



## Claire Donovan

July 13, 2014

### Claire E. Donovan Obituary

Claire E. Donovan passed on July 13, 2014 following a year long struggle with cancer. She is free again, soaring again and watching over everyone she loved again.

Claire was born a Texan in Corpus Christi, she was always first a Texan but she embraced the entire world, cherished the diversity of people, places and times. There was little to learn and experience that did not capture Claire's imagination, if not her heart. Her formative years were spent in Bryan, where as a 17 year old she once had dinner with Elvis Presley. Claire's fondest childhood memories were soaring over the landscapes of Texas with her father in his crop duster-prompting her desire to wing walk and sky dive.

Claire worked all of her adult life. Her early professional years included roles in modeling, administrative support in the Texas Legislature and positions in journalism, including the "The Item" in Huntsville. During these years, she followed one her lifelong callings-the civil rights movement of the sixties. There was rarely an event in Texas in support of civil rights that she did not actively participate in. She marched in Mississippi and Alabama with Martin Luther King. It was fitting that she later was awarded the inaugural Martin Luther King Award at the University of Texas Medical Branch.

In the 70's, Claire arrived at the University of Texas Medical Branch and quickly caught the eye of top administrators eventually leading to a 20 year career as an administrative official in the School of Medicine. She worked for four different Deans of Medicine and supported the efforts of scores of departmental Chairman, and many faculty and staff members who sought her advice or who were referred to her. Upon her retirement in 2000, Claire was honored by the Deans, Chairmen, faculty and staff of the School with the establishment of the Claire Donovan Medical Education Scholarship Fund. The Fund continues to grow each year and supports a School of Medicine graduate who shows the compassion, empathy, and spark necessary to succeed in a primary care residency program and career.

During this same time period, Claire was instrumental in the emerging development of the Texas Brain Injury Foundation. She worked tirelessly to preserve the "The HRA Village" in Galveston County. The village served not only as an assisted living home for the brain injured but also the mentally challenged. Her efforts along with those of a special colleague, Mike Johnson, have preserved the village which continues to prosper as "The Independence Village" today. Her work and that of many others provided a wonderful home for her son, Mike Searcy, who was head injured in 1981 while on duty serving our country in the United States Coast Guard.

Claire's continuing passion in life was people. She sought and embraced a rainbow of friends from every walk of life, every profession including the arts, the sciences and the trades. Her friendships were ageless as was she-the young, the old and those in between. Babies and young children always captured her heart. Claire loved creative, imaginative and humorous individuals and cherished those who approached life honestly and with passion and tolerance for all. The greatest gift she provided was her desire and ability to network these friends, enriching all along the way.

Claire's love of family and the well-being and success of each member was always paramount in her mind. As with her friends, she networked everyone providing her husband, children and grandchildren with touchstones that constantly enriched their lives. She taught her family to love completely, even when there was less than complete understanding-a gift that will sustain her family during this time and in the years that follow.

Claire is now on her way, free again to continue another of her lifelong interests and joys- travel. During retirement, she visited Italy, Greece, Russia, France, Turkey, Israel, Egypt, and Canada. She so loved New York City and traveled there with family and friends. She traveled extensively with her husband, Harvey. They loved the west including Yellowstone, the Tetons, the Snake River, Monument Valley and many other venues. Claire loved cowboys-their boots, their buckles, their jeans, their spurs and their hats. Claire and Harvey's Alaskan cruise was a highlight for both of them.

Claire was preceded in death by her father and mother, Richard and Nan Cardwell, her brother Ashford Manning and her sister, Mary Nan Hayes. Claire is survived by her husband, Dr. Harvey Bunce III, her sister-in-law Maxine Manning, her sons Mike Searcy, Flynn Donovan and significant other Sammie Camp, and Christopher (Cutty) Donovan. Claire is also survived by her "gift" children Jessica Holt and husband Todd Holt and Beau Bunce and wife Meagan Bunce. Also surviving are her grandchildren Dustin Searcy and wife Laura Searcy, Beth Ann Searcy, Liam Donovan, and Jackson Holt. Claire is also survived by three great grandchildren, Cortlynn, Carleigh and Cooper Searcy, numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and countless friends.

Claire so loved the fall in the northeast. Look for her presence there in a few months.

A "Celebration of Life" will be held at 2 pm, July 26th, 2014 at The Sam Houston Funeral Home, 1700 Normal Park Drive, Huntsville, Texas.

Memorials may be made to the Claire Donovan Medical Education Scholarship Fund and can be addressed to the:  
UTMB Development Office, 301 University Blvd, 3.110 Administration Building, Galveston, TX 77555-0148.

Memorial condolences may be made to the family online at [www.shmfh.com](http://www.shmfh.com).

# Tribute Wall



“ *Claire Donovan*

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November 15, 2022 at 08:33 PM