



## Helen Louise O'Leary

September 21, 1921 - August 6, 2022

Helen L. O'Leary

1921-2022

Helen L. O'Leary, 100, passed away August 6, 2022 at a local care center.

Born Elena Garcia Yniguez on September 21, 1921, at the family home in Crockett, California, she was the 5th of 8 siblings born to Jose Isabel Yniguez and Maria Mata Garcia Yniguez. She attended John Swett school graduating with the J.S. Class of 1938. She spent much of her time playing on different women's athletic teams. She was an excellent athlete lettering on many of her high school teams as part of the GAA. She enjoyed sports well into her 60's. Among her activities were swimming, tennis, basketball, and badminton.

After graduation, she began her career at the C&H sugar factory like her father and older siblings. Then, WWII broke out and Elena met a young soldier from Boston, Massachusetts, assigned to the 211th Army stationed in Crockett. She married Eugene J. O'Leary Jr. before he was sent to Europe.

While her husband was at war, Elena joined the U.S. Army. She was very proud of her service to her country (as are her children and entire family). Two children were born to Elena and Eugene: Eugene Joseph O'Leary, III and Kathryn Ann O'Leary. Elena and Eugene were divorced in the early 1950s. She remained a single mom raising her two children on her own.

When her children went away for college, she furthered her own education by attending Vallejo Junior College while continuing to work full-time. She worked for over 30 years, and retired from Mare Island Naval Shipyard. After a brief retirement, she went to work for the City of Napa Housing Authority as a bilingual receptionist. She worked into her 80s.

Always athletic and interested in learning, she began studying Greek folk dancing at the Minerva Café in San Francisco. From there she took up ballet, flamenco, and belly dancing. Her passion remained Greek music and dancing. She was able to make many friends while attending festivals and picnics and while traveling to Greece.

She was preceded in death by her parents, four of her five sisters and her two brothers. She is survived by her sister, Gloria Cooper, and by her son Eugene (Alexandra), her daughter Kathryn Watson, five grandchildren, six great grandchildren, many generations of nieces & nephews, great nieces & nephews, and cousins.

Mass will be celebrated at St. Apollinaris Catholic Church, 3700 Lassen Street, Napa, CA on Tuesday, August 16, 2022 at 11:00AM. Private Committal with military honors will be scheduled for a future date at the Sacramento Valley National Cemetery in Dixon, CA.

In lieu of flowers, donations to any charitable organization are encouraged.

# Cemetery Details

## Sacramento Valley National Cemetery

5810 Midway Road  
Dixon, CA 95620

# Previous Events

## Funeral Mass

AUG **16**. 11:00 AM (PT)

St. Apollinaris Catholic Church  
3700 Lassen Street  
Napa, CA 94558