



## Helen Lee Cornelius

May 3, 1933 - February 6, 2022

Helen Lee Cornelius (age 88) passed away peacefully on Sunday, February 6, 2022 at her daughter's home in Mustang, OK surrounded by her loved ones. She was born May 3, 1933 in Portland, OR to Robert E. and Helen Katherine White McGary.

Lee grew up in Lake Oswego, OR and graduated high school from Lincoln High School in Portland, OR in 1951. After high school, she attended the University of Oregon majoring in Language and Arts and graduated in 1956 after touring Europe for one year. After graduation, she returned to Germany and became an Army Special Services Club Director where she met and later married J Paul Cornelius on September 2, 1960 in Windsheim, Germany. They were blessed in this union with three sons and one daughter. They were happily married for 58 years.

Lee enjoyed art, reading, traveling, playing the piano and was a consummate gardener. After extensive travel throughout Europe and the United States, Lee and Paul settled in Duncan, OK in January 1973, where she worked for the City of Duncan as the city draftsman until her retirement in 1988. She then moved back to Germany until 1991. Lee and Paul retired to a house overlooking Lake Tenkiller where she resided until her passing.

She was preceded in death by her husband, J Paul Cornelius; her parents, Robert E. and Helen Katherine White McGary; one brother, Robert M. McGary; and one son, Mark Andrew Cornelius.

Lee is survived by a son, John Christopher Cornelius, OKC, OK; a son,

Matthew Kelly Cornelius, Vian, OK; and a daughter, Katherine Lee (Kitty) Cornelius, Mustang, OK, 5 grandchildren, 7 great grandchildren and a number of other relatives.

A family conducted memorial service will be held at Ft. Gibson National Cemetery on February 22, 2022 at 1:30 p.m. She will be laid to rest with her husband, J Paul following the service.

Cremation services provided by Cornerstone Funeral Home 1830 N York St Muskogee, OK 74403. Condolences can be made to the family at [www.cornerstoneofmuskogee.com](http://www.cornerstoneofmuskogee.com).

# Cemetery Details

## Fort Gibson National Cemetery

1423 National Cemetery Rd.  
Fort Gibson, OK

# Previous Events

## Family conducted memorial service

FEB **22**. 1:30 PM (CT)

Fort Gibson National Cemetery  
1423 National Cemetery Rd.  
Fort Gibson, OK

# Tribute Wall



“ *Helen Lee Cornelius*

October 23, 2023 at 09:38 AM



“ *Happy Heavenly Birthday Lee.....Look forward to the day I see you again.....*

*Love*  
*Staci Nickles Thornton*

**Staci Nickles Thornton** - May 03, 2022 at 05:10 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Helen Lee Cornelius.*



February 22, 2022 at 01:02 AM



“ *Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Helen Lee Cornelius.*



February 21, 2022 at 08:25 AM

CC

“ Mom a week ago I sat by your side watching you as labored to breath. I was truly awed by the strength and determination that you continued to display as you had so valiantly had done for the last five years since your accident. I recall thinking that you were a real medical miracle because of the multitude of times you defied the overwhelming odds stacked against you time after time.



I wish with all of my heart that your final days had been more peaceful and much stressful for you mom. You never complained or felt sorry for yourself or blamed others for your situation, you just met every challenge with fierce determination and bravery as you always had your whole life. You were and always will be the epitome of grace under fire, and I will miss you for the rest of my days on this earth.

I miss and love you very much!  
Christopher

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**Chris Cornelius** - February 13, 2022 at 09:38 AM

ST

“ Staci Thornton lit a candle in memory of Helen Lee Cornelius



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**Staci Thornton** - February 10, 2022 at 03:14 PM

ST

“ Kitty, Chris, and Kelly,

*I am so so so so sad by this. Your mom meant so much to me growing up. I love her.....and I'm devastated for you guys.....I love you all and all the memories we have I will always treasure.....*

*Staci Nickles Thornton*

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**Staci Thornton** - February 10, 2022 at 03:03 PM



“ Peace Eternal Wreath was purchased for the family of Helen Lee Cornelius.



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February 09, 2022 at 11:30 PM

JC

“ Dearest Mother,

*I will remember your grace and sophistication as well as your rapier wit. You always made me feel special in so many ways. You gave me encouragement when I needed it most. You were my touchstone and inspiration for most of my ventures both in business and life. I can't fathom at this moment how we will manage to go forward without you and dad in our lives but, I promise to do my part to keep all us together as a family in your absence mamma.*

*Love always and forevermore!*

*Christopher*

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**John Chris Cornelius** - February 09, 2022 at 06:53 PM