



## Bessie Kirby

November 27, 1922 - May 2, 2014

Bessie Sullivan Kirby Nana, 91, passed away at 9:00 a.m. on May 2, 2014, at her home in San Antonio, Texas where she lived with her daughter Kathleen Martin. Bessie was born on November 27, 1922, in Clarksdale, MS, to James Homer Sullivan and Kathleen Shappley. Surviving are her two children, Leonard F. Kirby Jr. and Ruby Kathleen Martin. Bessie has eight grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren. She was known as May Bess by her primary family in the South. She was born in Clarksdale, Mississippi on their family farm known as the King & Anderson Plantation. Her father owned and operated the country store down the road. Bessie was a "daddy's girl." Her father taught her horseback riding, hunting and fishing. Her love of animals began here on the plantation. She was blessed with many cousins whom she deeply loved. This is where she developed the principal of family unity which continued throughout her life and now lives on in her grandchildren. Bessie's father passed away when she was ten years of age. During The Great Depression they lost the farm. She went to live and be raised by her aunt and uncle in Shreveport Louisiana while her mother started a new career as a nurse in Memphis Tennessee. She began to excel at academics, music, tennis, and dancing. At age 18 she married Leonard Floyd Kirby and moved to Fort Benning, Georgia. After Pearl Harbor was attacked by Japan, her husband was deployed overseas to fight in World War II. Bessie continued her college education earning her undergraduate degree at Sam Houston State University and Masters at The University of Texas. She began

her teaching career in High Island Texas and her life's course lead her to San Antonio. After 37 years of teaching, she retired and obtained her Real Estate license. She always had an interest in Real Estate and it soon became her hobby after retirement. She enjoyed taking art lessons and painting continued to be a part of her life until she passed away. One night after a party where she was swing dancing with other artists, she was given the nickname "Rag-Time Bess" among her fellow artists and this became a title signature on her artwork. She was a member and officer of The Beta Sigma Phi and Delta Cappa Gamma Sororities. She was a member of The Daughter's of The American Revolution. She was deeply religious and the funeral services will be held on Wednesday, May 7, 2014, at 11:00 AM, at St. Pius X. Catholic Church with interment to follow at Mission Burial Park North. The family will receive friends at a visitation on Tuesday, May 6, 2014, from 6-8 PM with a Rosary at 7:00 PM at Mission Park Funeral Chapels North, 3401 Cherry Ridge.