



## Thera Callahan Bryant-Witter

April 18, 1925 - February 4, 2016

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Lakeland - Thera Callahan Bryant-Witter died on February 4, 2016 at the age of 90. Thera was born in Lake Garfield, Florida and many of her early years were spent moving from town to town as her Father searched for work during the depression years. Being the new kid on the block taught Thera to smile and make friends readily which was an asset throughout her lifetime.

In 1942 Thera married Clyde Bryant prior to Clyde being deployed in the US Navy during WW II. Thera remembered the long trips from Florida to Boston on the train to visit Clyde whenever his ship docked for furlough.

After the war they lived in Lakeland and eventually purchased a small grocery store located at the intersection of Hwy. 98 and West Socrum Loop Road in Lakeland. They worked together many long hours to build the business which customers could purchase gasoline, hardware, animal feed, blocks of ice, fabric & sewing notions along with fresh meats and produce. Bryant's Red & White Grocery served the north Lakeland area and was a local landmark until sold in the early 1970's.

Thera was among the first nursing class in 1968 from Polk Junior College in Winter Haven, graduating with honors. This was one of her proudest accomplishments and a lifetime goal. After graduating she was employed by Lakeland General Hospital and absolutely loved her work in orthopedic nursing. Thera was forced into early retirement while serving as orthopedic

head nurse due to health issues.

During this lifetime of working, Thera and Clyde also enjoyed travel. Their first trip to Europe was to visit their daughter and son-in-law in Germany. While there they toured France, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland and Austria. For many years they were passionate about the Smokey Mountains and eventually purchased a vacation home in Franklin, NC. There were also trips taken to each of the US states during the years of touring in their motorhome. Thera was very creative in many crafts, quilting, sewing and an accomplished artist. In addition to creating beautiful things, Thera was a Sports fan. Once asked why Thera and her brother Herbert stopped watching the Saturday night boxing when there was only black and white TV, Thera replied, "You know I really thought I would have a heart attack and thought it best not to continue!" While football was probably her preferred sport, she also followed tennis, basketball, golf and especially enjoyed the Olympics. This love of football served her well as she drove thousands of miles transporting Peggie and car loads of silly teenage cheerleaders to and from high school ball games for years.

After losing spouses, Thera and Grady Witter were married in 1994 and celebrated 23 years of marriage. Thera and Grady were avid card players and enjoyed yearly vacations to Long Boat Key.

Thera is preceded in death by her parents, Will and Maymie Brantley Callahan, husband Clyde S. Bryant and brother, Herbert Callahan.

Thera is survived by her husband Grady, one daughter, Peggie and son in-law Don Whitworth, her grand-children Amy Whitworth and Tad Whitworth. In addition is also her sister in law, Bernise Callahan.

Thera's extended family includes Ruth Anne (Jim) Maloy, Bill (Sharon) Witter, Ken Witter, Grandchildren, Kevin (Amy ) Maloy, Steven (Ruth) Witter also Keith (Missy) Witter. In addition there are 6 Great-Grandchildren.

Interment will be at Bethel Baptist Church, 3125 W. Socrum Loop Rd. Lakeland with visitation from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. with memorial service beginning at 11 on Tuesday, February 9. Memorials may be made to Good Shepherd Hospice. Arrangements provided by Gentry-Morrison Funeral Home at Serenity Gardens.

# Cemetery Details

## **Socrum Cemetery**

3125 W. Socrum Loop Rd.  
Lakeland, FL 33810

# Tribute Wall



“ *Gentry-Morrison Funeral Homes created a Tribute Video in memory of Thera Callahan Bryant-Witter*



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**Gentry-Morrison Funeral Homes** - February 09, 2016 at 06:50 AM



“ *Thera Callahan Bryant-Witter*

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November 17, 2022 at 10:14 AM



“ *Peggy- Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family as you celebrate the home going of your sweet Mama, Mrs. Thera. Though we knew her for such a short time our lives were touched by her and also by you-her devoted daughter. Sincerely, Edith's daughters (Tina, Tura & Tona)*

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**Tina** - February 09, 2016 at 06:03 PM

TM

“ There was not a dry eye in the Community as we watched Mrs Thera's "Tribute Video". She gave great hugs and her smile...how could you deny that beautiful smile. She has certainly left a lasting footprint in my heart and my career in Senior Living. She looked fabulous in red and knew it....truth is she looked fabulous in any color. She had great one liners, and was a force to be reckoned with. When I remember Thera I will always remember hugs, beauty and sassy red lipstick....she was a special lady. Thank you for sharing her for such a short time. Many years ago when I lost my mother a friend gave me a quote I have carried in my wallet for years and often times reflect back on all the special moments we share.....

*I know for certain that we never lose the people we love, even to death. They continue to participate in every act, thought and decision we make. Their love leaves an indelible imprint in our memories. We find comfort in knowing that our lives have been enriched by having shared their love." - Leo Buscaglia*

*I have attached one of my favorite pictures...you both are as beautiful as always!*

*Sincere Condolences,*

*Tammi Mara  
Brookdale Highlands*



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Tammi Mara - February 09, 2016 at 03:20 PM

CW

“ Thoughts and prayers are with Peggy and the family during this most difficult time. Chuck Wooten

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**Chuck Wooten** - February 08, 2016 at 09:17 PM

DH

“ I grew up adoring this lady I called MeMaw. Thera always had a beautiful smile, a warm hug, and an encouraging word for me. As I read these words about her interesting life, I found myself standing in her living room on Dees Rd in my mind's eye. Thera you will be missed. Peggie, Don, Tad, & Amy, I love you all!  
Grady and all the Whitters, I love you all too!  
I will hold fond memories of MeMaw in my heart forever. I'll be praying for you all!

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**Della Bridges Hightower** - February 08, 2016 at 05:41 PM

LC

“ Peggie was blessed with a very sweet and loving Mother. She had a smile on Her face every time I saw her. A very classie Lady. I can not make the funeral but my love and sympathy goes out to Peggie and the family.

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**Lorraine Casey** - February 08, 2016 at 03:11 PM