



## Mary Lou Smith Bantly

October 29, 1945 - November 18, 2024

Mary Lou Smith Bantly passed away peacefully surrounded by family and friends on November 18, 2024, at Homeplace of Henderson. Mary Lou was born on October 29, 1945, in Henderson, KY, and lived there the entirety of her life. She loved the Lord with all her heart and enjoyed sharing the love of Jesus with everyone in many ways especially with her gift of heartfelt hospitality.

A 1964 graduate of Henderson County High school she kept in close touch with her classmates especially her lifelong best friend Rita Carroll. In 1970, she married Jim Bantly and started a family while working at The Gleaner in Henderson. They moved into a house in Balmoral Acres where she lived for 46 years, making life long friendships with her neighbors. She attended church during those years at Zion United Church of Christ and served as the pianist, chaired their Christmas bazaar, and served as the superintendent of the Sunday school, which revived the small church's

attendance substantially.

In 1978, she began a successful career selling Home Interior and Gifts which introduced her to hundreds of people all across the tri-state area. She won trips all over

the country each year for her high sales. In 1985, she won a trip to Los Angeles where

she was a contestant on the Price is Right and subsequently won a car.

In the late 80's, she began taking photography classes at the University of Southern Indiana and opened up a photography studio in her home in 1990.

She

worked as a photographer up until the time of her passing. Mary Lou Bantly Photography is well known in Henderson and across the nation. She was the official

photographer for the Ladies' Oriental Shrine of North America for 20 years, traveling to

states each year for their conventions and making close friends in many cities along

the way. In Henderson, she has photographed weddings, seniors, families and most

notably was the photographer for Henderson County High School dances, local youth soccer, archery, baseball and Upward basketball. In addition to taking photos at

Upward basketball she started a program and secured fundraising to insure that each

child could have a complimentary dinner before every game.

In the late 1990's she joined Zion Baptist Church and was an active member especially

in programs of gospel outreach. She was always eager to share her love of Jesus with

anyone and brought many people to the love of Christ during her lifetime. Not only by telling them about Jesus but showing love to them in her deeds. If she saw a need she was quick to devise a plan to help and follow through to make it happen. She loved hosting dinner parties using her fine china, she never needed a reason and that was one of the many ways she shared her love of Jesus. She took immense pride and garnered joy in setting beautiful holiday themed table scapes but most notably Christmas was her favorite holiday. Mary Lou has been known for her Christmas decorations at her home on Glengary for many years, putting up numerous trees and having a vast collection of Santa Clauses. Although her health did not allow her to stay in her home until the end, she brought the Christmas cheer to Homeplace of Henderson decorating this year before she fell ill and sharing her love of Christmas with the staff and residents there.

Mary Lou will be forever cherished by her two daughters Beth West and her husband, Kevin of Nashville, TN and Jennie Peak and her husband Jason of Ponte Vedra Beach, FL. She was known as Nonna by her beloved four grandchildren, Kate, Claire, Bantly and Lainie. She was preceded in death by her father, Hosea Smith, Sr. and her mother, Mary Montell Smith. She is survived by her brothers Hosea Smith,

Mike Smith

and her sister Pat Vowels all of Henderson, KY. In addition, she leaves behind many cousins, nieces and nephews. Mary had many close friends who supported her throughout her life and she held each friendship very dear. Most especially that of her next door neighbor of 46 years and loving friend, Sandy Judd. They worked side by side in the photography business. Sandy was also a steadfast caregiver during the last few years of Mary's life allowing her to stay at home. Additionally, the family would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the staff and residents of Homeplace of Henderson for their compassionate care and support over the past year. Living at Homeplace was a true blessing in her life.

Relatives and friends are invited to Mary's Life Celebration from 5:00 until 8:00 p.m. on Friday, November 22nd at Zion Baptist Church in Henderson, KY and again on Saturday from 10:00 a.m. until the service time. The funeral service will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, November 23rd at the church with Yvette Eastham officiating. Private burial will be held at Fairmont Cemetery in Henderson, KY.

In lieu of flowers please bring a pre-lit small Christmas tree that you will donate to someone in need for the Christmas season.

Arrangements entrusted to Benton-Glunt & Tapp Funeral Home, A Life Celebration® Home, online condolences may be made at [www.bentongluntandtappfuneralhome.com](http://www.bentongluntandtappfuneralhome.com).

# Cemetery Details

## Fairmont Cemetery

Henderson  
KY 42420

# Previous Events

## Life Celebration

NOV 22. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Zion Baptist Church  
8158 Kentucky 351  
Henderson, KY 42420  
<http://zionbaptist.org/>

## Life Celebration

NOV 23. 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Zion Baptist Church  
8158 Kentucky 351  
Henderson, KY 42420  
<http://zionbaptist.org/>

## Funeral Service

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NOV **23**. 11:00 AM (CT)

Zion Baptist Church  
8158 Kentucky 351  
Henderson, KY 42420  
<http://zionbaptist.org/>

# Tribute Wall

YD

“ Dear Pat, Mike, Paul, Jake, and the rest of your spectacular family, we are sending our love and prayers of comfort for all! (We’ve been down with strep and unable to be there in person.) Mary Lou lived life to the Max! (just like the rest of you...) and made so many people’s lives better with just a smile. Lifting you up in prayer, Vonnie, Duncan, and Will. May you feel loving arms around you each day 🙏❤️

Yvonne Draper - November 26, 2024 at 10:26 AM

MO

“ Mike Orsburn lit a candle in memory of Mary Lou Smith Bantly



Mike Orsburn - November 23, 2024 at 09:16 AM

JS

“ Mary Lou, myself, and 3 friends went to the Beverly Hills Hotel In Hollywood and had lunch at the famous “Polo Lounge”.....we celebrated a faux birthday of Mary Lou’s with singing waiters. What fun, friends and laughter. I will miss her but will always remember a beautiful woman ..inside and out.

Joan E Sullivan-Ozer - November 22, 2024 at 09:06 PM

MA

“ *Mary Arnett lit a candle in memory of Mary Lou Smith Bantly*



Mary Arnett - November 22, 2024 at 12:23 PM

MA

*May your light shine in Heaven*

Mary Arnett - November 22, 2024 at 12:24 PM

MB

“ *Monica, Travis, Beaux & Nick Brashear purchased the Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet for the family of Mary Lou Smith Bantly.*



Monica, Travis, Beaux & Nick Brashear - November 22, 2024 at 08:52 AM

MB

“ *Monica, Travis, Beaux & Nick Brashear planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mary Lou Smith Bantly.*

Monica, Travis, Beaux & Nick Brashear - November 22, 2024 at 08:52 AM



“ *Your Light Shines was purchased for the family of Mary Lou Smith Bantly.*



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November 21, 2024 at 01:08 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Mary Lou Smith Bantly.

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November 21, 2024 at 01:08 PM



“ *The Hamilton Family purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Mary Lou Smith Bantly.*



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**The Hamilton Family** - November 21, 2024 at 12:08 AM



“ *Rachel Aulgur - her Kansas City Friend purchased the Blue Caribbean Bouquet for the family of Mary Lou Smith Bantly.*



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**Rachel Aulgur - her Kansas City Friend** - November 20, 2024 at 10:47 PM

JB

“ Our deepest sympathy to the family. Balmoral Acres neighbors were always eager to see the early Christmas decorations she lovingly displayed. She kept the neighborhood lively! Our warm thoughts and prayers.

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**Judy Bugg** - November 20, 2024 at 08:31 AM

CP

“ Carrie and Chad Patrick purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Mary Lou Smith Bantly.



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**Carrie and Chad Patrick** - November 19, 2024 at 08:04 PM

TA

“ To the family , we are so very sorry for your loss. You are all in our thoughts and prayers.

Mary Lou , what a classy lady you have always been. Thank you for all the joy and love you have spread through the world. We always had so much fun with you when we saw you. You always made us laugh. We will miss your beautiful face and smile. Rest in peace and we will see you in heaven one day. We love you.... Tammye, Debi, Steve and Robin ( Lucy's kids)



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**Tammye** - November 19, 2024 at 07:30 PM

MC

“ *Mary Frances Conn lit a candle in memory of  
Mary Lou Smith Bantly*



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**Mary Frances Conn** - November 19, 2024 at 05:02 PM