



## Phyllis Ann Jenkins Dyer

May 29, 1924 - September 30, 2016

Our dear Mother and Friend passed away peacefully on September 30, 2016 at her assisted living home at Brookdale Shavano Park in San Antonio, Texas, with Paula and Jeff at her bedside. Phyllis had celebrated her 92nd birthday in May with a drive to PoPo's Restaurant in Boerne for brunch with Paula, Jeff and caregiver, Rachel. As recently as two weeks ago, she was still getting to the game room at Brookdale Shavano to play the regular Bingo games, and just last weekend, she was holding forth at jewelry class and then attended a birthday party for a compatriot resident. Foregoing radical treatment for recurring breast cancer several months ago, she had decided to "party 'til it's over!". And as always, she certainly made every moment count!

Phyllis was born on May 29, 1924, in Topeka, Kansas as the 2nd daughter of Elmer Lawrence Jenkins and Nelle Pearl Slyhoff Jenkins. A printer by trade, Elmer was a Navy veteran [WWI] and an Assistant Adjacent General in the VFW of the United States. As a result, Phyllis had already traveled to 32 different states by the time she graduated from Topeka High School in 1942, where she was the head twirler and played accordion in the school band. In later years Phyllis become an accomplished organist and was a good friend of Hector Olivera, perhaps the best concert organist in the world. Tap and ballet dancing, mixed with acrobatics classes evolved into her life-long love of ballroom dancing. After graduation, Phyllis became a long-distance telephone

operator with the Bell Telephone Company. With the pending war effort [WWII], Phyllis and her friends began helping out at the USO at the Topeka Army Airfield. It was there she met US Army Air Corp 2nd Lieutenant Maurice Lemoine Dyer of Elwood, Nebraska, who was a young officer training on the B-24 bomber. They attended the opening of the Kansas State Fair where they rode every ride at the Fair; danced every dance at the VFW Pavilion; fell madly in love, and in two weeks were engaged. The Army Air Corp sent Maury to war in England almost immediately, and after almost a year away, he returned to Kansas. Phyllis and Maury were married in Kansas City on July 18, 1944, and their lives together continued until Maury passed away in San Antonio after their 50th wedding anniversary in 1994.

During Maury's military career, Phyllis lived in Orlando, Miami and Norfolk. They settled in Denver at the end of his first tour. By that time, through the VFW and the Air Force service and USO functions, Phyllis had managed to "meet and greet" Glen Miller, Artie Shaw, Frank Sinatra, Sammy Kaye, Doris Day, Gene Krupa, Kay Kyser, Jimmy Van Heusen, Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, Ray Price, and yes, Louis Armstrong.

Maury and Phyllis were blessed with two children born in Denver, Colorado: Son Mark Randall Dyer, born April 30, 1949 and daughter, Paula Annelle Dyer, born March 20, 1951. Mark ultimately became a San Antonio police officer, but unfortunately passed away from cancer in 1978. Sister Virginia Jenkins Schmidt also predeceased Phyllis. Phyllis is survived by daughter Paula and Jeff Baker who reside in Houston and San Antonio.

In the early 1950's the family was truly blessed to have as a member an especially gifted dog – "Tang". Tang won the first National Dog Hero Award

given by Ken-L-Ration (a division of Quaker Oats) in 1954. He received the award for saving the lives of five children in separate instances.

The Korean War caused Maury's recall into the Air Force assigned to Alaska in 1951. The Dyer family lived in Anchorage for 2 years before Maury's transfer to Denison, Texas and San Antonio, Texas, before being stationed in Darmstadt, Germany, after which he retired in San Antonio. While in Germany, Maury and Phyllis, life-long Presbyterians, were so pleased to chaperone 2 busloads of teenagers to Rome for an Easter Sunday audience with Pope Paul VI.

Not one to ever sit still, Phyllis also was able to experience parasailing in the Bahamas, and submarine and helicopter rides in Hawaii. Not surprising, she took biplane and glider rides in San Antonio.

After retirement from the service, Maury pursued his origination of a genealogy computer program, compiled a book of the Dyer Family History, after traveling the Midwest U.S. researching the family. Both Maury and Phyllis enjoyed continuing communications with their various ham radio contacts in locations all over the world.

After Maury's passing, Phyllis enjoyed extensive travels with Paula and Jeff: road tripping through Arizona and Utah; then Colorado and several trips to Nevada – Grand Canyon and Las Vegas. In 1997, Paula took Phyllis to her Topeka High School "ultimate" reunion, celebrating the school's 125th anniversary and her 55th class reunion in Topeka, and on another vacation to

Carmel, California. They then took the American Orient Express train trip from Denver to San Francisco, through Canyonlands and Arches National Parks, then Lake Tahoe with an overnight in Yosemite. Just prior to the hurricane disaster in New Orleans, Phyllis accompanied Paula and Jeff on the American Queen paddle wheel steamer up the Mississippi River, concluding with a driving tour of nearly all of New Orleans's historical sites.

It's no surprise that in her younger days, Phyllis quite athletic and became a high-calibre golfer – even winning ladies' tournaments. Soon after their arrival in San Antonio, Phyllis became an avid and well-known fan of the San Antonio Spurs basketball team, and followed each game closely. Three cheers to the team and especially her favorite, Tony Parker. Phyllis was also a devoted fan of pop-opera superstars "Il Divo" and managed to attend their concerts in San Francisco, Las Vegas, San Antonio. Phyllis loved ancient fossils and viewing the stars in a clear night sky.

In her declining years, Phyllis moved to Brookdale Shavano Park, for assisted living, where she remained fairly active with brief outings with Paula and Jeff. She loved the Bingo and Dice Games and Jewelry Class and all of the other activities. And she passed away at Brookdale Shavano, with truly valued friendships formed over her seven year stay.

The family wishes to offer so many thanks to the Management and Staff of Brookdale Shavano Park, and most especially, to Mr. Ben Cuellar, the Director of Activities. Everyone is also most grateful for friends and caregivers, Kathy, Miriam, Rachel G., Rose, Rachel R., Linda and Brenda. And much appreciation and thanks to the hospice professionals of Gentiva Hospice. What a wonderful help everyone has been.

Arrangements are being made through Mission Park North Funeral Home.

After an evening remembrance service at Brookdale on Wednesday, October 5th, at 6:30 p.m. Phyllis will join Maury at their joint cemetery site at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery at a private service to be determined.

Arrangements are being made through Mission Park North Funeral Home.

Donations in lieu of flowers may be made to National Parks Conservation Association, Attn. Membership Department, 777 6th Street, NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC, 20001. The Association website is [www.npca.org](http://www.npca.org).

# Cemetery Details

## **Ft. Sam Houston National Cemetery**

1520 Harry Wurzbach  
San Antonio, TX 78209

# Previous Events

## **Evening Remembrance Service**

OCT 5. 6:30 PM (CT)

Brookdale Shavano Park  
4096 De Zavala Rd  
San Antonio, TX 78249

# Tribute Wall

KH

“ *It was my honour and pleasure to care for your loved one. We talked sooo much about IL Devo...we loved them.May GOD grant you peace and understanding during this trying time*



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**kathleen lavonne,Ivn Gentiva Hospice** - October 04, 2016 at 09:59 PM

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“ *Paula, Jeff. I know you will miss her and the fun she brought to your lives. I'm grateful I met her and shared a lunch with you all. She was a great lady. My thoughts and prayers are with you. See you soon. Love. Stephanie.*

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**stephanie** - October 04, 2016 at 07:43 PM

VF

“ *Phil was such a blessing to me, her presence will be greatly missed! I will miss her sweet demeanor and fun personality. I'm fortunate to have had her as a neighbor and friend and always enjoyed listening to a good story or watching the Spurs with her. My thoughts and prayers are with you, Paula and Jeff, and all those she left behind. Love, Valinda F.*



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**Valinda Fiorenza** - October 04, 2016 at 05:05 PM