



Bettye W. Alexander

October 24, 1926 - November 26, 2020

Ms. Bettye Wilkes Alexander peacefully passed away on November 28th, 2020. She was 94 years old. She was born in Dallas, Texas in 1926. As the Great Depression dragged on, and the young men prepared for war, the young ladies of her time concentrated on their education. She attended Highland Park High School starting at age 12 and by age 19 she was majoring in Latin American Studies in Mexico City. After the end of the war, she returned to the University of Texas in Austin where she graduated Phi Beta Kappa at age 19. It was there that she met a young Army Air Corp lieutenant by the name of Thomas J. Alexander who had just returned from serving as a B-24 pilot flying missions over Europe. After meeting in late 1945 during their first Christmas together, Tom proposed the following Spring. Part of their courtship included Tom flying his Army Reserve P-51 Mustang upside down at over 400 miles per hour at treetop level along the quiet residential street where Bettye lived at the time. He had suggested that Bettye and her parents, Joseph L. Wilkes and Dorothy T. Wilkes sit out on their second floor balcony on one sunny Saturday afternoon for a surprise. As Tom raced by just above the road, Bettye said she could see Tom waving from the cockpit! You would think that was the highlight of their long life together, but that was only the beginning. They witnessed revolutions in South America and watched in disbelief as American B-52's conducted night time bombing raids out on the South Vietnamese horizon while sitting at the bar on the top floor of the Saigon Hilton. They had to make a secret run to the Manilla Airport to flee a furious Ferdinand Marcos after an offshore drilling rig failure, and because of their travels, they experienced encounters with an increasingly curious CIA while in Southeast Asia, as well as back home in Texas. We wish we could have a big ceremony for her many friends and family members, but because of the current situation in the United States and the associated health concerns, there will be no public ceremony at this time. Her family asks that you remember her in your prayers and honor her in your thoughts.