



Laura Griffith Harper

March 21, 1946 - June 24, 2026

Coleman Funeral Home of Oxford

Laura Griffith Harper, 80, passed away on Wednesday, June 24, 2026, at Yalobusha General Nursing Home.

The family will receive friends on Thursday, July 02, 2026, from 4:00 PM until 6:00 PM. She will be entombed privately at Mulhearn Memorial Park and Cemetery in Monroe, Louisiana, at a later date.

Born and raised in Monroe, Louisiana, Laura graduated as the salutatorian of Neville High School's Class of 1964. She continued her academic excellence at Louisiana State University, earning her Bachelor of Library Science in 1968 and her Master's Degree in Library Science in 1970. Her dedication to her field was evident throughout her distinguished career, where she became a pillar of the university library, guiding countless students and faculty members with her expertise and patience.

Known for her leadership as a past president of the Cedar Oakes Guild, Laura dedicated herself to the betterment of her community and beyond. She was deeply involved in both local and state chapters of the League of Women Voters, passionately working to expand democratic participation. Laura's commitment to civic duty was evident in her regular appearance at

Naturalization ceremonies, where she registered new voters and celebrated the promise of American democracy.

Driven by a sense of justice, Laura contributed to a project focused on making restitution to families of lynching victims, ensuring that difficult chapters of history were met with acknowledgment and action. As a charter member of the Wise Women, she fostered empowerment and solidarity among women in her community.

Laura's professional life was marked by excellence and dedication. She was the head research librarian at the University of Mississippi (Ole Miss) and served as Head of Government Documents at the university library for many years. Her influence extended nationally through her active participation in professional library organizations, where she was respected for her expertise and leadership.

A voracious reader, Laura's interests spanned philosophy, religion, and politics. She delighted in the company of her William Faulkner reading group, and her love of literature knew no bounds. Detective novels—especially those with female leads—were her guilty pleasure, though she counted John Grisham among her favorite authors. She also enjoyed detective TV shows like *Blue Bloods* and *NCIS*, and never missed an opportunity to explore new genres and authors.

Laura's passion for the arts was evident in her love of theater, particularly musicals. Before her final illness, she enjoyed performances such as *Beautiful* and *An American in Paris* at the Ford Center. An enthusiastic traveler, she explored the continental United States, Hawaii, Quebec, the UK, Europe, and took a memorable Alaskan cruise with her son in 2019.

At home, Laura was known for her love of animals—especially cats. She

rarely lived without a feline companion and enjoyed programs like The Dog Whisperer and My Cat from Hell. Cooking brought her joy, and her kitchen was often filled with the scent of new recipes. She liked international cuisine, especially Asian food, and enjoyed exploring new flavors from around the world.

Her sharp wit and great sense of humor brightened the lives of those around her. Even as her health declined, she sought laughter and joy, including standing in line to see comedian Bill Maher in Memphis.

Above all, Laura was a devoted mother. She frequently drove from Mississippi to Indiana when her son was ill, doing everything she could to ensure he received the best possible care. Her steadfast love and commitment to his well-being were unwavering throughout her life.

Laura Griffith Harper's life was a testament to the power of curiosity, kindness, and action. She will be remembered for her intellect, her warmth, and her unwavering commitment to making the world a better place.

She leaves behind a loving family to continue walking down the path of life in her absence: beloved son, William Griffith Harper of Oxford, Mississippi; three cousins: Kent Breard of Monroe, Louisiana, and Byron Breard of New Orleans, Louisiana; and, Satchie Carvounis of Washington, DC; dear friends, Gail Tapscott of Oxford, Mississippi; Julia Rholes of Georgetown, Texas; Sylvia Lenhoff of Oxford, Mississippi; and, Lisa Watts of Oxford, Mississippi.

The loved ones who departed from this life before Laura include: her husband, William Rodney Harper; and her parents, Dudley Griffith and Elizabeth Breard Griffith

The staff at Coleman Funeral Home of Oxford is honored to serve the family during this challenging season of life. Condolences may be expressed online on her Tribute wall at www.colemanfuneralhomeox.com.

Cemetery Details

Mulhearn Memorial Park and Cemetery

623 US-80
Monroe, LA 71203

Upcoming Events

Visitation

JUL 2. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (CT)

Coleman Funeral Home of Oxford
601 Commerce Parkway
Oxford, MS 38655
(662) 234-3900
info@colemanfuneralhome.com
<https://www.colemanfuneralhome.com/>