



## Francine Paulette Gladys

October 13, 1924 - June 10, 2025

Conway...

Francine Gladys, 100, went to be with the Lord on Tuesday, June 10, 2025. Francine was born on October 13, 1924 in Lyon, France to parents Edmond Monti and Benadier Granatier.

Mrs. Gladys has an expansive list of selfless acts throughout her life. During WWII, when she was a teenager, Francine was a volunteer with the Red Cross, helping to pick up wounded. Also as a teen, she worked in a Soup Kitchen while helping with the underground getting people safely out of France. She moved from France to Canada where she was a social worker, helping the needy. Mrs. Gladys was a long time member of the St. James Catholic Church. She was a Pastoral Minister for St. James for 20 years. She will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved her.

Francine is survived by her son, Daniel Henry (Manuela) Quaestor; grandchildren, Tanya Quaestor, Nadia Quaestor, Emily McBride; great-grandchildren, Rowyn, Leah; step-grandchildren, Christopher, Dixie, Dinah; and Cousin, Gerald (Marie Claude) Wolf.

She is preceded in death by her first husband, Henri F.Kamann; second husband, Stanley John Gladys; sister, Alberte Monti; and brother, Henri Monti. A funeral mass will be held at 11:00am on Monday, June 16, 2025, at St. James Catholic Church. Burial will follow at Hillcrest Cemetery.

As a tribute for her hard work and dedication with the Red Cross, the family

would like to include a copy of a speech that Francine gave, in her own words:  
(including spelling errors)

“Madame President, Ladies & gentlemen’s. I am honor to be here amound  
dedicated Red Cross members.

May I at this time pay tribute to John Daniel-Jenkins, for it was at his  
suggestion that I am here to-night.

He felt that you might be interested in knowing what can be done by trained  
Red Cross Workers in emergencies during a war. He was, I feel, didicated in  
that he wanted the full potential of this group realized. It is dedication of this  
kind that makes the Red Cross the strong force it is to-day in the world.

Be proud and be ready-

May I recall a few instances of my work & of my associates.

During the occupation of France the Red Cross organize many small groupes  
of men & women’s for emergencies, we had 30 volunTERS members in each  
group;

We were taught the rudiments of first aid - how to bandage a wound, stop a  
bleeding- but were also told to use our own judgement in cases of emergency,  
and to acquire additional useful knowledge on our own.

First, I would like to speak about a great lady - My Mother- She was a member  
of our group. Her judgement & understanding of humanity, was such, that she  
realized additional assistance had to be given to the very old, if they were to  
survive- for they could not stand in queu’s for their food.

She went to the City Hall & obtained permission to open a kitchen for the old  
people.

There the food was prepared & cooked for them. Those who were able picked  
up the cooked food in their own pots, presented their ration coupons & went  
home. Those too ill or too infirm to await themselves of this service were  
assisted by Boy Scouts, who took the food to them.

Mother need help to do all this. At least 3 cooks & other assistants.

At that time the Jewish people were being persecuted & having to flee their

homes. Many sought refuge in our City until they escaped to other countries. It was from these people that Mother obtained all the necessary help- she merely passed the word on to the right channel that there was a need.

In doing this, she realized that she herself would face certain death were it known, & yet she knew too, that the Germans would not seek out these escaped Jews in such a place.

She was offering them a refuge & yet was giving them the opportunity of helping others with a need.

In 1944 our city was bombarded for the first time, and we thought now is the time to put all our training to work.

We found however, that there was so many wounded and dead, that we did not have a chance to render first aid except for profuse bleeding.

We would look for the dead & wounded & when found would call our stretcher bearers to take the bodies to the school, where a hospital of sorts had been organized by our groupe Captain and a morgue set-up. The hospital was manned by one Doctor & senior Red Cross Workers. The morgue was in the hands of the Nuns, who cleansed the bodies & prepared them for family identification, in reality this sometimes meant sorting out arms & legs and trying to find the owner.

You possibly have not given it much thought, but a bomb exploding close by, can actually strip a person of their clothing.

I can recall finding a little naked boy of about 2 years of age on one such occasion, lying in the ditch. He appeared dead, but there no sign of a wound, on examining I found only a small perforation of his Tummy. I wrapped him in my apron & preceded to take him to the infirmary. I had gone but a short distance when a man run after me crying, that I had his baby, and he wanted him.

We had strict orders, on no condition to stop when accosted by to proceed directly to the infirmary, where, bodies could be taken care of and identification made. This was to prevent a waste of time, and unnecessary explanation.

There were so many dead & wounded and were So short of personnel.. Believe me, it is so very hard to hear a Father crying for is child and to pretend that you do not hear him.

As we neared our city's liberation in late 1944 our Red Cross workers were on call night & day at all hours. Ther German Garrison was situated near our headquarters, & fighting was actually taking place in the streets.

I well recall, how on one occasion, one of our Red Cross lady, while tending a wounded was taken by 2 German Soldiers when in retreat for safety and in the gun fight which ensued all three were killed. SHe was the first of our workers to be killed.

On another occasion the Germans called our groupe Captain & asked that stretcher-bearers be sent to the German Headquarters to pick up our wounded.

As the Captain did not trust the Germans. He would not order us to do this but asked for volunteers. All volunteered, but only the younger ones were sent. We arrived at head quarters to find about 20 bodies in front of the building. It was a sickening sight, as hostages, they had been beaten to death, their faces were distorted & their bodies swollen & bruised.

There was no identification on any of the bodies. All bodies were taken to a nearby Church were the priest & Red Cross workers took care of them.

More & more demand was made upon our Red Cross workers, and a few days later I was sent, as the only one available, to the front line at the entrance to our City. Here the Resistance Movement 7 the Germans were pitched in battle. The Resistance were trying to hold the City until the Canadian & American Troops arrived. As no vehicles, or even stretcher-bearers were available, I was called upon to put all my early first aid training to work.

The wounded were dragged in off the street, given first aid & word sent to a Doctor, upon his arrival, all on hand gave him assistance.

One day, I found a women in the street who had been wounded in the spine. The wound was so extensive that the Doctor said that if she was not

hospitalized she would die. I managed to get a 12 year old boy to run to the other side of the City to our groupe Captain's quarters, for I felt certain that he would have the answer.

A couple of hours went by, and the Captain arrived in a small car. He had risked his life by doing so, for all moving vehicles were shot at.

A white sheet was put on top of the car, a cross painted in red with house paint, the door was removed as well as the back seat & a small child's mattress was put on the floor. This provided space for my patient, the most comfort we could arrange. We then proceeded by a devious route to the hospital, and thanks to the Captain we made it.

Our City was divided into two sections with a river as the dividing line. We were fortunate in our section to be liberated first. Much celebration followed & yet much internal strife still took place. For many thought, now was the time for vengeance on all known collaborators. The law was taken into their own hands. Many calls were still received to care for those persons wounded as a result of this vengeance.

The stretcher-bearers who had worked long hours with no thought for themselves and tirelessly, were ordered by the Captain, never to enter a house without being preceded by a Red Cross Nurse. The Red Cross nurse had her uniform to identify her, whereas, they had only helmets & arm bands which could be worn by anyone.

On one such call, the stretcher-bearers heard shooting in an upstairs room and fearing for the safety of the nurse rushed in ahead of her, only to be shot at, by a woman whose husband had just been killed, and who thought the men were his killers returning for her.

In war, when orders are given they should be obeyed, for those in charge have taken great pains, have weighed the risks, and are concerned for the safety of all.

It was not long before our City was completely liberated & everything back to normal again.

I felt the need of a holiday & when the chance arose of a drive to St. Raphael I

took it.

Much to my surprise, all was not back to normal at St. Raphael when I arrived. The beached were still being combed for land mines and the hotels occupied by liberating forces, only the merchants had remained in the City after the evacuation.

I was fortunate in getting a room in a private home, and was going to now return to my own City as soon as I could arrange transportation, for you see the railways had been bombed.

When talking to my hostess, I learned that there was a real urgent need for nurses at the hospital. The hospital, about twice the size of Scarborough General was being manned by 2 Doctors and a dozen Sisters.

I visited the hospital's Mother Superior & offered my services. I was asked to assist in the Emergency wing & operating room.

I replied that I would, to the best of my ability, As you know I had only an emergency first-aid course from the Red Cross.

That same day, I found myself doing all the duties of a full fledged nurse, under the guidance of the Mother Superior.

One day, a young Lieutenant was brought to the hospital seriously wounded as the result of a hand grenade exploding in his hands.

Thirty of his students whom he had been instructing were also injured. As we were so short handed, the Mother Superior was needed to administer the anaesthetic, and I was asked to assist the surgeon with the operation.

Both hands were amputated, an eye removed, and the scrapnel removed as much as possible from his chest.

We worked in the operation room for 24 hours. Before I went home the Doctor expressed his thanks and amazement that I had not fainted.

I think the only reason I had not was I just didn't have the time. Over the weeks, I tended the Lieutenant, changing the dressings on his chest wounds, "only every two weeks" thereby giving the pus a chance to transport small pieces of the grenade to the surface of the wound.

We counted 200 pieces by the time I left. " I worke tree month there". By the time I returned to my City, Lyons, the Red Cross was busy receiving those persons released from German Concentration Camps. And again my Mother was busy working with this group, helping to wash them, and always making sure that they were not given too much food to eat, for their starved systems could not have stood it.

After the prisoners were back with their families, I returned to by own home & took up my own life.

My Mother, however remained as a paid staff member of the Red Cross, who had the big job ahead of them of organizing prisoners welfare.

Many had to be placed in Sanatoriums and their families cared for. Mother acted as Council for them in all their troubles, marital & otherwise.

Then the Red Cross did something in turn for my Mother, After one year of research, they located the body of my brother. He had been a prisoner in a German Concentration Camp, and known only as a number. Is body was the first so reclaimed in my City.

While I have spoken to you of my limited experiences in the last war as a member of a Red Cross team, "I have done so", hoping to impress you, not with my work but to show you that during a war sometime you may be call to help without previous training, but use the best of your ability.

Remember, be proud and be ready."

# Cemetery Details

## Hillcrest Cemetery

1000 Highway 544  
Conway, SC 29526

# Previous Events

## Mass

JUN **16**. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. James Catholic Church  
1071 Academy Drive  
Conway, SC 29526