



Dorothy Malone Gumbert
February 26, 1940 - September 27, 2024

“Don’t Fence Me In”

Dorothy Malone Gumbert, 84, took her final trail ride early Friday morning, September 27, with her family gathered at their Cypress Acres Ranch in Wimberley, TX.




A lifelong Texan, Dorothy was born in Houston on February 26, 1940 to Clarence McLeod Malone and Alice Bragg Malone, joining a brother, Clarence Jr. (Bubba), and two sisters, Mildred, and Alice. While residents of Houston during the school year, the family traveled to Wimberley during warmer months to stay at “The Lodge”, their summer house overlooking the Blanco river. They spent long days and evenings on the screen porch and the flagstone patio, visiting with friends and cousins from San Marcos, where Dorothy fell in love with the cedar-covered hills, the clear, cool waters of Cypress Creek, and the warm, limestone banks of the Blanco River. In Wimberley, she learned to ride horses, swim, and fish, activities she taught to generations of her family--her children and grandchildren, her nieces and nephews.

In Houston, she attended Kinkaid through the 8th grade and graduated from Lamar High School. In the 2nd grade, she met Harry Edwards Gumbert, Jr. (Eddie), her lifetime sweetheart. She went on to study at Randolph-Macon College in Virginia and then transferred to the University of Texas in Austin, earning her bachelor's degree in history. While at UT, Dorothy pledged Pi Beta Phi and made her entrance into Houston society as an Allegro Debutante.

Dorothy and Eddie were married on June 28, 1963 in the Chapel of St. Luke's United Methodist Church in Houston. Their first two daughters, Alice and Wendy, were born in Houston, then joined by their younger sister, Lynn, after the family moved to Wimberley in 1970, where Dorothy and Eddie had purchased the land that is now Cypress Acres Ranch.



Together, they added on to a small, existing rock house to create a home made of stones from their pastures and cedar from their land to house their growing family in Wimberley. Over time, they built a real estate and development company—Eddie Gumbert Real Estate and Blanco Bend Development Company—where they both worked, selling large tracts of land and ranches throughout the Hill Country, and creating generously-spaced neighborhoods along the waterways. And together they built a venerated short-term lodging business on their ranch, creating memories for so many families for 60 plus years, a laid-back relaxing respite on the cypress shaded banks of the spring-fed creek.






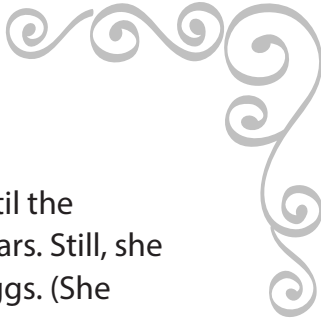

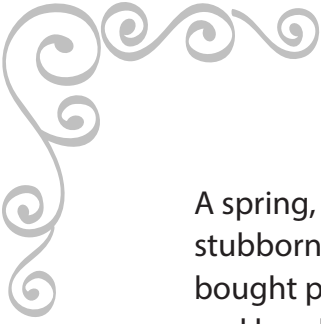
The Gumbert's raised their three daughters on the bluff above the banks of Cypress Creek, and Dorothy pursued her passion of riding horses through the scented cedar brakes and the limestone-studded pastures covered in bluebonnets, agarita, and fire wheels. In her barn is a weathered wall hung with lead ropes and bridles with the names of those old friends above each one... Scooter, Smoky, Squaw, Calico, Hondo, Patches, Fie, and Vaquero; to name a few.

Dorothy and Eddie pulled massive amounts of limestone rocks from those pastures, feeding Dorothy's love of rock laying and forming the walls of their home, the patios by the creek, the stone tables replete with wildflowers and picnic provisions. She also loved her chainsaw, and anyone who visited during the cooler months would come away from the Gumbert residence perfumed with cedar smoke, since for years, the stone fireplaces filled with cedar stumps and logs were, by choice, the main source of heat in the Gumbert house.

Dorothy loved to hunt and fish, and she and Eddie kept their deep freeze loaded with wild game. Summers always included family and friend fish fries, with perch, bass, and catfish pulled from the Blanco River and Cypress Creek. (But you were not allowed to fish for her pet catfish, with which she was on a first-name basis and fed every day, (only she and her grandchildren were allowed to fish the main hole). Venison sausage for breakfast (eaten on the generous patio overlooking the creek) was a given...and often a Christmas gift to her non-hunting friends. In cooler months, meals were taken in the dining room on a long, Malone-family table in front of a stone fireplace fed with cedar logs.

Dorothy was also an avid bird lover. In addition to her chickens, geese, and ducks, who populated the barnyard and pastures, along with (at different times) pigs, horses, goats, sheep, and longhorn cattle, she fed the wild songbirds on her patio, and the peacocks who liked to hang out on the roof of the main house.








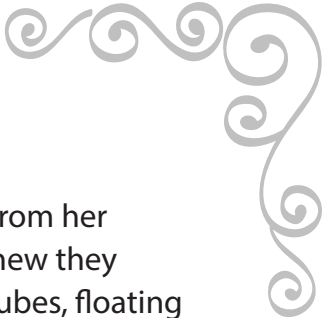

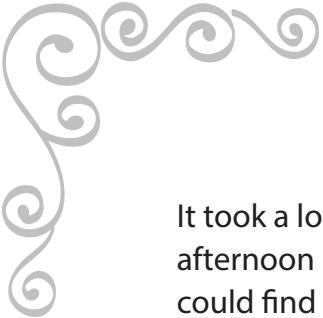
A spring, fall, and summer garden helped fill the Gumbert table until the stubborn earth and dearth of rain won its battle with advancing years. Still, she bought produce from local farmers and kept her chickens laying eggs. (She and her daughters had a small, but dependable egg business as teenagers, as well as a firewood business that helped the girls to have stylish clothes.) Always, Dorothy loved and gathered family around her. An avid genealogist, she wrote books on family history, gathering stories from genealogical research and memories from family and friends. She wrote two books, chronicling the past and present and even conquered the internet and different parts of the country in her search for family connections.

In keeping with her fascination with family, genealogy and history, Dorothy was an active board member of the Hays County Historical Commission, tracing the history of the area's earliest days to the present, learning about the Malone family's journey from the nation's Deep South to Central Texas and the roles they and so many others played in the creation of what became her family home.

But mostly, she gathered family and friends around her, hosting many of the Cowboy Camp events, a decades-old reunion of cousins from across the country, based, in theory, around their children. In reality, it was just as much about the adults visiting and catching up, preparing and serving meals along the river and creek, trekking to famed and reclusive swimming holes, sleeping on the screened porches of the Gumbert cabins, and debating the twists and turns of the world over hand cranked ice cream and beverages of choice. Fireworks lit the Gumbert's caliche driveway on the Fourth of July.

Thanksgivings were filled with family--daughters and their families, nieces and nephews, cousins and friends from across the country who needed a sense of family and place for the holidays. Christmas and Easter were no exception. If you were there in the warmer months, chances are you'd be loaded into a big car, stuffed with children, sometimes dogs, inner tubes, and pulling a trailer loaded with canoes and kayaks, headed for some exotic adventure in the Texas Hill Country, almost always centered around water.



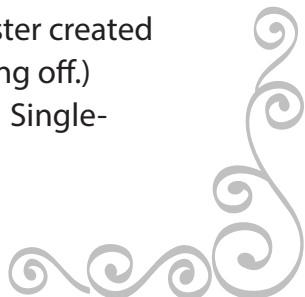

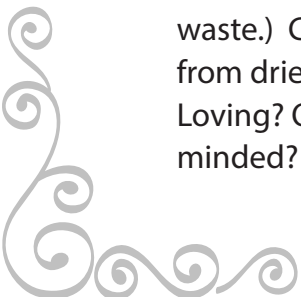


It took a lot of rain or an exceptional occasion to pull Dorothy away from her afternoon swims in the Creek. Anyone who stopped by after 3 pm knew they could find Dorothy and Eddie lounging in big black Gumbert inner tubes, floating beneath the green awning of the ancient cypress and over the faithful springs of Cypress Creek. Afterwards, if you were lucky, you could join them on the terrace overlooking the creek for cocktail hour,

To say Dorothy never branched out beyond the ranch after she and Eddie settled their family amongst the limestone and cedar would have been to overlook the trips they took to places as far flung as Asia and Africa, or to the mountains of Wyoming where Dorothy rode horses with lifelong friends in the Grand Tetons. Visits to Houston that called for a shift in wardrobe were not frequent, but not unheard of. One story recalls Dorothy stopping at a gas station on the outskirts of the city to change from jeans into an evening dress for attendance at a debutante ball, where she was just as comfortable as she was on hunting trips at her friends' ranches in West Texas.

Though firmly anchored in the Hill Country, Dorothy never let go of her childhood friends, many of whom bought land in or around Wimberley, built summer homes that often turned into retirement homes, and anchored themselves firmly in the Gumbert's Wimberley sphere. You could find generations of friends scattered through the shaded creek on inner tubes in summer months, drinks in hand, coveting the refuge from the heat and the rewards of old friendships. In the winter, those friends would return home to the city reeking of cedar smoke, dreaming of jigsaw puzzles near the fireplace, and ranch fresh eggs for breakfast.

And Dorothy had so many friends...from the childhood companions who still come to visit from Houston, to the family scattered across the country, from the local Wimberley residents, to the renters who have become like extended family. Adventurous? Yes, she was, but she knew her limits and the beauty of home. Eccentric? Maybe a little. Family-oriented? Very. (And you were so fortunate to become part of that family.) Generous? Yes, in very much her own style. (Never too much food. Always just enough by her standards. Dorothy did not believe in waste.) Creative? (Yes. I still remember the mosaic she made of a rooster created from dried beans that hung in the kitchen until the beans started falling off.) Loving? Oh yes. (Again, Dorothy style. But you knew you were loved.) Single-minded? Pretty much.



Dorothy liked to say that the only thing a woman needed in her pocket was a tube of (red) lipstick and a pocket knife, and that most everything could be fixed with baling wire. She had a wonderful smile, was always practical and most of all, she carried inside her, sometimes hidden in gruffness, bravery and a generous heart. In essence, a woman who created the life she wanted to live and drew her family and friends into her sphere, a sphere many never wanted to leave.

So now, Dorothy joins another sphere of friends and relatives that include her parents-- Clarence McCleod Malone, Sr. and Alice Bragg Malone; her siblings-- Clarence McLeod Malone, Jr., Mildred Malone Ryman, and Alice Malone Williams. She is survived by her husband, Harry Edwards Gumbert Jr, (Eddie); her daughters and their spouses, Alice Gumbert Lebkuecher and Ralph Phillip Lebkuecher III, Wendy Gumbert and Saul Mendoza Hernandez, and Lynn Gumbert Edone and Derek Christopher Edone; grandsons, Matthew Phillip Lebkuecher, Blake Edwards Lebkuecher and his wife Kari Louk Lebkuecher, with the first great granddaughter on the way; Paul Gumbert Mendoza; and granddaughters Julia Grace Edone and Elizabeth Hope Edone.



There will be a private graveside service followed by a "Celebration of Life," to be held at Old Glory Ranch in Wimberley starting at 2:30pm on October 28, 2024. The family welcomes all who loved her to come and celebrate with them at Old Glory Ranch 3633 River Road, Wimberley 78676

In lieu of flowers, please consider donations to Texas ParaSport texasparasport.org or the Wimberley Watershed Association watershedassociation.org.