



Betty Coley Fredeman

August 4, 1933 - August 26, 2025

OBITUARY

Betty Coley Fredeman

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Betty Coley Fredeman passed away on August 26, 2025 in Dallas, Texas.

Betty was born in Corrigan, Texas and for 13 years she was the only child of Louise Long Gilbert, a schoolteacher, and Bennie Gilbert who worked first as a struggling farmer then moved into road construction. Betty Ann was a child of the Depression years and her Dad's job location changed multiple times every year of Betty's childhood. She attended 23 schools from elementary through high school and most of these schools were in tiny, remote Texas towns. For 13 years Betty found that if she did not make friends right away, her family would be moving again soon. This explains why many of Betty's friends in her later years commented that she "never met a stranger".

When Betty turned 13, the family was blessed with a baby boy, Boyd Gilbert, and he was a glorious ray of sunshine in Betty's life. She adored her baby brother.

Throughout these growing-up years, the most enduring and sustaining influences on Betty's young life were her grandparents, Annie and Jesse Long, known affectionately as "Mama" and "Papa". When the constant moving became too much, Mama and Papa took Betty in for many weeks at a time. She felt deeply loved and cared for.

Betty ultimately graduated from Huntsville High School, although she had spent most of her high school years at Paris High School in Paris, Texas. Bennie and Louise originally thought that Bennie's road construction job would last long enough for Betty to graduate from Paris High School, but the job ended, and the family relocated to Huntsville, Texas in the middle of Betty's Senior year.

During that difficult time of transitioning to a new school with one semester to go, Betty attended First Baptist Church in Huntsville where she met Kenneth Coley, a kind local boy who had just started classes at Sam Houston State Teachers College (now Sam Houston State University). Here were two young people who both wanted a new chapter in their lives, so they married at ages 17 and 18 in January 1951.

After college Betty taught school and over the years, she earned two master's degrees, one in Education and the second in Library Science. After teaching 2nd grade for several years in Mesquite, the family (which now included their only child Carol) moved to Houston where Betty became Law Librarian for the firm Fulbright & Jaworski. She was tasked with setting up, developing, and managing the new library.

Several years later in 1972, with a move from Houston to Waco, Betty accepted the position of Rare Book Librarian at the Armstrong Browning Library on the campus of Baylor University. The Armstrong Browning Library maintains the world's largest collection of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Browning first editions and memorabilia. In that capacity she lectured to civic groups and Browning clubs in New York, Boston, San Francisco and London. She hosted numerous academicians and scholars from all over the world for many years and she traveled extensively in the British Isles and Europe. Betty had found her perfect job and spent the next 22 years there before her retirement.

She is the co-editor of two books, *The Browning Collections: A Reconstruction* and *My Browning Family Album*.

Betty was widowed twice in her life. Kenneth passed away at the age of 58 in

1991. Betty's second husband, William Fredeman, passed away in 1999. After the death of her second husband, Betty relocated from Canada back to her home state of Texas. Up until 2021 Betty lived in Austin where she attended Lifelong Learning classes on the University of Texas campus; Austin Symphony concerts; and enjoyed the beauty of the Texas Hill Country. From 2021 until 2025, Betty lived in an Assisted Living facility in Dallas so she could be near her daughter and son-in-law.

Some of Betty's fondest memories were of her many travel experiences in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and western Europe. She was always ready to pack a bag at the first mention of a trip.

Betty has now made her final trip to be with our Lord, and we believe she has reached the most beautiful and welcoming destination of all.

She is survived by her daughter and son-in-law, Carol and Bill Haskins of Dallas; her granddaughter Casey Reynoso, husband Reuben, and great-granddaughter Lila of London; niece Kristi Hartley and husband Brian of Royse City; niece Brianna Levingston and husband Jordan of Longview; niece Debbie Ebeling and husband Jim of Houston; nephew Herb Atkinson and wife Marla of Roswell, NM; niece Linda West and husband Cliff of Quitman, MS; "adopted in love" nephew Brad Hargis, and special cousin Annette Turner and husband Craig Turner of Fairview and their grown children, Scott Turner and Shannon Hays.

A funeral service will be held at Sam Houston Memorial Funeral Home on Normal Park Drive in Huntsville, Texas on Wednesday, September 3rd, 2025, at 1:00pm, with visitation from 12:00 to 1:00pm.

The graveside service immediately following will be in the Adickes Addition of Oakwood Cemetery in Huntsville. Memorial condolences may be made to the family at www.shmfh.com.

In lieu of flowers, remembrances may be made to Emancipet.org, Attn: Missy McCullough, in Austin, Texas or to the Armstrong Browning Library at Baylor University.

Cemetery Details

Adickes addition of Oakwood Cemetery

700 Martin Luther King Blvd
Huntsville, TX

Previous Events

Visitation

SEP 3. 12:00 PM (CT)

Sam Houston Memorial Funeral Home - Huntsville
1700 Normal Park Dr.
Huntsville, TX 77340

Funeral Service

SEP 3. 1:00 PM (CT)

Sam Houston Memorial Funeral Home - Huntsville
1700 Normal Park Dr.
Huntsville, TX 77340

Tribute Wall



“ *Sam Houston Memorial Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Betty Coley Fredeman*



Sam Houston Memorial Funeral Home - September 03, 2025 at 12:43 PM

BN

“ *So Sorry to hear of Betty's passing. She was wonderful. Her work on the Brownings has been a valuable resource me and many scholars.*

Barbara Neri - September 04, 2025 at 01:22 PM



“ *A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Betty Coley Fredeman.*

September 02, 2025 at 12:04 PM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Betty Coley Fredeman.*



September 02, 2025 at 12:04 PM

VE

“ Our deepest condolences to the Haskins and Reynoso family, may the Lord bring peace and comfort to you all.

Vergara - September 01, 2025 at 12:53 PM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Betty Coley Fredeman.



August 31, 2025 at 04:20 PM

CR

“ I'll never forget when I first met Betty. I had the honor of fixing her hair once a week for many years. She was such a beautiful woman inside and out. Losing touch over the years but always having memories of our time spent together on earth. Goodbye Betty now you are dancing with the angels.



Connie Rackel - August 31, 2025 at 08:21 AM

MC

“ A very sweet and beautiful lady!!

Mark Chalker - August 28, 2025 at 01:00 PM

MF

“ *Lifting up the family and friends of Betty Fredeman for comfort and healing from our Lord Jesus Christ.*



Marvin Hyvl & Family - August 28, 2025 at 12:56 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Betty Coley Fredeman.

August 28, 2025 at 10:27 AM

GK

“ *Gayle Kelly lit a candle in memory of Betty Coley Fredeman*



Gayle Kelly - August 27, 2025 at 03:37 PM