



## Retta Cook

June 26, 1922 - August 15, 2019

Retta Cook, 97, of Dallas, Texas died August 15, 2019 in Dallas. Funeral services will be conducted at the Wildwood Chapel at Restland Cemetery located at 13005 Greenville Avenue, Dallas, on Friday, August 23 at 12:30 p.m., preceded by an hour for family visitation in the same location beginning at 11:30 a.m. There will be no open casket viewing and there will not be a graveside service, due to concerns with the heat, but those who wish may visit her final earthly site in the Evergreen section of the cemetery. Retta's parents were John Cliff Cook and Mabyn Rosetta Morrison. Mabyn, a school teacher, was the daughter of one of three Morrison brothers who came to Bosque County, Texas in covered wagons in the 1870s with their mother. Eldest of five children, Retta was born a sickly preemie on June 26, 1926 and wasn't expected to survive. All her siblings predeceased her: MOFFATT Coseley Cook (died Aug 15, 1944 in Italy in Operation Dragoon), John CLIFFORD Cook (died 1943 in a military training accident), LINCE Connell Cook (died 1991 in a traffic accident), and Vara LARUE Cook Hume Ferrell (whom Retta and the family called "Chick") died in October 2016 following an illness. Retta was born in Dallas where her father (who had for a time been a Texas Ranger) operated a barbeque restaurant in the Knox/Henderson area, but the family moved back to Walnut Springs in Bosque County to be able to feed their children by raising food on the farm during the Great Depression. Her father died in 1937 in a farming accident when she was a young teenager, still in Walnut Springs. After all the children graduated from Walnut Springs High School, her mother, along with her aunts Ruby Morrison, RN, and Gladys Morrison, moved the family to Dallas. Retta attended Southern Methodist University. After some time at SMU, she moved to California to get her physical therapy certificate and worked with polio patients as a visiting physical therapist. This career became obsolete when the polio vaccine arrested the spread of the disease. Retta went back to college and received her PhD in psychology, studying at Texas Women's University and North Texas State University. Retta worked with children in the Richardson Independent School District until she retired, and she was also a psychology professor at Richland College in Dallas. No description of Retta's life would be complete without mentioning her absolute passion for playing bridge. She played as often as she could get into a game, sometimes three times in a week, from the 1940s to the last few years. Beyond bridge, Retta was a

whiz at jigsaw puzzles. She loved crossword puzzles and brain games, and she had a great sense humor with a wonderful contagious laugh. She cherished classical music and was a frequent attendee at performances of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, chamber music presentations, vocal recitals, and other types of classical entertainment. She had a keen mind and was eager to learn more about the world via travel and study, attending lectures on current affairs at various venues and enjoying book reviews at Highland Park United Methodist Church. She was a member of the Agape Class at Highland Park Methodist Church for a time. She loved flowers and gardening and was an active member of the Lakewood Garden Club for many years, as well as the Dallas Council of Garden Clubs, in addition to being a member of a chapter of the Red Hat Club. Her family would say that Retta's primary dedication was her family, both older and younger members. She faithfully cared for her mother and her aunts, Ruby and Gladys, in her home until they died. She took an active interest the lives and education of her nieces and nephews, always present for birthdays, graduations, weddings, recitals, or other special moments. As evidenced by her life, she put great emphasis on the importance of furthering their education, as well as spending time with them, as much as possible. She never married or had children, yet she spent years as a Girl Scout Troop leader. Retta lived on Yale Boulevard (later changed to SMU Blvd) in University Park for most of her life, but moved to C.C. Young Senior Living community in Dallas in April 2009, maintaining an active life in the Thomas Residences until failing health caused her to move to the memory care unit at The Cove (at CC Young) in the fall of 2018. Not everyone's cup of tea, Retta was clearly strong willed and of determined opinions even in her final hours in this life, but she was generous and caring to both friends and family. Her transition from this life to the next leaves a Retta-shaped hole in the lives of her surviving nieces and nephews. In addition to her parents, aunts, uncles, and siblings, Retta was predeceased by her nephew Frank Clifford Cook on October 30, 2017. Survivors include niece Connie Cook Sandlin (and husband Dick) of Costa Rica; niece Leah Hume Wilson (and husband Ray) of McKinney; nephew Cliff Everett Hume of Dallas; and niece Ann Hume Sutter of Waxahachie. In the next generation, she is survived by her by great niece Jennifer Sandlin of Denton; great nephew Ed Sandlin (and wife Katie) of Austin; step-great niece Justine Holt (and husband Chad), of Austin; great nephews William Sutter (and wife Lauren) of Amarillo; and Stephen Sutter (and wife Haley) of Amarillo. Her great grandnieces are Sophia Elizabeth Holt and Penelope Elizabeth Sandlin, both of Austin. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that those who wish to memorialize Retta do so by donating to the American Cancer Society, to the National Park Foundation, to SPCA of Texas, or the charity of your choice. Funeral arrangements for Retta have been faithfully entrusted to Restland Funeral Home and Cemetery, which is located at 13005 Greenville Ave., at the intersection of Restland Road, Dallas, Texas 75243, and can be reached at (972) 238-7111.