



Mrs. Ora L. Griffin

July 5, 1909 - March 24, 2014

Ora Lea Varnado Griffin left this world on March 24, 2014 at almost 105 years of age while residing at Autumn Leaves Nursing Home in Henderson, Texas. An informal celebration of her life will be held on April 6, 2014, from 12:30 til 2:00 p.m. at the home of Joan and Terry Bridges, 2100 US Hwy. E, Henderson, Texas 75652. The celebration will begin with a meal and continue with fond remembrances of her. A private graveside service will be held at a later date.

Ora Lea was born July 5, 1909 in Barlowe, Copiah County, Mississippi to Andrew Jackson Varnado and Evie Louise Bagley Varnado. The Varnados moved their nine children to Norphlet, Arkansas near El Dorado, during the 1920's where Ora Lea graduated from Norphlet High School in 1930. She was an outstanding athlete there and her record for the most points scored by one player in a women's basketball game still stands at 65 points.

While in Arkansas, she met the love of her life, Jay Brown Griffin and married him in 1932. They moved their family to the Henderson area where Jay was employed by Texaco in 1945. They were loving, nurturing parents of four children and were completely dedicated to them and to each other. But, in 1962, Ora Lea, was left alone to provide for the two youngest children when her beloved Jay suddenly died. Though heartsick at the loss of her soul mate she gathered her strength and faith and faced life courageously in such a way

that positively inspired many lives along her journey. She was known to possess a profound ability to encourage confidence, faith and pride in her family members as well as countless friends including those of her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Those from the Henderson area knew her as “Nannie.”

Her talents as a seamstress plus excellent organization skills eventually led her to a successful profession in women’s fashions with Nardis of Dallas in Kilgore, Texas. As Assistant Manager of Nardis, she skillfully managed the work of over 300 women as they made the exclusive line of women’s fashions known for perfection in construction and excellent fabrics. Ora Lea’s sharp eye for detail in fashion construction and her unique managerial abilities were recognized and valued by her superiors. She retired from Nardis at age 75.

After retirement, she enjoyed filling her life with family activities. She was always available to help family when needed. She loved to decorate and cook for holidays, especially Christmas. Just before her 96th Christmas she was seen mowing her lawn and climbing a ladder to put Christmas lights on her roof. Soon after, the ladder and lawn mower mysteriously disappeared. Though she never found them, she continued to decorate the inside of her home while daughter Joan, who inherited her zest for celebration and decorating, took care of the outside Christmas lights.

While physically able she enjoyed attending baseball, football, and basketball games far and near, especially those that involved family. When no longer able to attend or to see a TV, she listened to games and other events on the radio, always remembering every play. She anticipated personal bedside reports of every activity involving the grands and great-grands and was a loyal fan of the Henderson ISD and SFA band and twirlers.

Her charming and witty humor remained intact as did a remarkable memory

and sharp, clear mind. She retained the ability to make visitors and family feel good about themselves and glad they had been in her presence.

Preceding her in death as well as parents and husband were five sisters, three brothers, many nieces and nephews and a baby great-great granddaughter.

Left to celebrate the memory of her life are sons: Jerry Griffin (Zetta), Gary Griffin (Priscilla), and daughters: Patricia Bridges (Jerry), and Joan Bridges (Terry). Also, remembering her with love and happy memories are grandsons: Larry Griffin (Sharon), Coe Griffin (Paula), Jason Bridges (Joey); Bradford Bridges; Clayton Bridges (Windy) and Jeff Wright; Also, granddaughters: Jan “Buffie” Walton (Keith), Sheila Lucero, and Nancy Espinoza. Great-granddaughters are: Paij Drake(Kevin), Ashleigh Walton, Rachel Bridges, Madisyn Bridges, Morgan McNew, Laurell McNew, Janessa Espinoza, Nikki Lucero, Danielle Espinoza, and Carli Espinoza. Great-grandsons: Josh Griffin, Jeffrey Lucero, Phillip Cecil (Brittani), Callahan Walton, Benjamin Bridges; Bradley Bridges, Cannon Bridges, and great-great-grandson, Griffin Jones.

If desired, memorials may be sent to: First United Methodist Church, 204 North Marshall, Henderson, Texas 75652 ; London High School Scholarship Fund, c/o Scholarship Committee Chairman, London Ex-Students Reunion and Memorial Association, P.O. Box 173, New London, Tx.75682 ; the London School Museum Fund, 690 S. Main, New London, Texas, 75682 or The Heart Fund.

Tribute Wall

CP

“ *Lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Ora L. Griffin*



Cheryl & Danae Patterson - March 26, 2014 at 04:01 PM

JA

“ *Jeffie & Doyle Allen lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Ora L. Griffin*



Jeffie & Doyle Allen - March 26, 2014 at 03:59 PM

JA

Thanks for being a loving and sweet neighbor.

Jeffie & Doyle Allen - March 26, 2014 at 04:00 PM

GB

“ *Gay Barham Brown lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Ora L. Griffin*



Gay Barham Brown - March 26, 2014 at 02:20 PM

PD

“ *Paulette & Bruce Duncan lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Ora L. Griffin*



Paulette & Bruce Duncan - March 26, 2014 at 12:19 PM

PB

“ *May you know the peace of our Lord and Savior as you deal with this loss. Our prayers are with you.*

Patti Capps Bryan - March 26, 2014 at 11:12 AM

PB

“ *Heaven gained a beautiful angel who was loved by many. Rest in Peace, Mrs. Ora Griffin....a life well lived.
Danny and Phyllis*



Phyllis Bigbie - March 26, 2014 at 11:04 AM

LK

“ *I am sorry for your lose. The short time I knew Mrs. Ora was a blessing. The stories she could tell were amazing. I know she was a blessing to her family and everyone that met her. My thoughts and prayers go out to the family.*

Sincerely

Linda Keith



Linda Keith - March 26, 2014 at 10:17 AM

CE

“ Chad & Brandy Ellis lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Ora L. Griffin



Chad & Brandy Ellis - March 26, 2014 at 09:42 AM

PB

“ Heaven gained another wonderful angel who was loved by many! Rest in Peace, Mrs. Griffin.
Danny and Phyllis



Phyllis Bigbie - March 26, 2014 at 08:05 AM

JC

“ Jeri Coke lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Ora L. Griffin



Jeri Coke - March 25, 2014 at 11:44 PM

JW

“ Judy Williamson lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Ora L. Griffin



Judy Williamson - March 25, 2014 at 10:38 PM

JW

Mrs. Griffin was a wonderful lady who loved her family with all her heart. I have so many great memories of her through my years of growing up with Joan. She will be truly missed. My prayers for comfort and peace to all of her sweet family.

Judy Williamson - March 25, 2014 at 10:43 PM

DD

“ *Dennis & Dixie Duncan lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Ora L. Griffin*



Dennis & Dixie Duncan - March 25, 2014 at 02:54 PM

JS

“ *Jamie And Karen Skelton lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Ora L. Griffin*



Jamie and Karen Skelton - March 25, 2014 at 09:17 AM