



## Mrs. Betty Gilbert Roberts

August 27, 1931 - November 10, 2020

Betty Gilbert Roberts, artist, teacher, friend, and beloved mother, died on November 10th aged 89. She was born in Washington County, Florida in 1931, the only child of Selma Henrietta Georg Gilbert and Arthur Bradford Gilbert, a descendant of William Bradford, Governor of Plymouth Colony.

The Gilberts had farmed at Orange Hill since the 1830s. She spent her childhood in Chipley, riding her pony out to Gilbert's Mill on Hard Labor Creek, listening to stories told by her Big Mama, and befriending every animal from barn kittens to the polled Herefords her father raised. In 1949, she entered Florida State University and had so much fun during her freshman year her father told her that if her grades didn't improve, she'd soon be back on the farm. She made the Dean's List ever after. After college, she worked for the Tallahassee Recreation Department and in 1954 married a young civil engineer named Milton Roberts. Milton died in 1967, leaving her to raise two small children on her own, which she did, in a loving home full of books, objets'd'art, cats, and dogs.

She was an early member of LeMoyne, a founder of the Society of Arts and Crafts, and instigator of the Arts and Crafts Program at Lafayette Park. She had studied with renowned potters, FSU's William Watson and Amos White at FAMU, eventually opening her own studio, Penrhyn Ceramics. She collected folk and studio pottery and enjoyed visiting the San Ildefonso Pueblo, home of

the artist Maria Martinez, and the Cornwall studio of Britain's Bernard Leach. She loved traveling, especially to Ireland, Britain, New Mexico, and New York: her favorite city.

Betty Roberts was a Southern lady feminist, a proper Presbyterian who loved politics, and a strong Democrat. She was never idle, always working with clay or crocheting or making jelly or baking her famous pound cake. An athlete herself, she loved FSU football so much she sat through every home game of the 1973 0-11 season.

She is survived by her cousins, nieces and nephews, friends and cats, as well as son Bradford Roberts and daughter Diane Roberts, both of Tallahassee, who thank Big Bend Hospice for their help. Brad and Diane are especially grateful to Christina Robertson RN for her generosity and friendship. Betty will be buried Tuesday (Abbey Funeral Home), but we'll celebrate her life in a big way next year. In lieu of flowers, please donate to Best Friends Animal Society, Spring House Institute, or the Florida Wildlife Federation.

# Cemetery Details

## Tallahassee Memory Gardens

4037 North Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32303  
(850) 562-1518  
<https://www.abbeyfh.com/>