



Pearl E. Fadoir Miller Gilliland Ahern

December 8, 1922 - November 26, 2015

Pearl E. Fadoir Miller Gilliland Ahern
Colonel US Air Force Nurse Corps Ret.
December 8, 1922 – November 26, 2015

Pearl passed away peacefully into the arms of God on 26 November 2015. She was born on 8 December 1922 in Torrington, Connecticut, one of five children, to Josephine and Michael Fadoir. She had an older brother, Edwin and three younger sisters, Doris, May and Rosemarie.

After High School in Torrington, she attended St. Francis Hospital School of Nursing in Hartford, graduating in 1943. While attending Catholic University in 1943, she was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Army Nurse Corps and assigned to the 135th Evacuation Hospital, which was preparing for action in the European Theater. The 135th sailed in a troop ship in convoy to France in early 1945. Pearl's ship was rammed by a Tanker which had gone off course. The troop ship could not keep up with the convoy and spent two dangerous days looking for enemy submarines and limping into Southampton in England.

Pearl's hospital was immediately sent to France where it was attached to the 17th Airborne Division. The 17th was then preparing for the airborne assault across the Rhine. There she met an Army Officer whom she was destined to

marry fifty-eight years later.

World War II ended soon after and Pearl chose to remain in Europe, where she served in several assignments: Louis Pasteur Hospital in Nice, France; in the 112th Evac Hospital in Degendorf in the Alps.

Returning home, Pearl served at Letterman General Hospital in San Francisco until her discharge in April 1947, as a First Lieutenant, Army Nurse Corps.

After her Army service, Pearl worked in Public Health Nursing in California and returned to college at UCLA and earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing in 1951.

Pearl then went to Newfoundland for three years where she was on the Faculty of St. Johns General Hospital School of Nursing.

In 1953, Pearl joined the Air Force and was commissioned a Captain in the USAF Nurse Corps. There followed numerous interesting assignments, including: Flight Nurse School in 1954, two years at Wheelus Air Base in Libya and three years at the RAF Base at Lakenheath, England. While at Mitchell Air Base in New York, Pearl earned an MS Degree from Adelphi University in New York in 1960. Her final assignment, as Chief of Psychiatric Nursing, was at Wilford Hall, Lackland Air Base, Texas. She retired from the USAF NC in 1972, in the grade of Colonel. Never stopping to rest, Pearl became Director of Nurses for Santa Rosa Medical Center in San Antonio. In 1978, she earned a Post Masters in School of Social Work from Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio, Texas, at which time she became an Ecumenical Minister and loved her biweekly visits to the transplant hospital to give Communion to the sick.

She did extensive volunteer work at church and in the community. Pearl was

one of the founding members of the St. Vincent de Paul Society at St. Matthew Catholic Church and for her work was awarded a Papal Blessing by Pope Benedict.

Pearl was a member of the Third Order of Franciscans, the St. Vincent de Paul Society, the Serra Club, the American Legion, Catholic War Veterans, the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the Association of Air Force Nurses. She was a long time member of St. Matthew Parish in San Antonio.

Pearl was preceded in death by her brother, Edwin M. Fadoir and sister, Doris Fadoir Mitchell. She is survived by her sisters, May Fadoir Louchen and Rosemarie Fadoir Guerinni; nephew Thomas J. "Tom" Fadoir who she looked upon as a son and trusted friend; 16 nieces and nephews.

In 1980, Pearl married Ralph Gilliland and became a part of the wonderful Gilliland family. Ralph Gilliland died in 1986. His three daughters Sarah Gilliland, Kate Veters and Frances Veters, all dear friends of Pearl survive her.

In 2003, Pearl married Joseph Ahern, whom she first met in France in World War II. She was the nurse who cared for his soldiers during the airborne crossing of the Rhine in 1945, while her hospital was attached to his airborne division. Joseph preceded her in death in 2011. She had been lovingly welcomed into the Ahern family by Joe's children Richard, Mary Jo, Michael, Kathleen, Joseph, Caryl, Rosemary and Therese. Richard and Caryl are now deceased.

Pearl's life was devoted to her church, St. Matthew Catholic Church, her family, her extended families and her friends. She was a camera enthusiast and she shared her photos promptly with friends who caught her camera's

eye. Her many acts of generosity and kindness will be long remembered by all whose lives she touched.

SERVICES

A memorial rosary will begin at 9:30 AM followed by Mass at 10:00 AM on Friday, December 11, 2015 at St. Matthew Catholic Church, 10703 Wurzbach Rd, San Antonio, TX 78230.

A second Memorial Mass will be celebrated in the Catholic Chapel at West Point Military Academy in the month of January 2016. She will be laid to eternal rest with her husband Joseph in the West Point Cemetery. Funeral services in New York will be under the direction of William Hogan Funeral Home, 135 Main Street, Highland Falls, New York 10928. www.wfhoganfuneralhome.com Online guestbook at www.missionparks.com arrangements with

MISSION PARK FUNERAL CHAPELS NORTH

3401 CHERRY RIDGE

SAN ANTONIO TX 78230

210 349-1414

Tribute Wall

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“ On behalf of the Society of Air Force Nurses, please know we are mourning with you the death of our sister nurse, Colonel Pearl Ahern, Retired. It takes a patriot, willing to give of themselves to other human beings in their time of need, to step forth and join the ranks of our U. S. Air Force Nurse Corps. Your beloved one will be mourned and missed by many who served alongside her. We will include her name in our Memorial Program of the Society of Air Force Nurses in commemoration of her life and service to our nation.

With Sincerest Regards and Gratitude,
Wendy S. Collins, Lt Col, USAF, Nurse Corps (Retired)



LTC W S Collins, USAF, NC, Ret - April 14, 2025 at 02:19 PM