



Opal "Snooky" Whittington

May 30, 1935 - November 17, 2017

Opal Loretta Whittington, 82

Opal "Snooky" Loretta Whittington, beloved wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, sister, aunt, and the love of many others, passed peacefully from this life to her next adventure on Wednesday evening, November 22, 2017 surrounded by her family, in Lakeland, Florida.

Mrs. Whittington was born May 30, 1935 in Wynona, Oklahoma to Dora and Bernie Hayes. "Snooky" was a nickname given to her at birth and it stuck throughout her life, becoming Snooky to almost all.

Snooky graduated from Barnsdall High School in 1953. She was a cover girl and was known for her lovely voice. She worked as a switchboard operator , until meeting the love of her life, William A. Whittington. Snooky and Whit were married in 1955 and spent 20 years as an Air Force Family before finally settling permanently in Lakeland, Florida in 1972.

She began her nursing career in 1970, achieving her Registered Nurse degree from Jefferson Davis College. She was hired by Traviss Vocational Center in 1973 as a nurse educator for the Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) program. She received her degree of Bachelor of Science in Nursing, cum laude, from Florida Southern College in 1985 and In 1990 earned her Master of Arts in Education degree from the University of South Florida, (Her children embarrassed her greatly by yelling "That's my Mom!" as she took the walk toward her diploma. It was a proud moment.) She was then designated the head of the LPN Nursing Program at Traviss and later named the Director of

Health Services, teaching and touching lives from 1973 To 1998. She attained the high honor of “Teacher of the Year” in 1989.

Upon her retirement, Snooky became a full-time wife and the family matriarch, roles in which she excelled. She taught us that Sunday family dinners and holidays were of high importance and to be shared and celebrated with stories, songs and great joy. She taught us that back yard pools, beach weeks, food, sass and silliness were imperative to a grandmother’s bag of tricks and that hugs should be given and “I love you” should be said, as often as possible. Her grandchildren remember her as a bikini wearing, fun-loving, snack-making, quick to hug and discipline grandmother. The love of all things family and the fierce protection of those she loved are her legacy to us. She recently wrote this to her children.

“Thanks for being my family. Keep loving each other – my life-long gift to each of you.”

She made sure that the Mississippi and Oklahoma clans stayed well informed and connected to the Florida clan, too. Family, family, family.

Her hobbies included all things creative. She made each child and grandchild a crocheted blanket or quilt. She made dresses and outfits and even knickers for her grandson to wear for her daughter’s wedding. She also enjoyed cooking, reading and trips to the beach.

She is survived by her husband of 62 years, William A. Whittington; her son Joe and his wife Ginger of Lakeland, and daughters Cheryl and her spouse Kimberly of Winter Haven and Melanie of Lakeland. She is forever remembered by granddaughters Loren, Samantha Morgan, and Chloe all of Lakeland and by her grandson Andrew of Tallahassee. She is also survived by two great granddaughters Avery Grace and Addison Rose of Lakeland. She left behind, for our comfort, her sisters Faye and Myrna of Oklahoma along with their spouses, and the many nieces and nephews who adored her.

A viewing for family and friends will be held Wednesday, November 29, 2017 at 6 pm at Gentry-Morrison Funeral Home, 1727 Bartow Road in Lakeland, Florida.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

NOV **29**. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Gentry-Morrison Funeral Homes - Southside Chapel

1727 Bartow Road

Lakeland, FL 33801

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Tribute Wall



“ Gentry-Morrison Funeral Homes created a Tribute Video in memory of Opal "Snooky" Whittington



Gentry-Morrison Funeral Homes - November 28, 2017 at 04:57 PM

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“ When I came to teach the Optometric Assisting program at Travis Technical, Opal was the director of nursing and health programs. Although the nursing instructors were out at clinicals about three days a week, Opal and I were always at school and shared lunch time together every day. We became close friends and I loved her very much. She is one of the most significant persons I had the pleasure of knowing during my career. She was fair, consistent, empathetic yet firm in supervising her students and teachers. She felt a serious commitment to her job but also had a great sense of humor. When she retired, we didn't see her much, but I am thankful she had so many years to focus on her beloved family. Thanks for sharing the wonderful photos. She made this world a better place.

Merry Stewart - December 22, 2017 at 11:44 PM



“ *Written in the Stars* was purchased for the family of Opal "Snooky" Whittington .



November 29, 2017 at 03:47 PM



“ *Beautiful Heart Bouquet* was purchased for the family of Opal "Snooky" Whittington .



November 28, 2017 at 09:17 PM



“ *50 files added to the album LifeTributes*



Gentry-Morrison Funeral Homes - November 28, 2017 at 03:31 PM