



Shelby Jean "MawMaw" Scott

April 2, 1940 - November 16, 2025

A LIFE LIVED OUT LOUD

Shelby Scott embodied the words “laugh loudly, love deeply, live fully.”

Her laugh was contagious, her love absolute, and her spirit radiated authenticity and boldness. For 85 vibrant years, she lived life out loud, and everyone lucky enough to know her felt the warmth of her presence.

Shelby Jean Russell was born April 2, 1940, in Sardis. She was the second eldest of five children. Her father, Howard, worked at Goodyear, while her mother, Nina, was a homemaker and volunteered as a “pink lady” at the local hospital. The family attended church at Sardis Baptist several times a week, and Howard and Nina instilled a strong work ethic in their children.

Shelby was an accomplished pianist, seamstress and cook. She was just 17 when she was swept off her feet by a barrel-chested man with a booming voice and a heart full of tall tales who towered over her 4-foot-11 frame.

Shelby and Buddy ‘Bud’ Jack Scott were married in 1957, and she was often known to joke over the years that she married him ‘for his good job (also at Goodyear) and his car.’

Their home was a place filled with both chaos and love — of loud voices and laughter, of delicious smells wafting from the kitchen and the echo of piano music, accompanied by Shelby’s lilting voice singing along to “Amazing Grace” and “Go Rest High on that Mountain.” The one thing Shelby was good at other than the upkeep of her home and playfully bickering with Bud was raising and affectionately nibbling on babies.

Shelby had four children of her own but filled the role of “Momma” and “Mawmaw” to countless others — her own sisters (who were decades younger), her grandchildren, and those throughout the Sardis and Whitesboro communities whom she babysat.

Shelby and Bud kept a large vegetable garden each summer that their children and grandchildren helped to plant barefoot, and later, harvest and can. Shelby loved tending her flower gardens, giving her grandchildren a good laugh in the family pool by pretending she couldn't swim and reading John Grissom and Nora Roberts novels.

Her bunny cakes, powdered donuts, pumpkin rolls, turnip green soup and chicken and dressing were favorites, while during the holiday season, she constructed an elaborate Christmas village and put a Christmas tree in every room of her home. She played piano at Smith Chapel, and Bud sang off-key in the choir.

Bud called her “Momma” and “my love.” Shelby had a colorful vocabulary (especially when responding to Bud's “Momma!”). She exclaimed, “I-von!” or “They!” when surprised or someone was in trouble, and a resounding “well shit” when something had gone wrong. She kept the kids in line so Bud didn't “have to get mean,” and a punishment often began with being asked to pick your own hickory switch.

She was an expert snake-killer and could be caught screaming and cursing while using a hoe, broom or shotgun to send unfortunate, typically non-poisonous snakes to their doom.

Nothing gave her joy quite like her family and friends — cooking for them, hugging them, laughing with them and giving the unsolicited advice they often needed to hear.

Bud passed in 2014 after battling a host of illnesses including prostate cancer and dementia and, though a great light in her life had been extinguished, Shelby found other things that gave her joy. She loved attending festivals, even when her knees began to give her pain, and traveling to new places with her family.

She became a dare devil, accepting family challenges that always ended in dramatic outbursts — eating a raw oyster (it tasted like snot), trying her first sip of whiskey (it was terrible), even entering the world of virtual reality (one time was enough) and dancing to the ‘Pamela Pumpkin’ song. On Halloween, she often wore a scary costume and draped over the rail of her porch, awaiting unsuspecting trick-or-treaters. Even in her 80’s, she could be caught standing on tabletops in her home to clean the light fixtures.

Shelby died on November 16, 2025, after a brief and unexpected battle with an aggressive form of leukemia, just one day before what would have been her and Bud’s 68th wedding anniversary. It’s commonly agreed that they’re rejoicing in heaven together — while he’s grabbing her leg and calling her “Momma,” and she’s slapping his hand away and screaming “well shit!”

A life lived out loud is a life well-lived.

Shelby is survived by her children — Teresa Burns (Windell), Timothy Scott (Gina), Todd Scott (Steven) and Kristin (the late Brian Bruce) — 10 grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren; her sisters — Debbie Crawford (Steve) and Lisa Nelson (Andy) — and sister-in-law, Dean Peppers Russell. She is preceded in death by her husband, Buddy Jack Scott; parents Howard and Nina Russell; and brothers Loye Maxwell Russell and Larry Joseph Russell.

Shelby will have a memorial graveside service at 2 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 20, 2025, at Smith Chapel Cemetery. Bro. Alan Hallmark and Bro. Ricky Holmes will be officiating.

In lieu of flowers, please make donations to the lymphoma and leukemia fund of your choice.

Arrangements are entrusted to Etowah Memorial Chapel.

Cemetery Details

Smith Chapel Cemetery

Smith Chapel Rd.
Boaz, AL 35956

Previous Events

Memorial Graveside Service

NOV 20. 2:00 PM (CT)

Smith Chapel Cemetery
Smith Chapel Rd.
Boaz, AL 35956

Tribute Wall

JS

“ *My deepest condolences, dear Kati. I know what you and your family must be going through; it must be a very difficult time right now. But I can tell you that she is now resting in peace and is an angel watching over you from heaven. I send you a big hug and much strength.*

Sincerely, Josue Sermeño, El Salvador

Josue Sermeño - November 19, 2025 at 08:51 AM

JR

“ *Always a beautiful smile on that lovely face.*

Joan Robinson - November 18, 2025 at 11:50 PM

SS

“ *Shelby was one of the Best friends !! have ever had !she will forever be hold special place in my heart!!!*



Soworowski Soworowski - November 18, 2025 at 11:40 AM

TR

“ *I will forever be grateful for all the times we had together Mawmaw. You made my childhood memories full of joy! Thank you for always being so good to me. I sure am going to miss you!* ”



Tamran Rudolph - November 17, 2025 at 11:56 AM