



Mrs. Ernestine Betty Jean Laribo

October 21, 1940 - July 26, 2025

Mrs. Ernestine Betty Jean Laribo, 84, of Charleston, SC, entered eternal rest on Saturday, July, 26, 2025. She leaves to cherish her memories, sister-in-law: Marcella Holmes; nieces: Tona NaDean Jones, Gail Elizabeth Holmes Taylor (Eugene), Kimberly Jones-White (Willie Sr.), Tracy Holmes-Bell, Jaria Ayala (DeVal), Elizabeth Pratt (Rashon Sr.), Tiffany Berrian Green (Sharray), Ericka Boston, and Vernetta Boston; nephews: Harry Holmes III (Alexis), and Dwight Heyward. She was preceded in death by her parents: Harry Holmes Sr. and Ernestine Washington Holmes, loving husband: Franklin Kenneth Laribo; brother: Harry Holmes Jr.; sister: Wilhelmina Holmes Jones; sister-in-law: Darlene Elizabeth Holmes; nephew: Eric Jones.

With full hearts, we announce the passing of Ernestine Betty Jean Laribo, affectionately known as Auntie Betty or Betty Jean, on Saturday, July 26, 2025. Born in Charleston, SC on October 21, 1940, Betty was the eldest daughter of Ernestine Washington and Harry Holmes Sr., one of Charleston's first Black firefighters. From the very beginning, Betty radiated beauty, charm, and grace. Her presence lit up every room and her warmth touched those she met.

Named in honor of her mother, Betty matriculated through Immaculate Conception Catholic School then attended Bennett College in Greensboro, NC. During the summer following her Freshmen year, Betty took a trip to New

York City and was so enamored that she decided to take her own bite of the Big Apple. Betty lived in Jamaica, Queens where she worked as a hostess and mixologist, captivating many with her striking beauty and magnetic energy. She was featured in Jet and Ebony magazines which are a testament to her beauty and elegance. Her time in New York was accentuated by the lifelong friendships she formed, with Dollie, Jackie, and Tara, her goddaughter.

Betty's fashion sense was bold, sophisticated, and a reflection of her confidence. Being a natural in front of the camera, she carried herself with elegance and flair, celebrating life through every outfit, photo, and joy-filled experience. She enjoyed music, song stylist Nancy Wilson was one of her favorites.

Though she cherished her years in New York, her heart remained with her family in Charleston. She shared an unbreakable bond with her beloved brother, Harry Holmes Jr., and sister, Wilhelmina Holmes Jones. With their encouragement, she returned to Charleston, where she worked for renowned cardiovascular surgeon Dr. Ruben Spann and his family.

It was in Charleston that Betty met the love of her life, Franklin Kenneth Laribo. Their marriage was filled with love, laughter, and shared travels. Through her marriage, Betty gained a large extended family through Frank's 5 brothers and 7 sisters, with whom they enjoyed many family gatherings. Though Frank preceded her in death, their enduring bond was a testament to their joy together.

Faith was a cornerstone of Betty's life. As a devoted member of St. Patrick Catholic Church, she was an active member of Our Lady of Guadalupe Court 110, served on the Bereavement Committee, and sang in the St. Patrick Choir and the Black Heritage Choir. Betty fulfilled civic duties by serving the community as a member of the Order of the Eastern Star, Prince Hall Chapter

No. 41.

Betty's joy for life was expressed through her laughter, kindness, unforgettable greetings "Hey Boobie!" or "Hey Kiddio!" and memorable sayings like "Be cool kangaroo..." Her words and warmth remain etched in the hearts of all who knew her.

Betty treasured joyful memories of summers at Coney Island, riding through New York in her friend's ice cream truck, travels with her husband and heartfelt visits with cousins on James Island. Betty loved having company, which became an even greater highlight of her days as she aged. Betty was a "talker," always ready for conversation, especially while watching Westerns with her dear friend, Wilhelmenia Coakley, affectionately known as Nana. Of course, anyone who came to visit them was welcome to revel in the nostalgia of good ole' westerns.

Betty had a tender heart for animals, in particular, DOGS. Her dogs—Mitzi and Flakes from New York, and later Midnight and Vanilla, then Sherri and Carmine in Goose Creek—were her children that she loved deeply and spoiled in every way. Betty taught us that the love of animals reflects the depth of one's kindness and compassion.

Ernestine Betty Jean (Holmes) Laribo was lovingly surrounded by family and friends who made every effort to ensure she never felt alone. Her sister-in-law, Marty, loved her and cared for as an extension of the love from her brother, Harry Jr. Her nieces and nephews and cousins cared for her and returned the reciprocated tenderness that she showed. Her niece Tona shared an especially deep bond nurtured through long walks, bike rides, and countless meals filled with laughter and meaningful conversation. She was honored to be by her aunt's side through life's challenges, witnessing her strength, grace,

and quiet tenderness.

Her cousin Mary Anne, who considered her a sister, remained a loyal and loving presence throughout her life. Her family was ever present and by her side in her final days.

Betty was a blessing — a radiant light whose love, laughter, and spirit left an indelible mark on all who knew her. Though we will miss her deeply, we are comforted by the memories she gave us: the sound of her voice, the sparkle in her eye, her warm hugs, and the joy she brought into every room. Betty showed us how to live with grace, style, and open-hearted generosity.

Her legacy lives on in the stories we share, the kindness we pass forward, and the love we carry in our hearts. As we say goodbye, we do so with full hearts, grateful for every moment we had with her. Rest well, dear Betty Jean. You are forever loved and never forgotten.

To honor Betty's love of dogs, in lieu of flowers please feel free to send donations to the Charleston Animal Society. Link below.

<https://charlestonanimalsociety.org>

If you would like to purchase sympathy flowers or plants for the service, her niece Vernetta is the owner of Florist of Omaha and will be designing sympathy arrangements for the service(s) in her honor. Please visit our website to place your order: www.vkfloristofomaha.com.

For questions or custom requests, Vernetta may be contacted directly at 402-510-2241.

Viewing for Mrs. Laribo will be on Monday August 4, 2025 from 4:00 pm - 7:30 PM at Smith-McNeal Funeral Home Chapel 2119 Dorchester Road North Charleston SC 29405. Celebration of life service will be Tuesday August 5,

2025 11:00 AM at St. Patrick's RC Church 134 St. Phillip Street Charleston,
SC 29403.

Interment

Hillcrest Cemetery

Hillcrest Lane, Summerville, SC

Cemetery Details

Hillcrest Cemetery

441 Hillcrest Cemetery
Summerville, SC 29485

Previous Events

Viewing

AUG 4. 4:00 PM - 7:30 PM.

Smith-Mcneal Funeral Home Chapel

Celebration of Life Service

AUG 5. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Patrick's RC Church
134 Philip St.
Charleston, SC 29403

Tribute Wall



“ Aretha Laribo sent a virtual gift in memory of Mrs. Ernestine Betty Jean Laribo



Aretha Laribo - August 04, 2025 at 10:14 PM



Miss you 🥹 My Loving Sister.. SIP 🙏❤️❤️❤️

Aretha Laribo - August 04, 2025 at 10:15 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mrs. Ernestine Betty Jean Laribo.



August 04, 2025 at 03:45 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Mrs. Ernestine Betty Jean Laribo.

August 04, 2025 at 03:45 PM

TH

“ *Love - your Goddaughter*
Tara L. Hamilton-Barnett



Tara L Hamilton-Barnett - August 04, 2025 at 11:08 AM

JS

“ *We remember people for different reasons-a great laugh,a unique perspective, a story shared. But mostly, we remember a life well-lived and honor a person well-loved. Hoping your memories bring comfort in your time of loss, and that it lifts your heart to know that others share your sadness.*
Love Jackie , Chops & Family

Jacqueline Simpson - August 04, 2025 at 10:34 AM

SC

“ *Sylvia Commodore Carson lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Ernestine Betty Jean Laribo*



Sylvia Commodore Carson - August 01, 2025 at 05:03 AM

SM

“ *Sonya Mitchell lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Ernestine Betty Jean Laribo*



Sonya Mitchell - July 30, 2025 at 03:24 PM

SM

Rest In Peace, Betty! 🙏

Sonya Mitchell - July 30, 2025 at 03:27 PM

PA

“ *Love always Betty* ”

Patricia - July 29, 2025 at 06:22 PM