



Mr. Cleo Eston Willis, Jr.

January 12, 1930 - May 13, 2025

Cleo Eston Willis, Jr. passed away peacefully on May 13, 2025, in Plant City, Florida, at the age of 95 surrounded by his family.

Born on January 12, 1930, in Georgia. Cleo faced early challenges with strength and resilience. After losing his parents, at only twenty-one he assumed the responsibility of raising his five younger siblings with unwavering dedication. These formative experiences shaped a life marked by perseverance and deep-rooted values.

In 1956, he married Judy Lumley, beginning a loving union that lasted 68 years. Together they built a life grounded in love and shared purpose. Cleo is lovingly remembered by Judy; their children Jody (Lynne), Julie (Larry), and Holly (Dirk); four grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents and four sisters.

Affectionately known as “Junior” to friends and “Poppy” to family, Cleo was a man of vision and determination. He founded what became one of the largest drywall companies in Florida and constructed hundreds of homes throughout the Plant City area. However, it was the treehouse he built for his grandchildren that brought him the greatest joy—a quiet testament to his enduring love for family.

Cleo's life reflected a deep spiritual foundation and steadfast commitment to those he held dear. His legacy endures through the lives he touched and the lasting impact of his work.

A funeral service will be held Friday, May 30 at 11:00 A.M. at Hopewell Funeral Home and Memorial Gardens, 6005 South County Road 39, Plant City, where the family will receive friends at 10:00 A.M. Committal to follow at Salem Cemetery, Sydney. For those unable to attend, the service will be live-streamed starting at 11:00 A.M. at <https://www.facebook.com/hopewellfuneral>.

May he rest in eternal peace, and may his memory be a blessing to all who knew him. Expressions of condolences at www.HopewellFuneral.com.

Cemetery Details

Salem Cemetery

Dover, FL

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 30. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Hopewell Funeral Home
6005 County Road 39 South
Plant City, FL 33567
(813) 737-3128
office@hopewellfuneral.com
<http://www.hopewellfuneral.com>

Funeral Service

MAY 30. 11:00 AM (ET)

Hopewell Funeral Home
6005 County Road 39 South
Plant City, FL 33567
(813) 737-3128
office@hopewellfuneral.com
<http://www.hopewellfuneral.com>

Live-Streamed Service

MAY 30. 11:00 AM (ET)

[Facebook.com/HopewellFuneral](https://www.facebook.com/HopewellFuneral)

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Tribute Wall

JA

“ I send you my sympathy Judy and family. I'm so glad you had 63 years together. Cleo was always positive and listening when we were together. Janet

Janet - May 30, 2025 at 02:38 PM

WR

“ With sympathy, Universal Court Reporting purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Mr. Cleo Eston Willis, Jr..



With sympathy, Universal Court Reporting - May 29, 2025 at 03:58 PM

WR

“ With sympathy, Universal Court Reporting planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mr. Cleo Eston Willis, Jr..

With sympathy, Universal Court Reporting - May 29, 2025 at 03:58 PM

RB

“ Radd Builders purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Mr. Cleo Eston Willis, Jr..



Radd Builders - May 28, 2025 at 12:46 PM

LF

“ love Aileen Pelham family purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Mr. Cleo Eston Willis, Jr..



love Aileen Pelham family - May 27, 2025 at 06:23 PM

LF

“ love Aileen Pelham family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mr. Cleo Eston Willis, Jr..

love Aileen Pelham family - May 27, 2025 at 06:23 PM

TF

“ The John Wilkes Family purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of Mr. Cleo Eston Willis, Jr..



The John Wilkes Family - May 21, 2025 at 09:42 AM

WC

“ With love, Tisha, Willis and Chris purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Mr. Cleo Eston Willis, Jr..



With love, Tisha, Willis and Chris - May 20, 2025 at 03:17 PM

TF

“ *The Baldwin family purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Mr. Cleo Eston Willis, Jr..*



The Baldwin family - May 20, 2025 at 09:31 AM

TF

“ *The Youmans Family purchased the Lavender Reflections Spray for the family of Mr. Cleo Eston Willis, Jr..*



The Youmans Family - May 19, 2025 at 05:26 PM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Mr. Cleo Eston Willis, Jr..*



May 19, 2025 at 04:28 PM

FB

“ In loving memory of our brother Junior. In the 1930 Census, New River district, Berrien County, Georgia, Cleo Eston Willis, Jr. is listed as 3 months old living with his parents, Cleo Eston Willis, Sr. and Fannie Walker Willis.

Junior was preceded in death by his parents Cleo, Sr. and Fannie, sister's Virginia M. Willis, Cleon Willis Franklin, Betty Wilkes Ashley, Carol Wilkes Christie. He is survived by siblings Sylvia Wilkes Youmans, John W. Wilkes and M. Faye Wilkes Baldwin.

We were blessed to have him as the matriarch of our family leaving us with so many fond memories.

Our condolences to his immediate family, his beloved wife and dear sister-in-law Judy, his son, Jody, and daughters, Julie and Holly and their families.

Faye Baldwin - May 19, 2025 at 10:36 AM

AL

“ I was blessed to have you as a brother in law ,I have a lot of wonderful memories of visiting with you and Judy ,especially the weekend Roy and I spent with ya'll in Crystal River, what a fun time we all had.You are going to be missed so much by all those who knew and loved you.



Ava Lumley - May 18, 2025 at 11:38 AM

AL

“ Hew



Ava Lumley - May 18, 2025 at 11:25 AM

LC

“ Through my life journey, I have been both honored and blessed to feel close to Junior and Judy and family. All of us "kids" grew up together. Our parents were friends. We've all experienced trials and tribulations together. Junior was "the real deal". He adored Judy, loved his children and showed that love and adoration in so many ways. He earned his angel wings and is busy preparing his mansion for his loved ones to follow. Prayers for comfort and peace for Judy, Jody and Lynne, Julie and Larry and Holly and Dirk and their families. Much love to each of you.



Lisa Camp - May 16, 2025 at 02:13 PM

KR

“ So many life time memories you were like my second dad,I was so blessed to have you and aunt Judy ,Jody,Julie and Holly in my life growing up.Loved our last long talk a few weeks ago I cherish it.This is not goodbye it's see you soon.Not a doubt your praising Jesus with the angels. Your going to be so missed!

Kathy &Tim Rogers - May 15, 2025 at 04:34 PM

AL

I have so many wonderful memories of you,as my brother in law I loved you dearly and am truly blessed to have known you .Roy was always so thankful and grateful to you for teaching him the drywall trade ,I know you and him are catching up on lost time.You are going to be greatly missed by all those who knew and loved you.

Ava Lumley - May 17, 2025 at 10:41 PM