



Mamie Ruth Gadson

April 8, 1945 - September 4, 2026

Florence, South Carolina

Mamie Ruth Gadson died in Florence on September 4, 2026. She was eighty-one. Born there on April 8, 1945, she grew up in a house where the church bulletin was treated as a legal document and a pot of beans was treated as a ministry. She learned a warehouse ticket before she learned a highway. A correct weight, she said, is a form of respect.

She spent twenty-eight years in a tobacco warehouse that smelled of leaf and coffee. She typed the ticket list, the sale list, and the quiet list of men who needed a ride and would not ask. Later she ran a school cafeteria breakfast that had to catch kids who came in late from a pickup that had already been working since dark. She kept extra milk without making a speech about it.

She married Howard Gadson in 1966. He sold insurance and died in 2004. They raised a son and a daughter who still argue about who got the last piece of caramel cake. Mamie kept the garden of cannas, and the habit of leaving a casserole on a porch without a speech. She sat through long meetings the way other people sit through weather.

Grandchildren remember a woman who corrected their thank-you notes more than their homework, who kept a biscuit tin of paper clips, and who could name every auntie in the sanctuary by the hat she no longer wore. She died in Florence, in the heat she had always said you could live with if you dressed for it. The kitchen is someone else's now. The patience she practiced there is harder to replace than a ticket.

Services

A funeral in Florence with one familiar hymn, sung slowly. A gift to a school breakfast fund is welcome.

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