



Gretta Roque Burns

April 14, 1931 - June 27, 2025

Gretta Roque Burns, age 94, entered eternal rest at home on June 27, 2025.

She was born on April 14, 1931, on the family's Roque Brothers' farm, founded by her father in Cane River, Louisiana. Gretta was the youngest child of Emitte and Cecile Roque. She grew up alongside her siblings—Collins, Robbie, Lucille, Earl, Marie, and Irma—helping on the family farm and in the Roque Brothers' General Store, a cherished community gathering place. Gretta was proud of her heritage and her ancestral ties to Cane River, a hamlet made famous through books and films, and where she often returned for family visits and reunions.

Gretta began her early education at St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School, located next to the historic St. Augustine Catholic Church. At the age of thirteen, she left Cane River to attend St. Mary's Academy in New Orleans, where she boarded at the school's original location in the French Quarter. It was there that she began a lasting relationship with the Sisters of the Holy Family, who instilled in her the values of faith, service, and duty—principles that would guide her throughout her life. Upon graduation in 1948, she was selected as valedictorian of her class.

After graduation, Gretta enrolled at Xavier University of Louisiana, where she pledged Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. It was at Xavier that she met a

handsome young soldier who had served in World War II and was also enrolled there. After considerable persuasion, Winston “Bootsie” Burns won her heart, and their love story blossomed into a lifelong marriage and partnership that endures to this day.

Nestled in the Voscoville neighborhood of Gentilly, the Annette Street home that Winston and Gretta built quickly became a cornerstone of community and family life. There, they raised their five children and lovingly welcomed their thirteen grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. For more than 68 years, Gretta’s dinner table became a gathering place of laughter, tradition, and love, not just for family, but for a wide circle of friends, neighbors, co-workers, church members, schoolteachers, and the families of her children’s and grandchildren’s closest companions. She had a gift for making everyone feel welcome, seen, and fed body and soul. Whether you came for a bowl of gumbo or stayed for the stories and laughter, time at Gretta’s table left you feeling like family.

Gretta was deeply devoted to her Christian faith. She and her family attended Mass regularly and hosted the recitation of the rosary every Tuesday evening in their home, welcoming neighbors and friends into a space of prayer and fellowship. One of Gretta’s most cherished memories was having the honor and privilege of serving as a Eucharistic Minister during the Mass celebrated by Pope John Paul II during his historic visit to New Orleans in 1987. Her devotion also took her across the world—she was deeply honored to attend the canonization of St. Katharine Drexel in Rome, Italy, in 2000, a moment that deeply affirmed her lifelong commitment to faith and service.

In 1957, Gretta began her professional career as secretary for Justice Revius O. Ortique, Jr, the prominent jurist and civil rights leader, who operated his private law practice on St. Bernard Avenue in Gentilly. For over thirty-five years, she served as his chief administrative officer and trusted confidante at

Orleans Parish Civil District Court until her retirement in 1994. Their relationship was characterized by the bonds of family ties and genuine friendship between both families and their children, who all lived and grew up on Annette Street.

Gretta was as tireless in her dedication to her community as she was devoted to her family. As a founding member of the Parents of Alumni Club at St. Augustine High School, Gretta was a driving force behind the organization's weekly Monday night Bingo games that helped raise needed funds for the school. Gretta was also a tireless fundraiser for her beloved alma mater, St. Mary's Academy, as an organizer of the school's annual Alumnae Association's Gala Cabaret Magic. She went on to receive numerous awards such as the Henriette DeLille Award, the Crystal Award, and the Legacy Award for the 150th anniversary of SMA. Her continued involvement reflected her deep gratitude for the foundation the school and the Sisters of the Holy Family had given her, and she remained a proud and active alumna throughout her life as well as an Associate of the Sisters of the Holy Family.

Gretta and Bootsie raised their children during the Civil Rights Era. With courage and conviction, they insisted that their children be among the first African American students to integrate St. Leo the Great School. It was not always easy, and Gretta would later reflect on those years as "difficult but necessary." Her grit and determination helped usher her family—and her community—into a new era of progress and possibility.

Affectionately known as "Grammy", Gretta took on her role with immense love, care, support, wisdom, and gratitude. She welcomed her grandchildren with a full heart and open arms. She was present at Grandparents' Day, as well as at volleyball, baseball, football, and soccer games, track meets, school plays, and graduations—cheering them on with pride and joy. Her presence was a

constant source of encouragement and love. Gretta considered herself especially blessed to become a great-grandmother in 2009, when she welcomed the first of her eight great-grandchildren. It was a role she cherished deeply, embracing each new generation with the same boundless love, wisdom, and grace that defined her life.

Gretta Roque Burns is preceded in death by her beloved husband, Winston Burns, Sr.; her grandson, Trenton M. Gueno; her parents, Emitte and Cecile Roque; and her six siblings.

Gretta leaves to cherish her memory of her daughter, Roxanne Burns (John Baker), and her four sons, Ronald (Sheila), Burton (Constance), Brian (Stacie), and Winston Jr (Wendy). Grandchildren: Amber Burns Anderson (Sylvester), Christy, Damon, Erin Burns, Ronald "Vinnie" Burns, Jr., Jason Burns, Sr., Brian "BJ" Burns, Jr., Brittany and Dominique Burns, Brandon Gueno (Sarah), Shannon Gueno Phillips (Don), and Blair Burns. Great-grandchildren: Dashaydon Phillips, Darien Phillips, Gabrielle Gueno, Marcus Gueno, Kendal M. Anderson, Sylvester B. Anderson, Jordyn "JoJo" and Jason "JJ" Burns, Jr. She is also survived by a host of nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Relatives and friends of the family are invited to attend a celebration of Gretta's life at St. Martin de Porres Church (formerly Transfiguration of the Lord Catholic Church), 5621 Elysian Fields Ave. on Saturday, July 12, 2025, Visitation begins at 8:00 a.m. with a Mass of Christian Burial at 11:00 a.m. Interment: St. Louis Cemetery No.3, New Orleans, LA. Arrangements entrusted to D.W. Rhodes Funeral Home, 3933 Washington Ave. New Orleans, LA 70125. Please visit www.rhodesfuneral.com to sign the online guestbook, share memories, and condolences to the family. In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests donations be made to St. Mary's Academy 6905 Chef Menteur Blvd. NOLA, 70126 https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_bu

ttion_id=GPPRF7HVZHDVJ or St. Augustine High School, Winston, Sr. and Gretta Burns Scholarship Fund 2600 AP Tureaud Ave NOLA, 70119 <https://www.staugnola.org/advancement/ways-to-give> in honor of Gretta's enduring legacy of love and service.

Please visit https://globalparkingsystems-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/vburns_parkglobal_net/Ef8j3OgSZINJmQj-2sWmxukBr7grMfnXaEHvuRhQREt8vQ?e=NQrIhY to access Gretta's Program.

Cemetery Details

St. Louis #3 Cemetery

3421 Esplanade Ave
New Orleans, LA 70119

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 12. 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Martin de Porres Catholic Church
5621 Elysian Fields Ave
New Orleans, LA 70122

Funeral Mass

JUL 12. 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Martin de Porres Catholic Church
5621 Elysian Fields Ave
New Orleans, LA 70122

Tribute Wall

ME

“*Mrs. Burns always had a smile on her face. As a young lawyer in 1987, she was instrumental in making sure I had curator appointments. When Katrina struck and she temporarily located to Pelican Point, I would frequently Connect and help with any requests she had. She was one of God’s jewels in his crown.*”

Monique Edwards - July 12, 2025 at 07:08 PM

JG

“*Sending condolences to all who mourn the loss of Greta Burns. May her memory be a blessing.*”

Jacqueline Goldberg - July 12, 2025 at 01:58 PM

NO

“*Nolan and Jean onezime lit a candle in memory of Gretta Burns*”



Nolan and Jean onezime - July 12, 2025 at 01:31 PM

JA

“*Johnny and Annette Adams purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Gretta Roque Burns.*”



Johnny and Annette Adams - July 12, 2025 at 08:05 AM

HD

“ i could never say no to Mrs. burns when she asked me to give to St. Aug. high school. draw down, etc. or for prayers for her family members especially, children, spouse, friends ,etc. much love to mall the family, I will definitely miss her calls and smile. rev.Davis SSSJ

HENRY DAVIS - July 11, 2025 at 06:42 PM



“ Large Basket Garden was purchased for the family of Gretta Roque Burns.



July 11, 2025 at 01:45 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Gretta Roque Burns.

July 11, 2025 at 01:45 PM

LL

“ Linda and George Lunsford purchased the Beautiful Dreams for the family of Gretta Roque Burns.



Linda and George Lunsford - July 11, 2025 at 01:11 PM

JU

“ Brian, sorry for your loss. Jules G

Jules - July 11, 2025 at 11:15 AM

GC

“ Our deepest condolences to the Burns Family. God grant you comfort and joyful remembrances. The Burns Family have always meant a lot to the Purple Knights Family. Joining our prayers with the Angels and Saints. May God bless and keep Gretta safe in His arms. Rest in peace, Mrs. Burns!
Sincerely yours in Christ,
Glenn & Patrice Carrere

Glenn & Patrice Carrere - July 10, 2025 at 11:37 PM

GM

“ Glenn M. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gretta Roque Burns.

Glenn M. - July 10, 2025 at 11:25 PM

CH

“ Carlyle, Bryan and Gary Hithe purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Gretta Roque Burns.



Carlyle, Bryan and Gary Hithe - July 10, 2025 at 03:33 PM

CH

“ Carlyle, Bryan and Gary Hithe planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gretta Roque Burns.

Carlyle, Bryan and Gary Hithe - July 10, 2025 at 03:33 PM



“ *Pink Tribute Spray was purchased for the family of Gretta Roque Burns.*



July 10, 2025 at 02:05 PM



“ *My deepest condolences to the Roque/Burns family. You will forever be remembered by family and friends. RIP Queen 🙏.*

Ashanti Spurlock - July 10, 2025 at 12:30 PM



“ *Kevin Brisco & Veronica Mallett purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Gretta Roque Burns.*



Kevin Brisco & Veronica Mallett - July 10, 2025 at 11:34 AM



“ *David &. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gretta Roque Burns.*

David &. - July 10, 2025 at 11:32 AM

BW

“ Bobby & Sheila Williams purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Gretta Roque Burns.



Bobby & Sheila Williams - July 10, 2025 at 11:07 AM

KH

“ Blessings and prayers are being sent for the entire family. Her smile, her voice I can hear this morning. She had strong faith and passion for her beloved SMA !

Proud to have known such a lady!
Kim and Wade Hypolite

Kim Hypolite - July 10, 2025 at 10:56 AM

RJ

“ She always made everyone feel special. It was like receiving a gift of kindness that made you smile and feel loved. A great lady.

Roy J. Rodney, Jr. - July 10, 2025 at 09:55 AM



“ We love the family of Winston Burns and pray for the beautiful legacy of Mrs Burns.

Jacky and Manuch Akbari

Jacky Akbari - July 10, 2025 at 09:29 AM

LB

“ To the Family, May God cover you with peace and comfort at this time. Ms. Gretta was truly a beautiful person inside and out! Heaven as a new angel!

Condolences and Love Always,

Lynnette Braud, Melba Braud and Natalie Lindon Williams and James Williams

Lynnette Braud - July 10, 2025 at 06:39 AM

DD

“ Mrs. Burns , you will be missed here on earth but you are welcomed into the kingdom of heaven because of your sweet spirit and loving nature. I appreciate you and your family for making my family feel welcome whenever we were in your families presence, get your rest Queen. The Dixon Family.

Darren Dixon - July 10, 2025 at 12:29 AM

AK

“ I first met Mrs Gretta and Mr Bootsie in 2007 when their son, Coach Burton Burns, was on the staff at Alabama Football. Such amazing people. I can still hear Mrs Gretta's soft spoken voice. She will truly be missed. My condolences to the Burns family. Love you guys. ❤️
~ Ashleigh Kimble

Ashleigh Kimble - July 09, 2025 at 09:54 PM

CL

“ Love, The LaCour Family, Julius, Cynthia, Allison and Tamia! We love you!

Cynthia F LaCour - July 09, 2025 at 09:39 PM



“ *Forever Our Angel Bouquet was purchased for the family of Gretta Roque Burns.*



July 09, 2025 at 09:22 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Gretta Roque Burns.

July 09, 2025 at 09:22 PM



“ *What an important, impactful and inspirational life! Wow! Our thoughts and prayers are with all who are mourning the loss of this great woman. We will honor her by attempting to follow in her footsteps. May she rest in peace.*

The St. Julien Family

Eli St. Julien - July 09, 2025 at 08:58 PM



“ *To The Family,
May our Lord's loving promise of eternal life for beautiful Mrs. Burns give each of you peace, comfort & strength today & always!
God bless you!*



Alvin & Phyllis Alexander - July 09, 2025 at 04:36 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Gretta Roque Burns.



July 09, 2025 at 02:27 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Gretta Roque Burns.

July 09, 2025 at 02:27 PM



“ To the family: May God give you peace and comfort at this time! Heaven has truly gained an Angel! Ms. Gretta was truly a beautiful person inside and out! May she rest in heavenly peace! Love and condolences from Lynnette and Melba Braud and Natalie Lindon Williams

Lynnette Braud - July 09, 2025 at 08:00 AM



“ Lovingly, Ronald and Julie Berniard purchased the Lily and Rose Tribute Spray for the family of Gretta Roque Burns.



Lovingly, Ronald and Julie Berniard - July 08, 2025 at 09:11 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Gretta Roque Burns.*



July 07, 2025 at 04:58 PM



“ *We offer our sincere condolences to the entire Burns family. The loss of a family's matriarch is like no other. May you find strength and reassurance knowing that Mrs. Burns is in a much better place now in the Lord's Heavenly Arms along with those loved ones who preceded her in passing. 🙏*

The Prevost Family

Brian Michael Prevost - July 07, 2025 at 06:54 AM



May the Burns Family find strength and comfort in God's grace and mercy at this difficult time 🙏.
Mary Jane Hayes Jones

Mary Jane Hayes Jones - July 08, 2025 at 10:36 PM



My dearest Ms Gretta how I will miss you!!!! You are a class act!!!! You brought the essence of elegance every where you went!!!! We enjoyed many days of taking walks down memory road you had an amazing life!!!! You and I had an eye for fashion thus several trips to our favorite Stein Mart!!!! We were so upset when they closed it!!!! I can go on and on with the special memories I shared with you!!!! You were my special girl and I hope I shared the same sentiments!!!! Rest on as you have earned your gold diamond encrusted crown!!!! Life has been altered by your exit from Annette St!!!! Sleep on my friend until we meet again!!!!

LyDia Poindexter - July 09, 2025 at 06:20 PM

TF

“ *The Prevost Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gretta Roque Burns.*

The Prevost Family - July 07, 2025 at 03:37 AM

TF

“ *The Prevost Family purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Gretta Roque Burns.*



The Prevost Family - July 07, 2025 at 03:37 AM