



## Celeste Graves

June 28, 2023

Celeste Graves, born Celeste Gayle on August 30, 1919, in Magnolia, TX, passed away on June 28, 2023, in Magnolia, TX. She was surrounded by her loved ones. Celeste was a beloved mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and friend. She will be deeply missed by all who knew her.

Celeste loved her family with a passion and always enjoyed the times they could all be together. She cherished visits from friends and relatives, and her door was always open, as she often said, "The coffee pot is always on!" Her warm and welcoming nature touched the lives of many.

She is survived by her daughter, Tarvah McGinty, and husband, Ginty; daughter-in-law, Cinda Graves; grandchildren, Shelley LeBlanc and husband JoDe, Ty McGinty, and Trisha Thomas and husband Brock; and great-grandchildren, Cody LeBlanc, Ryan Thomas, and Zack Thomas. Celeste was preceded in death by her husband, James W. "Dub" Graves, Jr.; son, James W. "Jimmy" Graves III; grandson, James W. "Little Dub" Graves IV; parents, William Julius "Jule" Gayle and Emilie Baudat; and brothers Milton and Dalton Gayle.

Celeste attended Magnolia High School in Magnolia, TX, and furthered her education at Lon Morris Junior College in Jacksonville, TX, and Draughan's Business College in Houston, TX. She had a successful career that spanned

several fields. Celeste worked for Culpepper Realty when they received the contract to train women in the Army Air Force Woman's Flight Training Division - the 319th AAFWFTD - as a dispatcher and recorder of their flying time. She also worked for Grogan Cochran Lumber Company for several years. In 1952, she began working for Magnolia ISD as the secretary to the Superintendent of Schools. She also taught shorthand for 17 years and retired in 1985. Even after retirement, Celeste continued to contribute to the education field by working two days a week in the building that was named after her, the Celeste G. Graves Education Support Center. She finally retired at the age of 100, leaving behind a legacy of dedication and hard work.

Celeste was a member of First Baptist Church of Magnolia, later renamed Magnolia's First Baptist Church, where she taught Sunday School for several years. She drove herself to church every Sunday until she was 99. Her faith was an important part of her life, providing her with strength and guidance.

In her free time, Celeste had two main hobbies. She began collecting elephants as a child and had amassed over 1200 elephants at the time of her passing. She was also an avid genealogist, delving into her family history and preserving it for future generations.

Visitation for Celeste Graves will be held at Magnolia Funeral Home on Wednesday, July 5, from 5-8 pm. A funeral service will take place at Magnolia's First Baptist Church on Thursday, July 6, at 10:30 am. A private burial will follow in Magnolia Cemetery, where Celeste will be laid to rest.

In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made in Celeste's memory to the Magnolia Historical Society, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, or Shriners Hospitals for Children. These organizations held special meaning for Celeste, and your support would be greatly appreciated.

Celeste Graves will be remembered for her kind and nurturing spirit, her dedication to her family and community, and her unwavering faith. May her soul rest in eternal peace.

The condolences of the Addison family and staff are with her family and friends.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JUL **5**. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Magnolia Funeral Home  
811 South Magnolia Blvd.  
Magnolia, TX 77355  
(281) 356-3363  
magnoliafh@yahoo.com  
<https://magnoliafunerals.com>

## Funeral Service

JUL **6**. 10:30 AM (CT)

Magnolia's First Baptist Church  
18525 N 6th ST  
Magnolia, TX 77354  
(281) 356-8543

# Tribute Wall

SG

“ I'm sorry to hear of her passing. It sounds like she lived a very full life. I communicated a bit with her when I was on FB. Her husband's father was my Dad's uncle. His brother, Aubra was my grandfather. I remember meeting Uncle Jim in China Springs. I grew up in Waco. Celeste actually met my Dad in Hillsboro before the war. Her husband was already in the Navy I believe. Dad quit high school that year and joined the Army-Air Corps at age 17. Celeste knew my parents, Aubra and Cloris Graves very well. She visited them in their last home in Hewitt, TX when they were still active and healthy. We lost Mom in 2017 and Dad in 2020. They knew she was the family historian.

---

**Steve Graves** - December 25, 2023 at 10:21 PM

BH

“ My heartfelt love and sympathies to the family of Celeste--a longtime friend across Spring Creek to the north-- in Magnolia; a beautiful lady of the south who dressed in style...those high heels!-- and an encouraging word for everyone. Celeste's #1 love was her Lord Jesus and she lived out her strong faith! Celeste also loved her Magnolia!! Having known Celeste is a blessing that I will forever cherish. Love, Bruce Hillegeist-- Tomball

---

**Bruce Hillegeist** - July 08, 2023 at 01:22 AM

TM

Thank you, Bruce. My mom thought a lot of you too.

---

**Tarvah McGinty** - July 22, 2023 at 12:01 PM

RW

“ 1 file added to the album graves



Ron White - July 05, 2023 at 04:45 PM

MC

“ Montgomery County Veterans Commission planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Celeste Graves.

Montgomery County Veterans Commission - July 05, 2023 at 02:27 PM

MC

“ Montgomery County Veterans Commission purchased the Sacred Duty Spray for the family of Celeste Graves.



Montgomery County Veterans Commission - July 05, 2023 at 02:27 PM



“ Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Celeste Graves.



July 05, 2023 at 01:57 PM



“ Sweet Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Celeste Graves.



July 05, 2023 at 10:53 AM



“ Just wanted to send prayers to all of Celeste family. I know she touched so many lives, and made so many memories with her friends, students, co-workers and family over her lifetime. Anyone that knew her was fortunate to have been in her circle.

Ellen Pruett - July 04, 2023 at 05:06 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Celeste Graves.

July 04, 2023 at 03:29 PM



“ Large Basket Garden was purchased for the family of Celeste Graves.



July 04, 2023 at 03:29 PM



“ Celeste was a treasure, my thoughts and prayers are with you all.  
Patricia C Handley

Patricia C Handley - July 03, 2023 at 03:46 PM

JM

“ *Celeste, May God bless you in the richest way. I know you are wearing a special crown in heaven today! Thanks so much for your love and friendship for almost 70 years. I look forward to joining you. Much Love from all the Jimmy W Murphy family.*



**Jimmy W Murphy** - July 03, 2023 at 12:55 PM

TF

“ *The Jimmy W Murphy Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Celeste Graves.*

**The Jimmy W Murphy Family** - July 03, 2023 at 12:52 PM

TF

“ *The Jimmy W Murphy Family purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Celeste Graves.*



**The Jimmy W Murphy Family** - July 03, 2023 at 12:52 PM

MM

“ *Mayor, Council & Staff -City of Magnolia purchased the Pink Tribute Spray for the family of Celeste Graves.*



**Mayor, Council & Staff -City of Magnolia** - July 03, 2023 at 08:45 AM

LF

“ I first met Celeste Graves soon after being appointed to the Montgomery County Historical Commission in the summer of 2012. At age 92, she was its oldest active member. But I didn't know it as she was also one of its most energetic members. She loved history, particularly Montgomery County history and especially Magnolia history. She gave me and others on our Commission her huge collection of photos, her extensive research of the County over the past 150 years, and her enthusiastic love and support. My wife Martha and I enjoyed visiting her in her home with her collection of elephants and her impressive library. We treasure today her autographed books about Magnolia and the Women Army aviators training at Ellington Air Field during WWII who she met. Celeste was always bubbly and good natured every time I saw her, even though her old age had slowed her down. Celeste touched so many lives, and I was one who was blessed to know her. Our Historical Commission was delighted to dedicate our 2022 History Road Rally in Magnolia to Celeste Graves. She truly was a gallant History Road Warrior and a grand lady!!

Larry Foerster, Chairman, Montgomery County Historical Commission



---

Larry L Foerster - July 02, 2023 at 04:52 PM

JM

“ Members of the Joanna Troutman Chapter National Society Daughters of the American Revolution are sad at the passing of our DAR sister, Celeste. Prayers for the family.

---

Joanan Miazga - July 02, 2023 at 11:40 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Celeste Graves.

July 01, 2023 at 03:47 PM



“ *Fairest of All* was purchased for the family of Celeste Graves.



July 01, 2023 at 03:47 PM



“ *What a sweet wonderful lady. You made such an impact on Magnolia and everyone you came in contact with . God welcomed you with open arms our friend . Prayers for the family 🙏*

**Jeff & Darla Graham-Clapp** - June 30, 2023 at 03:17 PM



“ *Beautiful Heart Bouquet* was purchased for the family of Celeste Graves.



June 29, 2023 at 05:38 PM



“ *What an amazing, loving woman. You taught me so much. Heaven just received an angel. Love, Kim Murphy*

**Kim Murphy** - June 29, 2023 at 05:10 PM

JL

“*Celeste, I have so many beautiful memories in my heart that include you. Your way of seeing life in a positive manner even when it tested you. Your faith, even when events in life didn't make sense. Even when you read things in the Bible that tested your faith. You still believed.*

*My favorite memories: Coffee breaks at work. Especially when Tarvah was there too. Yes, that is going back a few years, but memories have no time constraint. The best ones feel like yesterday. So, sometimes, at those coffee breaks, Tarvah would bustle in, doing this or that, you might say something that would get an exasperated comment from Tarvah. All this time I'd be watching you. You would make eye contact with me and have that twinkle in your eye and that smile. That little smirk. Tarvah was acting like the Mom and you were the child...and you were loving every minute of it. Those little moments in time are precious because I was able to have a little peek into the dynamic that was your relationship with your daughter. Life is all about relationships and witnessing them is a special gift.*

*My dear friend Celeste, you have given us so much. So much history, so much community involvement, so many accomplishments. And you did it by taking one step at a time. What an example!*

*So, my friend, I'm not saying 'goodbye'. Just, 'see you down the road.'*

*Janteena Lovett*

---

**Janteena Lovett** - June 29, 2023 at 11:13 AM