



Frances Whitty Mercer

June 4, 1926 - March 30, 2020

Frances Whitty Mercer, age 93, passed away on March 30, 2020 at her home in Lee, Florida. She had an accident in the fall and was never able to fully recover. Frances had many roles during her lifetime including mother, teacher, grandmother, great-grandmother and care giver. Everyone that she touched has a fond memory of her sense of humor, kindness, sharing, and generosity.

She was born on June 4, 1926 to John B. and Edith Whitty in Lee, Florida. She was a child of the depression whose parents knew the value of working, saving, and an education. Walking to Lee School was never a question. She and all of her five siblings graduated from college. Her degree was from Florida State University in Business Education in 1948. She met her husband, Raymond Mercer, who was returning from four years of service in WWII in the South Pacific in 1948. After a whirlwind courtship and a new car, they were married and began their life together raising two children, Ramona and Frank. Grandchildren would follow, and each of them adored their Grandma and Papa and the times they all spent together.

After adding elementary education to her teaching certificate, she began her career in education

where she spent the next 39 years. She always remained in the classroom teaching and taught in

the Greenville, Lee, and Madison Primary Schools as a third-grade teacher touching the lives of

over 1,000 students. She took great pride in remembering the names and following the careers

and families of each of her students!

After her retirement and death of her husband, Raymond, in 1989, she reinvented herself as a

community volunteer. She volunteered for the Madison Thrift Store, Treasures of Madison

County Museum and The Madison County Memorial Hospital for many years.

She began seeing

an old friend and educator, Griffin Bishop, at the same events and they began to date. In 1998,

she was engaged to him and they became a “pair” at parties, events, and date trips for lunch to

local north Florida towns for the next several years until his passing in 2005.

Frances was a member of the Lee United Methodist Church where she served as treasurer for over

40 years. She was a member of the Madison Women’s Club, Madison County Educational

Foundation, Lee and Madison United Methodist Women’s Circle, Pink Ladies of Madison

Hospital, and United Methodist Cooperative Ministries.

Frances was the matriarch of her family. She took the lead in planning family vacations to every

national monument and state capitals. She took great pride in planning special birthday parties for

her family and giving housewarming parties for friends. She also took on the role of being the

best grandmother ever to her four grandchildren.

She took pride in her community and wanted to know who everyone was in the local restaurants

and their families. If she did not know them, she would introduce herself to them. She loved

taking her dog, Gideon, on rides through the family farm in Lee on her ATV.

Lastly, she was a

proud Florida State University Seminole fan.

She was very close to her siblings and was devastated at the loss of her sister, Muriel Turlington

in 2010. Her brother, Bobby Whitty, and sister, Lucile Cherry, both passed in 2019.

Frances is survived by her sister, Gertrude Gamble and brother, Benny Whitty; her daughter,

Ramona Prine (Rip), son, Frank Mercer (Midge); her grandchildren Melissa Anderson (Dean),

Gena Smoak (Ron), Grady Guess (Ashley), Ryan Mercer (Molli); many great-grandchildren and

nieces and nephews; Tommy Bishop, and her dog, Gideon.

Tribute Wall

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“ We were so sorry to hear of Miss Frances' passing. What a wonderful person and what a life! We were blessed to have known her.

Ron and Elaine McCreary - April 04, 2020 at 08:51 AM