



Elsie W. Smith

November 24, 1920 - January 6, 2010

Portsmouth - Elsie Lucille Wilkins Smith, 89, died on January 6, 2010. She was born in Portsmouth, VA on November 24, 1920, the youngest child of Adeline White Wilkins and David Lee Owens Wilkins. Mrs. Smith attended Portsmouth Public Schools and graduated as salutatorian of the Class of 1937 of I. C. Norcom High School.

A widow, she married Emmerson R. Smith on December 26, 1941. Her new husband was one of Portsmouth's first young men to be drafted, as the country built-up its defense in preparation for World War II. Soon after their marriage, he deployed to North Africa and Europe. Elsie Smith waited for his return for more than three years. During that time, she worked at a candy factory located on Crawford Street. When the war ended, they settled in Portsmouth to start a family.

As a homemaker, she was very faithful to her husband and two children, Alexis and Emmerson. She always maintained a home of cheer and joy. There were constant colorful activities for the family and neighborhood children. After her two children moved on to college, she was able to pursue one of her endearing passions, the education of children. For a number of years, she worked with the Head Start Program hosted by Emmanuel AME Church. From there, she moved to a substitute teacher position at Brighton Elementary School.

After working in education, she continued with many of her rewarding hobbies. She was an avid lifelong gardener and enjoyed many hours with her husband refinishing antique furniture and looking after the many family pets. Her final years were spent at the Maryview Nursing Care Center. There she put on several noted programs on Portsmouth and Black History. She received numerous acclaims for her efforts.

Left to cherish her memory are her children, Emmerson (Diane) and Alexis, three grandchildren, Timothy Pillus, Marcus Smith and Chrispas Smith, five great grandchildren and many cherished relatives and friends.

Viewing will be held on Tuesday, January 12, 2010 from 4 – 7pm in J.T. Fisher Funeral Services, 1080 N. George Washington Highway, Chesapeake, VA. A life celebration service will be held 2 pm on Wednesday, January 13, 2010 at J. T. Fisher Funeral Services Chapel. J. T. Fisher Funeral Services will handle the final care arrangements.

Condolences can be sent to the family at www.jtfisherfuneralservices.com.

Previous Events

Service

JAN 13. 2:00 PM (ET)

J.T. Fisher Funeral Services
1248 N. George Washington Hwy
Chesapeake, VA

Tribute Wall



“ Alexis, Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.##imported-begin##Adebanjo Fabunmi##imported-end##

January 14, 2010 at 03:41 PM



“ Dear Emmerson and Alexis,

I'm so sorry your mother has passed on. She was a great comfort to me when my mother died, as were both of you. Your mother assured me that my sister and I would be fine, and we were. So I want to assure you that it's okay.

Your mother was so Blessed... God gave her a long life and two children who adored and honored her.

Love,

*Lynette##imported-begin##Lynette Robinson
Thompson##imported-end##*

January 13, 2010 at 10:55 PM



“ I was dismayed at th news of your mother's death. I pray that you and your family will be lifted by the Holy Spirit as you work through your grief at the loss of your dear mother. Remember that you will fellowship with her in the glory of heaven one day.##imported-begin##Doris Lewis McNeal##imported-end##

January 13, 2010 at 06:10 PM



“ *Emmerson and Alexis, I will truly miss your mother. I can't tell you how many times I had long conversations with her about any and everything. She taught me so much about the history of Portsmouth. As a military transplant it was invaluable to have history lessons with the greatest of teachers. Ms. Elsie had a tremendous impact on me and she became more than a patient. She was a teacher and a friend.* ##imported-begin## *Gloria Kelly* ##imported-end##

January 13, 2010 at 05:10 PM



“ *Emmerson, you will always be in my heart for the wonderful love and care you gave your mother. You are forever in our prayers. Aunt Athaline* ##imported-begin## *Aunt Athaline S. Fisher* ##imported-end##

January 13, 2010 at 01:44 PM



“ *Hold on to the many fond and special memories and may you find happiness and peace. From the Fisher-Davis family and the entire staff with our deepest sympathy.* ##imported-begin## *Fisher Funeral Home (Effingham Street, Portsmouth)* ##imported-end##

January 13, 2010 at 10:58 AM



“ To Emmerson, Alexis and Family- It is with a heavy heart that I express to you my deepest and heart felt sympathy for the lost of your dear mother and grandmother. We were introduced when Alexis and I were band members at SH Clark Jr High School. I remember her great effort to sell donuts to raise funds for band trips and instruments. Her caring and giving devotion inspired myself and many other classmates to give back, especially to our beloved I.C. Norcom High School. Her openiness when we visited the home was like going to a beautiful garden. I thank her for the childhood experiences that she gave and the kind letters and prayers sent to me while I was deployed to Desert Storm, Saudi Arabia. I would call her on Mother's Day and thank her for the joy she would express about her two loving children. She will be truly missed but what a wonderful flower we shared in this life. Alexis, on behalf of the 1967 class of I.C. Norcom High School we love you and stand with you in your moment of lost.

Greyhound forever and always!##imported-begin##Herbert Townes##imported-end##

January 13, 2010 at 10:22 AM



“ Alexis, my deepest sympathy to you and your family. You are in our prayers.##imported-begin##Sabrina Colaianni##imported-end##

January 13, 2010 at 09:31 AM



“ PLEASE KNOW THAT OUR HEARTS, THOUGHTS, AND PRAYERS ARE WITH YOUR FAMILY. YOUR MOTHER WAS A MOTHER TO US AS WELL. WE ARE SADDEN, BUT WE TRUST IN GOD AND HIS WILL AS YOU DO. GOD IS ALWAYS WITH US AND WILL ALWAYS SEE US THROUGH. OUR PRAYER FOR YOUR FAMILY IS THAT GOD WILL GRANT YOU PEACE AND COMFORT NOW AND ALWAYS. GOD BLESS AND KEEP YOU.

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DON AND ELDA AND FAMILY##imported-begin##DONALD &
ELDA BLACK AND FAMILY##imported-end##

January 12, 2010 at 11:38 PM



“ With our deepest sympathy in the lost of your mother. May God bless you and be with you in this time of berevement.##imported-begin##Mr. & Mrs. William W. Watson Jr. and Family 1018 Palmer Street Portsmouth, VA 23704##imported-end##

January 12, 2010 at 10:07 PM



“ Alexis,

My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family. From your stories, your Mom was a great lady.

Liz##imported-begin##Liz Johnson-Wright##imported-end##

January 12, 2010 at 04:04 PM



“ *Emmerson and Alexis,*

May God comfort you during your bereavement. At this time, I know that you probably believe that grief will be a constant companion. However, time does truly fade and eventually heals all sorrow.

My love and thoughts are with the two of you.##imported-begin##Oscar Scott##imported-end##

January 12, 2010 at 08:46 AM

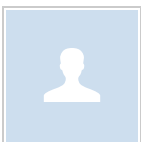


“ *To the family of Elsie Smith -*

I met Mrs. Smith while working at Maryview Nursing Care Center several years ago. Such a joyful and inspiring woman. You all are truly Blessed. May God Comfort each and everyone of you.

Annette Haskins##imported-begin##Annette Haskins##imported-end##

January 11, 2010 at 03:50 PM



“ *I always enjoyed visiting Miss Elsie's home. She and her husband had a beautifully manicured lawn, but there was always space for us kids to run and play. At great expense, she fed many a needy cat at a special table outside. She was a dear friend of my aunt, Odessa Smith. Emmerson and Alexis, may God bless you, and give you His peace.##imported-begin##Rachel E Clark##imported-end##*

January 10, 2010 at 07:58 PM