



Suzanne Blair (Thompson) Watkins

August 21, 1947 - December 31, 2025

Suzanne Blair (Thompson) Watkins of Rehoboth, DE, born August 21, 1947, died peacefully at home in Charleston, SC, from natural causes on December 31, 2025. Sue recently enjoyed a wonderful time with both of her children and four grandchildren over the holidays. In March, she moved to Charleston, SC, from her longtime home in Tallahassee, FL, to be closer to her daughter, Blair.

Born and raised in Rehoboth to Wesley Howard Thompson (d. 1985) and Patricia Meade (Layton) Thompson (d. 1996), Sue grew up loving the beach and surf. After graduating from Sweet Briar College with degrees in government and history, she moved to Washington, DC, where she worked for the National Geographic Society. She had many stories of meeting and working with fascinating figures of the day, including Wernher von Braun, Buzz Aldrin, and other Apollo astronauts. A surprising memory she shared recently was having tea with First Lady Pat Nixon at the White House following the publication of a new book on the residence that she worked on.

During her time in Washington, DC, she met a strapping young Marine second lieutenant, Arch Watkins, and they fell in love. On their wedding day in Delaware, they went surfing before rushing to the chapel for the ceremony. Sue and Arch moved to Tallahassee, his hometown, where she lived for over 50 years. Sue began her career in Tallahassee at WCTV and was engaged in many civic organizations. She loved cocktail and dinner parties, playing

tennis, hunting with friends, and spending time with her family's black labs—her other children. She had a particular fondness for horticulture and worked at Tallahassee Nurseries for many years, where she was a recognized expert on local flora. Her family had to keep a close eye on her while on vacation, as she would secretly take cuttings of interesting (non-invasive) plants to bring home to her backyard jungle nursery. After retirement, she spent many years volunteering at the North Florida Research and Education Center in Quincy, FL, surrounding herself with fellow plant lovers.

Sue was preceded in death by her parents, her sister, and her husband, Arch (d. 2017). She is survived by her two much-loved children, Archibald Legare Watkins, Jr. (Monika) of Baltimore, MD, and Elizabeth Blair Watkins Dorneanu (Daniel) of Charleston, SC; four grandchildren, Caroline Maria Dorneanu (13), Peter Layton Dorneanu (10), Miriam Legare Watkins (8), and Blair Houstoun Watkins (6); and many close friends in Tallahassee and elsewhere, whom she also loved dearly.

A celebration of Sue's life will be held from 2:00PM until 4:00PM on Sunday, February 15, 2026, at Dorothy B. Oven Park, 3205 Thomasville Road in Tallahassee. A private inurnment will be held at Roselawn Cemetery. Donations in Sue's memory may be made to the North Florida Research and Education Center (NFREC–Quincy), (850) 875-7100, 155 Research Road, Quincy, FL 32351.

Kelly Barber of Bevis Funeral Home is assisting the family with arrangements (www.bevisfh.com, 850-385-2193).

Previous Events

Memorial Celebration

FEB **15**. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Dorothy B. Oven Park
3205 Thomasville Road
Tallahassee, FL 32308

Tribute Wall

MH

“ I have only known Sue for ten years, but we became friends from the beginning and had a lively correspondence over the years. I shall miss her greatly as she was the fellow "Oma" to me as "Omi" to two lovely, spunky grand girls. *Moni Houstoun*

Monika Houstoun - February 13 at 04:05 PM