christmas Eve nights, and singing around your piano, and playing baseball with the failed rolls you made, while munching on the ham salad I basically had to myself. You always loved the things I made for you. I wish I could be there to do your hair one last time, and put on some liquid eyeliner you were always asking me for.



I promise to keep your legacy alive by teaching my daughters to sew and create and be awesome women.

"Do something worth remembering." Elvis Presley

Love,

Your granddaughter Kara

Kara - June 08, 2023 at 04:34 PM



“ Treasured Lilies Spray was purchased for the family of Juanita Tillman Whitney.



June 08, 2023 at 04:23 PM

MM

“ I was never in her presence that I didn't feel welcome and loved. I will miss her.

Martha McCullough - June 08, 2023 at 12:31 PM



“ Ocean Breeze Spray was purchased for the family of Juanita Tillman Whitney.



June 08, 2023 at 12:24 PM



“ Mom thank you for all you did for me. I wish your last years were less painful. I am glad I was able to care for you and keep you home. You were always in good spirits and had a positive attitude. I enjoyed sharing a Coke and chocolate with you. I love you and will miss you. Your daughter and caregiver. Gretchen

Gretchen Davis - June 07, 2023 at 07:57 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Juanita Tillman Whitney.

June 06, 2023 at 10:25 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Juanita Tillman Whitney.



June 06, 2023 at 10:25 PM

GA

“ I served as a caregiver for Juanita for 3 years, and in that time she has showcased her kindness, strength, and compassion for others. She was an exceptional patient, loving mother, and I consider her a dear friend. I give my deepest condolences to the Whitney family at this time.

Gifty Ashong - June 06, 2023 at 09:42 PM

WW

Hi Mom!

I can't believe I never posted on your page here. Funeral planning is pretty detailed!

I miss you. I miss your sass and your marvelous sense of humor. I miss your wise words. There have been so many times I have said to myself *Oh* I have to make sure I tell mom about [insert funny stuff from work or the family] and then I remember ... “oh yeah, that's right, she's not here any more”.

I have been keeping in touch with your lady living sibling Geraldine. She had her 103rd birthday just last month. Her son says she's going pretty good!

Thank you for being my mom. You took good care of me. I only hope to be able to pass that care along to others.

I love you ❤️ Wanda

Wanda Whitney - December 11, 2024 at 11:00 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Juanita Tillman Whitney.

June 06, 2023 at 09:13 AM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Juanita Tillman Whitney.*



June 06, 2023 at 09:13 AM



“ *Rose Remembrance was purchased for the family of Juanita Tillman Whitney.*



June 05, 2023 at 03:51 PM



“ *Your Light Shines was purchased for the family of Juanita Tillman Whitney.*



June 04, 2023 at 06:52 PM