



Cleita Anice Ferrell

November 27, 1935 - October 31, 2024

The Heavenly Choir Gained a Beloved Pianist

Cleita Anice Ferrell, 88, of Corsicana, Texas, passed away on October 31, 2024, at her home, surrounded by her family. She was born on November 27, 1935, in Hubbard, Texas, to Darrell and Ina Barrington.

Music was a big part of Cleita's life, along with crafting, cooking, and traveling with groups and friends. Her early career began at McPherson's Pharmacy as a soda jerk. After graduating from Corsicana High School, she worked as a telephone operator for General Telephone. She met Charles Ferrell who was serving in the Air Force. The uniform caught her eye, and that was the beginning of a 38-year marriage that produced Carolyn Jean, Charles Wayne, and Gary Allen.

They started their journey together, including being stationed in Okinawa, Japan, and later lived across many bases in the U.S. After retiring from the Air Force, they settled in Corsicana, Texas. Charles worked at Western Auto and Buck's Appliance, while Cleita started a catering business. She also worked at First National Bank, Hager Slacks, and Collin Street Bakery.

Cleita catered and baked for many years until she caught the crafting bug, inspired by her friend Norma Scott. This led her to travel to Wimberly, Texas,

on the first of every month for several years with her sister, Jeanette Sears. She continued baking and sold many cakes, including her specialty fried pies. Cleita also served as a Pink Lady for Navarro Regional Auxiliary until it was disbanded and was actively involved for many years in the Food for Fitness program.

Cleita, Jeanette, and their sister in the Lord, Judy Cofer, formed a gospel singing group called FM 709. They joked they weren't good enough to be called "Highway 101," but since they had all lived on FM 709 at some point, the name stuck. They raised money to buy sound equipment by selling peanut brittle made by Jeanette. Practices began in Cleita's garage with a small cassette player, and they had as much fun practicing as they did singing. There were never many dull moments with Cleita.

The Lord blessed Cleita with an ear for music—whether singing or playing the piano or organ. She started taking piano lessons from Mrs. Sutton at age 16 at Cedar Creek Missionary Baptist. She served as the pianist for several churches, including Emmanuel Baptist Church (October 1979–May 1985), Petty's Chapel (November 1985–June 1986), and First Baptist Church in Blooming Grove (March 2010–December 2020), as well as the organist for Emmanuel Baptist Church (September 1990–July 2005). Cleita retired as a church pianist in December 2020, but her retirement was short-lived. She joined First Baptist Church in Corsicana in January 2021 to play the piano for the Special Ministries Department and also sang in their Living Christmas Tree for several years. In June 2023, Cleita came out of retirement once again at the age of 87 to play the organ at First Baptist Church in Blooming Grove.

Cleita is survived by her sister, Jeanette Sears; her sons, Charles W. Ferrell and his wife, Diane Ferrell, and Gary Ferrell and his wife, Patty Ferrell; and her daughter, Carolyn Rhodes. She is also survived by her grandchildren: Emily Barlow; Rebecca Hickey and her husband, Travis Hickey; Ashley

Ferrell; Jacqueline Ferrell; Allison Ferrell; Shaun Jones; and Ericka Wilbanks and her husband, Robert Wilbanks. Her great-grandchildren are Kaylee Rhodes, Luke Hickey, Savanna Jones, Christopher Wilbanks, and Johnathan Wilbanks.

Cleita was preceded in death by her husband, Charles M. Ferrell, and her son-in-law, Keith Rhodes.

Visitation with the family will be held on Saturday, November 2, 2024, at Griffin-Roughton Funeral Home in Corsicana, Texas, from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm. A celebration of life service will be held on Sunday, November 3, 2024, at First Baptist Church in Blooming Grove, Texas, at 2:00 pm. Burial will follow at Fairview Cemetery in Hubbard, Texas.

Cemetery Details

Fairview Cemetery

Hubbard, TX

Previous Events

Visitation

NOV 2. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Griffin-Roughton Funeral Home, Corsicana
1530 N. 45th Street
Corsicana, TX 75110
(903) 874-4774
info@griffin-roughton.com

Funeral Service

NOV 3. 2:00 PM (CT)

First Baptist Church - Blooming Grove
205 East 2ND Street
Blooming Grove, TX 76626
(903) 695-2593

Tribute Wall

JB

“ I am very sorry for your loss. My thoughts and prayers are with you.

Jonathan Batton - November 12, 2024 at 03:45 PM

KA

“ Cleita graciously played for our special ministries choir when our longtime pianist had to give it up. We were so blessed and were sorry when she had to drop out. We are praying for there family.

Karen Ashcraft - November 07, 2024 at 04:02 PM

MT

“ Marsha Bonner Taylor lit a candle in memory of Cleita Ferrell



Marsha Bonner Taylor - November 03, 2024 at 08:52 PM

DW

“ Cleita was a great Christian lady. She was always willing to serve where ever she was needed. She was a great grandma and great great grandma. She is now up in heaven, singing and walking on streets of gold. May God be with her family in the upcoming day. Praying for peace and comfort for them



Donna Whittenburg - November 02, 2024 at 02:51 PM

JR

“ I always thought of Aunt Cleita as a whirl wind of energy and joy. I know she is enjoying being at the feet of Jesus. You will be missed.
Love Jessica (JJ) and family

Jessica Rankin - November 02, 2024 at 02:32 PM

LF

“ Lynn and Susan Pommerening & Family purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Cleita Anice Ferrell.



Lynn and Susan Pommerening & Family - November 02, 2024 at 10:12 AM

LF

“ Lynn and Susan Pommerening & Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Cleita Anice Ferrell.

Lynn and Susan Pommerening & Family - November 02, 2024 at 10:12 AM

JS

“ Jack & Carol Stevens purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Cleita Anice Ferrell.



Jack & Carol Stevens - November 01, 2024 at 07:07 PM

JS

“ Jack & Carol Stevens planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Cleita Anice Ferrell.

Jack & Carol Stevens - November 01, 2024 at 07:07 PM

JF

“ Jason Brown and Family purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Cleita Anice Ferrell.



Jason Brown and Family - November 01, 2024 at 03:03 PM

JF

“ Jason Brown and Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Cleita Anice Ferrell.

Jason Brown and Family - November 01, 2024 at 03:03 PM