



Juanita McKelvain

April 17, 1927 - April 25, 2018

Juanita McKelvain, beloved mother, grandmother, and great grandmother, passed from this life on April 25, 2018 at her residence in San Antonio. She was 92 years old.

She was born to Robert Lee and Etha Edna Meadows April 17, 1927 in Moran, Texas in Shackelford County. She was the second daughter in her family which also included her eldest sister Lorene Dixon, and younger siblings Wilburt Meadows, Edith Evelyn Petty and Bobby Guin Meadows. They all preceded her in death. 1927 was a tumultuous year in America, silent films were exiting the screen and making way for the more popular "talkies," Charles Lindbergh was pictured as Time magazines Man of the Year for flying non-stop from New York to Paris in 33 and one-half hours and Santa Claus got his flying license. Now the man in red could deliver packages from coast to coast to every boy and girl. Juanita's dad made his family a living by working small farms and ranches in the area as well as monitoring oil well leases located off remote and rugged country roads. The family shared a story about his adventures breaking horses during the depression for a \$1 a day and 'glad to get it!' Mom said her mother was sick a lot during those years and he would often come home from work and cook supper for all of them. She said they ate so many turnips, "fried, boiled, mashed and baked," that she never even wanted to see another one in her lifetime. In 1943 Juanita met the man she married that same year. She laughed when she said he wanted to get married quickly because he thought it would keep him from being drafted.

But it didn't. She gave birth to their first child in 1944 when he was fighting overseas with the U.S. Navy. She was 17 then and he was 19. The couple had another daughter in 1947 after the war had ended. By that time he had been discharged and they were back in Texas. Like so many others during those post war years, the young family moved a lot following the work. John Robert was a jack of all trades; working as a telephone lineman, Carpenter and ranch hand. In the 1950s the whole family migrated to West Texas where the oil field was booming and screaming for workers. He worked the big standard rigs as brake man, motor man and on the derricks. He worked as a roustabout and drove trucks. And he was pretty good at being a shade tree mechanic. Juanita gave birth to two more children in the 1950s, swelling their family to include four children. And she lost two babies during those years which always grieved her. The children were Johnie Lee. Born in 1944; Lavita Jean, 1947; Paula Kaye, 1953 and Weldon Richard, 1955. But the war had taken its toll on the father of the family. She would say that he came home a different man than the one who had left, the one she had married. He would never talk about his nightmares unless he was drunk. And he began drinking a lot. He developed a gambling habit and he collected pet fish and rabbits and dogs. But nothing really satisfied him or filled up the emptiness or made his nightmares go away. And we watched him destroy himself in sadness and sorrow. She divorced him in 1959 and began life as a single Mom. Juanita was not prepared to be the bread winner as well as the bread maker but she walked straight into the oven and did the best she could with what she had. She figured that almost anything was better than what she'd had. No one helped her beyond her parents who took us in and we lived there a few years until we could get a place of our own. The years that rolled by were tough and were sometimes void of even the necessities of life. One by one the kids grew up, married and began families of their own. When Juanita's health began to suffer from years on her feet as a waitress, she became a caregiver for the elderly. She loved her work and it was good for her. She moved from west Texas to the Lubbock area and finally settled in Levelland where she lived for

nearly 20 years. In 2012 she moved to San Antonio to be closer to her daughter and she lived here until she passed away. We will miss our Mom, our grandmother and great-grandmother. She was always there for us over the years, providing us with whatever we needed— she was our babysitter during sickness or while we were going to school, she was there when we had our babies, when we had surgeries, when we graduated. And she even doled out some cash if she had it and we needed it. Mama didn't have a dainty apron to protect her clothes while she fixed roast and baked bread and served up apple pies still warm from the oven. Although she did all these things from time to time. She didn't have a large beautiful home or drive a shiny new car...but she was real and she loved us. And that's what a Mother is: Love. Mom may have missed out on a lot of things in life - but she loved her family and her family loved her. In the end, when it matters the most, that's all you keep anyway from this life - the love you gave, the love you got, the love you'll always have.

Previous Events

Private Services

APR 28. 3:00 PM (CT)

Interment is Private

Tribute Wall

CM

“ *How sad to lose such a beautiful person. You have my deepest sympathy. Cousin Cynthia Collinsworth (grandparents Tom Collinsworth and Eva Lacey).*



Cindy Collinsworth McKenna - December 29, 2021 at 09:40 PM