



Mrs Bonnie Thomas Graves

MAR 14, 1934 - AUG 30, 2025



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Table of Contents

Obituary	Page 3
Events	Page 5
Tribute Wall	Page 6
Media	Page 7



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After a private burial, a visitation will be held at Radney Funeral Home from 3:00 pm until 4:00pm on Saturday, September 6, 2025, with a celebration of life to follow in the chapel at 4:00 pm.

Bonnie Thomas Graves, lovingly called Big Mama, 91, passed away at home peacefully and surrounded by family on August 30, 2025.

Our mother was born on March 14, 1934, to Joe and Lucille Thomas in Black Rock, Alabama. During her years in the Luverne school system, she was a cheerleader and was named 'Biggest Flirt' during her senior year. Big Mama loved to show off cheers to her grandchildren during family gatherings. She graduated from high school and moved to New York City for a few years before heading back south to settle in Alexander City, Alabama.

It was in Alexander City during an evening of bridge that she met and fell in love with Preston Nolen Graves, Sr. Together they raised three beautiful children, and ran Graves Furniture Company, a premier furniture store on Main Street. Seeing a need for preschool education, she founded the First Presbyterian Church Day School. She also served as an elder for many years at the First Presbyterian Church. During her free time, she became a Master Gardener, attended Auburn University at Montgomery studying art and design, and volunteered with the Camp Fire Girls.

Her home was a joy to share with others, where the door was open to friends and family. There was always a pound cake on the table and a pot of coffee brewing. Baking pound cakes was her love language, and we estimate that during her lifetime she made over 10,000 to share with others. When our mother wasn't baking, you could find her at the bridge table or outside in her yard. She had a kind heart, a sharp mind, a green thumb, and a keen wit.

Bonnie is predeceased by her parents, Joe and Lucille Thomas, and her husband Preston Nolen Graves Sr. She is survived by her children Denise Graves, Nolen Graves (Suzanne), and Lila Graves; her grandchildren Lila Ivester (John), Sadie Graves, Lucy Graves, Bea Graves, Preston



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Graves III, and Opal Graves. She is also survived by her two sisters Carole Knox and Hazel Smith. She will likewise be missed by her devoted friends Karen Channell and Roberta Wycoff.

Our love and gratitude are in abundance to Keith McElrath, who cared for our mother through the last 18 years of her life. We are also grateful to Tammy Parker, Shirley Jennings, and Angela Moore for their kindness and grace towards mom, which helped make her quality of life and transition peaceful. We will be forever grateful for their love. We are so thankful for the service of Hayley and Southern Hospice.

Honorary pallbearers are Preston Graves III, John Ivester, Tanner Brooks, Keith McElrath, Dale Adamson, and Mark Thompson.

The family is asking for no flowers and requests donations be made to the Lake Martin Animal Shelter (P.O. Box 634, Alexander City, AL 35010) or Backpack Buddies (326 Lakeview Dr., Alexander City, AL 35010).



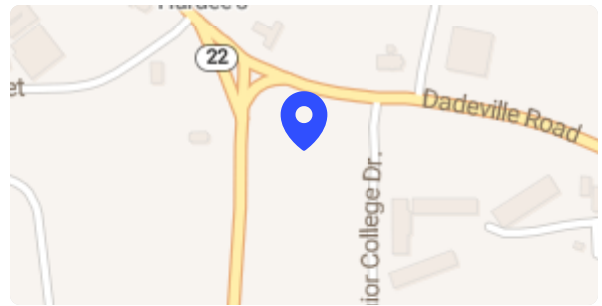
Events

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Visitation

- Saturday**, September 6, 2025
- 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM CT
- Radney Funeral Home**
1326 Dadeville Rd, Alexander City AL 35010



Memorial Service

- Saturday**, September 6, 2025
- 4:00 PM CT
- Chapel of Radney Funeral Home**
1326 Dadeville Rd, Alexander City AL 35010





Tribute Wall

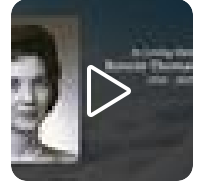
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Radney Funeral Home shared a **Video**.

September 5 at 5:09 AM





Media

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Radney Funeral Home shared a Video.

September 5 at 5:09 AM





Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Bonnie by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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