



## Nancy Ann Rayburn

November 25, 1938 - November 29, 2013

Nancy Ann Rayburn, also known professionally as Ann Russell, passed peacefully in her sleep on Friday, November 29, 2013. She was born in Evansville, Indiana on November 25, 1938, and attended both Bosse and Central High Schools.

She and her mother attended Devry University together and received their Beautician's Licenses. They later owned and operated Rayburn's Beauty Shop in the 1960's.

Nancy was best known for her amazing musical career. From a very young age, she played the accordion with Evansville's Campbell band, marching in parades and other community events. She mastered the piano very early in life, and had a beautiful voice that was heard by thousands of people in her lifetime.

Her earliest solo performances can be traced back to the 1950's, on a daily morning radio show in Evansville, Indiana hosted by Calvary Temple Church. She ministered to listeners, and performed traditional gospel hymns.

In the 60's and 70's, Nancy was making quite a stir in the music world. She performed various shows with Wally Fowler Productions, including the All Night Gospel Singings that he was well known for. Atlanta, Dallas, Nashville,

Indianapolis, and many other cities enjoyed her spiritual music. She was a guest performer at the Ryman Auditorium and Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, Tennessee, where she met and accompanied several upcoming performers that were just getting started in their musical careers. Nancy settled in Indiana in the 70's, and would often travel to several states, performing at many different churches and events. She loved the Lord, and would tell anyone who would listen how important their salvation was.

She spent the last 15 years of her life enjoying many Sundays as the featured pianist at Music City Mall in Odessa, Texas. She was called the "Lady at the Grand" because of her unmatched piano skills at the Baby Grand. The mall became like a second home to "Ann" (the stage name she liked to use) and her family. Her daughter Michelle sometimes joined her, harmonizing on their favorite Southern Gospel and country songs.

She also performed several times on God's Learning Channel, at the Brand New Oprea, and some private events. Her music, voice, and charm will be greatly missed.

She is preceded in death by her Mother, Willie Rayburn, Father, William Kemp Rayburn, and Brother, Jimmy Ray Griffin.

Survivors include a daughter, Michelle Fowler Martinez, son in law, Jimmy Martinez of Midland, TX. A son, Mike Fowler, daughter in law, Christy Fowler of Odessa, TX.

Grandsons, James Mitchell Martinez, Mikhail Berwin Fowler

Sister, Lucille Welborn of Odessa, Tx.

Best friend, Betty Jones, and many friends and fans at the mall who never missed her shows.

She would say, "It is Well With My Soul".

Viewing will be held on Thursday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Thursday, December 5. Services will be held at American Heritage Cemetery and Funeral Home, 4100 N. FM 1788, off 191, between Midland and Odessa on MONDAY, DECEMBER 9 AT 1:30 PM.

In lieu of flowers, the family is accepting donations to help with funeral costs. An account has been set up at My Community Federal Credit Union #68337

All arrangements are entrusted to American Heritage Cemetery and Funeral Home.

# Tribute Wall



“ *Sacred Cross Bouquet was purchased for the family of Nancy Ann Rayburn.*



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December 09, 2013 at 07:39 AM



“ *Michelle & Family you are in my thoughts and Prayers.*

*Rhonda Lesley & Family*

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**Rhonda Lesley** - December 09, 2013 at 07:29 AM



“ *Lucille, Lynn, Mike & Family & Michelle & family, You have my deepest sympathy. May God Forever Bless all. Nancy has gone to a better place. We will miss her dearly.*

*Virginia Gipson & Family*

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**Virginia Gipson** - December 05, 2013 at 01:49 PM