Mary Lee Randall

January 29, 1941 - September 17, 2016

After a four-year battle with pancreatic cancer, Mary Randall, 75, passed away in her Huntsville, Texas, home on September 17, 2016. She died peacefully, surrounded by family.

Mary was born January 29, 1941, in New Waverly, Texas, to Robert Smith and Rosalie Krystyniak Smith. Growing up on a working farm, where everything from meat to butter for the table were produced right there at home, shaped Mary into a very hearty, strong, practical, and hardworking person. A childhood spent in that small, close-knit community filled with Eastern European immigrants also instilled in her an appreciation for maintaining ties with extended family and living where, quite literally, everybody knows your name.

When she was 21, Mary married John Wheeler Randall, made a home in Huntsville, Texas, and they had four children - Kay, Joan, and twins Daniel and Darrell.

Mary worked for the U.S. Postal Service for almost 30 years and was one of the first female full-time mail carriers in Huntsville. After spending the first part of her career carrying rural routes, Mary was honored to take on the job of managing the Elkins Lake post office. Being a postal worker allowed Mary to indulge her gregarious nature, and she made many close friends in the

Huntsville community over the three decades of her career. Although it was a little less common at the time to be a working mother, Mary was proud to meet both challenges. Her success at working full-time while raising four children was a great inspiration to many who knew her - especially to her daughters.

When not working, Mary loved cooking and gardening - and eating well. She particularly enjoyed baking and frequently shared the fruits of her labor with friends and family. Many a warm pie made its way to neighbors, fellow church members, and coworkers during her lifetime.

When Mary wasn't busy in the kitchen, she was absorbed in reading cookbooks, the collection of which filled a wall of her home. She could lose herself in the pages of a good, beautifully illustrated cookbook the way others do in a novel. She also had a very gifted green thumb. In addition to raising a jungle of lush potted plants, she also maintained an abnormally large vegetable garden, which some passersby mistook for a commercial enterprise.

Perhaps one of the most unique things about Mary was her willingness to engage in the hard work of tending the land her family lived on. As anyone who knew her is aware, she could more than hold her own against the men. Whether it was baling hay or vaccinating calves, Mary was on the spot, doing the work that needed to be done and exercising an intellect that was particularly well-suited to the business of farming and ranching.

After her retirement in February 2001, Mary was able to spend more time on her hobbies as well as with her granddaughters, Sara and Jill. Just as she was born to be "Mama," she also was a natural at filling the role of "Mimi."

Mary cared for John through his two-and-a-half year cancer ordeal, and six years after his death was diagnosed herself. She handled cancer the way she

handled everything else in her life – with toughness, pragmatism, and courage. In surviving for more than four years, she defied all odds for a patient with her diagnosis.

Mary and John were charter members of Chapelwood Missionary Baptist Church in Huntsville.

Mary was preceded in death by her parents and by John, her husband of 45 years. She is survived by her four children; daughter-in-law Cynthia Randall; two granddaughters, Sara and Jill Randall; brother John Robert Smith and his wife Chiquita; her husband's sisters Shirley Taliaferro, Sarah Lynch, and Mary Dawson and brothers-in-law Steve Dawson and Phil Lynch; as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

Mary's family wishes to extend deep thanks to "special angels" Mary Jo Pool, Shirley Taliaferro, Roy Walker, Terry Vogler, Dena Davis, and Steve Jeter for the love and care they provided during her illness.

The family will receive friends on September 23 from 5:30-7:30 p.m., at Sam Houston Memorial Funeral Home.

Funeral services will be held Saturday, September 24, at 1 p.m. at Sam Houston Memorial Funeral Home in Huntsville, Texas. Burial will follow at Ebenezer Memorial Cemetery, also in Huntsville.

Pallbearers are nephews Tony Taliaferro, Terry Taliaferro, Stephen Dawson, Russell Dawson, and Steve Osborn and dear family friend Troy Walker.

Flowers may be sent to Sam Houston Memorial Funeral Home, 1700 Normal Park Dr., Huntsville, Texas 77340.

Cemetery Details

Ebenezer Cemetery

Huntsville, TX

Previous Events

Visitation

SEP **23**. 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM (CT)

Sam Houston Memorial Funeral Home - Huntsville
1700 Normal Park Dr.
Huntsville, TX 77340
(936) 291-7300
belinda@shmfh.com

Funeral Service

SEP **24**. 1:00 PM (CT)

Sam Houston Memorial Funeral Home - Huntsville
1700 Normal Park Dr.
Huntsville, TX 77340
(936) 291-7300
belinda@shmfh.com

Tribute Wall

Mary Lee Randall

November 15, 2022 at 08:33 PM

JS

Joan & Kay please take home / Jerry & Shirley purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Mary Lee Randall.

Joan & Kay please take home / Jerry & Shirley - September 22, 2016 at 12:09 PM

Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mary Lee Randall.

September 22, 2016 at 11:09 AM

BT

Barbara and Donald Trotter purchased the Mediu m Dish Garden for the family of Mary Lee Randall.

Barbara and Donald Trotter - September 22, 2016 at 10:22 AM

BT

We are so very sorry to hear of Mary's passing and our thoughts and prayers are with the family. Mary was a unique lady, laced with her own opinions from time to time; but had a heart of gold. Her days were always filled with thoughts of how she could help others, evidenced by the fact that she cooked for the entire community of Walker County. Those delicious dishes were her way of saying she was thinking of you. We've all taken those recipes and now share them with our own families, as traditions. Mary will be missed, both her spunk and her humor and her love. It is her time to rest now and God is her Physician and He now holds her in His hands. Rest easy and smile often, our Dear Friend, Mary.

Barbara and Donald Trotter
Houston, Tx.

Barbara b Trotter - September 22, 2016 at 09:15 AM

PP

To the Family of Mary Lee,

I am so sorry to hear of Mary Lee's death--I did not know she had cancer--I know that has to be such a trying experience. Mary Lee and I were classmates at New Waverly School and played several sports together (had many good times) as well as all classes together (small school--all classes together). I always considered her a friend (even though we were not real close).

Please accept my sympathy. The write-up was a most moving tribute to an amazing person. It's strange, but I was thinking about her just the other day. It is an amazing and misunderstood world.

Pat (Novakoski) Pavelock

Pat (Novakoski) Pavelock - September 21, 2016 at 06:03 PM

SS

We were so sorry to hear of Mary's passing. She was the sweetest lady and friend of ours. We lift her children and family up to the Lord. He will supply the comfort and peace the only He can give. Will miss her delicious cooking & her laughter. God Bless you all.

Michael & Sharon Siverand

Sharon Siverand - September 21, 2016 at 01:26 PM

JM

Kay, Joan, Daniel and Darrell: Our best wishes to you as we remember the strong woman Mary was. We have many fond memories of your parents (and you) at Chapelwood. Joyce and Jimmy Merchant (Mt. Pleasant, TX)

Joyce & Jimmy Merchant - September 21, 2016 at 01:14 PM

CB

Our thoughts & prayers are with Mary's children and family. She will be missed greatly by so many, she knew just about everybody in Huntsville. She had a smile that would light up the room & her cooking was out of this world. Going to miss that Chicken Ranch Casserole & Chocolate Surprise Dessert. We are so grateful she is now with our Lord and Savior. God Bless you all.

Charles Bobbitt and Family

Charles Bobbitt - September 20, 2016 at 08:58 PM

NG

I loved your mom. She always made me laugh. My prayers are with all of you.

Nancy Gatlin - September 20, 2016 at 06:16 PM

PJ

Daniel our thoughts and prayer are with you and your family. If there anything we can do, just let us know. We are here for you.

Markey Thomas, Jerry Johnson and family

Polly Johnson - September 20, 2016 at 04:13 PM

CS

We are so sorry for your loss. Mary will be missed.

Charlotte Snowden - September 20, 2016 at 02:08 PM

Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mary Lee Randall.

September 19, 2016 at 03:58 PM

Vicki Mikulin Prentice

Sincere sympathy to Kay, Joan, Daryl, Daniel and family.

Wayne and Vicki Prentice

Vicki Mikulin Prentice - September 19, 2016 at 10:39 AM