



## Mary Nell Baldrige

January 17, 2020

Mary Nell Baldrige (née Davis) was born on August 16th, 1928 in San Antonio, Texas to Nellie Ruth (née Harris) Davis and Aulbin Pearson Davis. She and her sister, Ida Ruth “Toodly”, were raised in Corpus Christi, Texas. Always the beauty, Mary Nell was chosen in her youth to be a Duchess of the Buccaneer Days Festival, held in Corpus Christi. She particularly enjoyed riding on the float and waving to the crowd in the festival's parade.

At the age of 10, Mary Nell came to the Rio Grande Valley on a family trip and enjoyed it so much that she proclaimed to her mother and father that some day she would live in the Valley. Her dream came true! She completed her Bachelor’s Degree in Education at A&I Kingsville (now Texas A&M University–Kingsville). While working on her Master’s, she accepted her first teaching position in La Joya ISD. During this time, she met and later married the love of her life, James Henry “Jim” Baldrige. While dating, Mary Nell was given the nickname “Pistol” because she could always be found by her sweet Jim’s side. Jim came from a farming and ranching family with businesses located both in the Rio Grande Valley and in Mexico. The couple moved to Mexico for the family business and raised their daughters, Sawnie and Cedar, both on their ranch, Rancho Peñitas, and in the city of Tampico, Tamaulipas. Always the teacher, Mary Nell's passion for education extended throughout her life. At the ranches in Mexico, she taught the cowboys' children to read and write.

Mary Nell loved her friends and her life in McAllen. She had many interests: traveling, reading, tennis, golf, and bridge. She loved to attend concerts at the Valley Symphony Orchestra. She was a lifelong animal lover. When at the ranch in Mexcio, she could be found bottle feeding calves or raising litters of cattle dog pups. Two significant presences in her later life were her grand-dog, Pancho Villa, and her grand-cat, Biggie. Mary Nell avidly followed Pancho Villa's successful show dog career and proudly attended the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show in New York City. But her greatest delight was taking her family to South Padre Island every summer—a tradition she began with her children and lovingly continued with her grandchildren.

She also enthusiastically volunteered for the Shary Mansion as a docent and for McAllen ISD as a reading and writing mentor for the School District's Host Program.

Mary Nell was a proud member of the following: The United States Tennis Association, the McAllen Country Club Ladies' Tennis and Golf Associations, the Junior Service League of Mission, PEO Chapter BV, the 20th Century Book Club, the Pan American Round Table, the New Birders Club, the Museum of South Texas History, and the First United Methodist Church of McAllen.

Mary Nell passed away peacefully, surrounded by her family, on January 17th in Dallas, Texas. Her joy for life was contagious. She left a lasting legacy of kindness, generosity, and gentleness to both her family and community.

Mary Nell is survived by: Daughter Cedar Anne Baldrige of Houston, Texas; Daughter Sawnie Ruth Baldrige Smith; Son-in-Law Julius Grey Smith; Grandson Travis James Smith; Granddaughter Sawnie Bertran Smith, all of Dallas, Texas; Niece Penelope Susan Crump of Atlanta, Georgia; Nephew Jack Sanders "Sandy" Crump Jr. of Gulfport, Florida; Niece Debra Dunn

Crump of Panama City Beach, Florida; and numerous nieces and nephews.

She is preceded in death by her husband, James Henry Baldrige; sister, Ida Ruth Crump; and her grandson, Henry Manela Baldrige.

A Memorial Service will be held on Saturday, January 25th at 2pm at the First United Methodist Church of McAllen, located at 4200 North McColl Road, McAllen, Texas 78504.

Should one wish to make a contribution in honor of Mary Nell, these can be made to:

First United Methodist Church of McAllen  
4200 North McColl Road  
McAllen, Texas  
78504

Museum of South Texas History  
200 North Closner Boulevard  
Edinburg, Texas  
78541

# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

JAN **25**. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (CT)

First United Methodist Church of McAllen  
4200 N. McColl Rd.  
McAllen, TX

# Tribute Wall



“ *Mary Nell Baldrige*

October 08, 2023 at 09:43 PM



“ *Mary Nell Baldrige*

November 29, 2022 at 06:40 AM



“ *Memories of Tampico: Mary Nell and Mom, laughing & visiting.  
I am so sorry to hear just now of her passing. What a great lady she  
was.*

*My condolences to Sawnee & Cedar and all her family.*

*She & Mom are laughing & catching up: I know it!*

*Julie Trolinger Murray*

Julie (Trolinger) Murray - April 22, 2020 at 11:06 AM



“ *2 files added to the tribute wall*



cedar - January 24, 2020 at 04:30 PM

CE

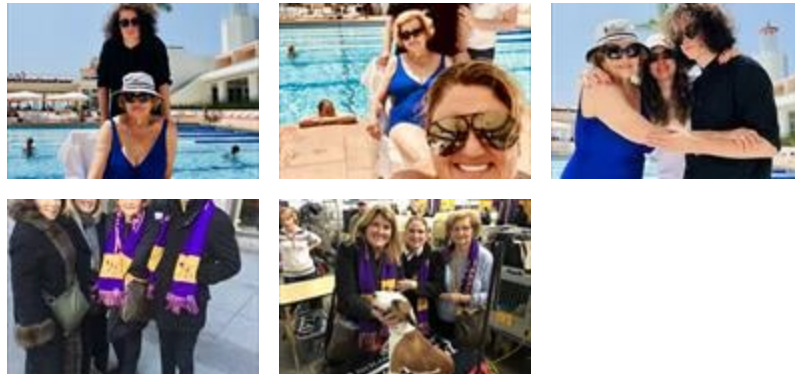
“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



cedar - January 23, 2020 at 07:32 PM

CE

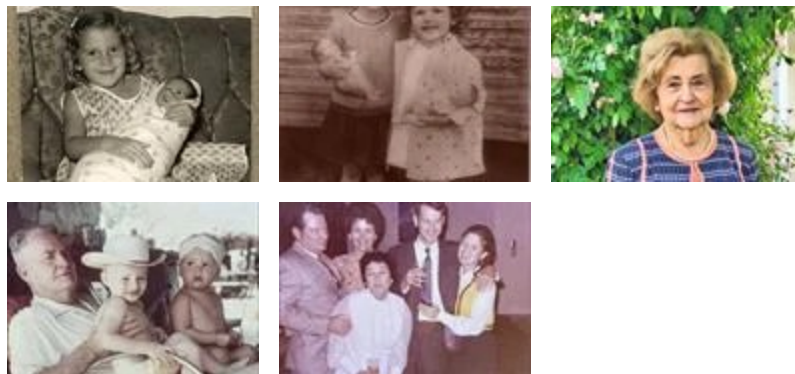
“ 5 files added to the tribute wall



cedar - January 23, 2020 at 04:46 PM

CE

“ 9 files added to the tribute wall



cedar - January 23, 2020 at 04:13 PM

DD

“ 1 file added to the album *Memories Album*



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**debby crump dunn** - January 23, 2020 at 08:59 AM

DD

“ 1 file added to the album *Memories Album*



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**debby crump dunn** - January 23, 2020 at 08:58 AM

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“ 1 file added to the album *Memories Album*



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**debby crump dunn** - January 23, 2020 at 08:57 AM

DD

“ 3 files added to the album *Memories of Mary Nell & family*



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**debby crump dunn** - January 22, 2020 at 06:43 PM

DD

“ 3 files added to the album *Memories of Mary Nell & family*



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**debby crump dunn** - January 22, 2020 at 06:42 PM

JD

“ *On behalf of her father's family, I would like to express my sincere condolences.*

*John Davis*

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**John Davis** - January 22, 2020 at 09:40 AM

JM

“ Mary Nell became a 1st cousin to me, when she married Jim Baldrige, I spent quite a few nights at the Baldrige place in Mission and family get togethers.. She was quite the lady and really a Pistol... Even thou we have been apart for many years, I will never forget her or myt memories of her... I know that she will be happy being together with Jim and the rest of the Baldrige amd Mitchell family members that departed this planet earlier then her.. Rest in Peace Miss Mary Nell... love you, Buckshot

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**Joe Mitchell** - January 21, 2020 at 10:35 PM