



Ms. Joyce Yvonne Cunningham

May 4, 1927 - April 7, 2017

Joyce Yvonne Cunningham, 89 years old, passed quietly in the early morning of 7 April 2017 after a lengthy bout with dementia. Since January 2014 she had lived at William Green State Veteran's Home in Bay Minette, Alabama.

Joyce was born on 4 May 1927 in Cleveland, Ohio to John "Jack" Cunningham of Sydenham, England and Doris Sybil Wilkins Cunningham of Madras, India. Since the Depression made finding work difficult, on 6 May 1933 the family moved to Madras, India. Joyce's favorite memory of the trip on a French troop ship was playing "taxi"-with soldiers (as passengers) paying her (the taxi driver) with oranges.

Joyce loved India - its weather and exotic locale suited her. She once said she had never been thoroughly warm since she left! After a happy and satisfying childhood, where she spoke four languages in the course of the day-English with family, French and Latin at school, and Tamil with servants-in 1948 she went back to the United States by her father. Indian independence from England was upon them, and Jack did not want Joyce to lose her American citizenship by taking a job with the India government. At that time girls did what their fathers told them to do. She did not realize then that she would never see her beloved India, or her mother, again.

At first she lived with her aunt and uncle in Traverse City, Michigan, then Joyce moved to Petosky, Michigan and attended the North Central School of Practical Nursing. While there a fellow student interested her in joining the military and on 2 August 1950 Joyce enlisted in the U.S. Army. After basic training at Ft. Lee, Virginia and advanced training at Fort Sam Houston, Texas at the Pharmacy Technician School, she was sent to Okinawa, Japan.

While stationed on Okinawa she met and subsequently married James Franklin (Buddy) Kee of Pensacola, Florida on 12 November 1952. After returning to the United States she mustered out of the Army on 4 April 1953. Joyce and Buddy had four children before divorcing in 1967.

Joyce returned to nursing school in Pensacola, Florida and recertified as a licensed practical nurse in 1961. She worked as a geriatrics nurse until 1979.

In her sixties Joyce qualified for her orange belt in karate and took classes in American Sign Language and Russian. In her seventies she twice toured England while visiting her

pen pal. And she took a trip around the eastern United States by herself on Amtrak. In her eighties she studied Buddhism and the Japanese language.

Joyce leaves behind her brother, John Albert Cunningham of Deltona, FL and four children: Jean Yvonne Barton (Dean) of Golden Eagle, Illinois; Jerry John Kee (Cathy) of Lillian, Alabama; James Franklin Kee, Jr. of Elberta, Alabama; and Judith Ann Lee (Mike Reeves) of Tuscaloosa, Alabama; 17 grandchildren and many great and great-great grandchildren. And we can't forget her little dog, Jojo.

To honor her love of animals the family asks that donations be made to the Spanish Cove Community Cat Coalition (850-516-2184).

Joyce's ashes will be scattered. With a favorable tide she will arrive in Indiana in no time!