



## Esther Lloyd McMurtry

December 28, 1914 - June 18, 2012

Esther Lloyd McMurtry passed away on June 18, 2012. She was born in Dallas, Texas, December 28, 1914 to Roberta Harris Jones and Robert D. Jones. She spent most of her early life in Dallas, as one of seven children of Roberta and Robert. Her life was unusual as the family, for part of her life, ran a boarding house.

An excellent student, she always had a love of art. She would get paper and pencils as birthday and Christmas presents, and her love of art was matched by her talent in it. She attended Dallas Technical High School, graduating in 1932. She and her sister, Nancy, enrolled at Tech the following year and with their mother rented a house near 19th and University. This was the depth of the Great Depression, and her mother took in boarders while Esther and her sister paid their tuition with “plow up money” from a government cotton program. Both majored in Commercial Art through the Engineering Department, a Bachelor of Arts degree Tech awarded only twice--to the two of them. To earn money they drove out around the Lubbock area creating drawings of cotton gins and grain elevators to sell to their owners.

She met Hoyse McMurtry early in her college career, and they both graduated in 1938. She ranked 5th in her class, slightly higher than her sister and husband-to-be, and this was the subject of much discussion in subsequent years. She and Hoyse married on September 4, 1938, and during the next five years they moved from Lubbock to Clovis to Houston and then to Vigo Park, Texas. During that time she ran the household, helped measure buildings with

her architect husband, taught art in the junior high school in Clovis, had her first child. During the war years she drove a tractor and helped run a farm household with a 2-year-old daughter in tow.

After the arrival of a son in 1944 and Hoyse's discharge from the army in 1946, they moved to Lubbock. He began his architectural career and she became a full-time housewife, mother of a second son, Girl Scout leader and dram trainer, Cub Scout Den Leader, playhouse designer, editor of architectural specifications, and perpetual "volunteer" for innumerable school projects. She also found time to create Prairie Dog Pete, a new mascot for the City of Lubbock, work as a volunteer expert at the Texas Tech Museum, specializing in dolls and period costumes, serving as president of the Women's Council, and representing Lubbock in a National Cleanest Town Contest in Washington, DC, where the city's entry won second place. She continued to use her art as a basis of personal enjoyment, constructing an elaborate Victorian dollhouse with finely carved furniture, working lighting fixtures, a miniature Steinway piano, and a harp, all made from Arkansas walnut and pecan. She also conceptualized and illustrated a children's book, repaired turn-of-the-century clothing and antique Persian rugs, compiled four volumes of family history and photos, painted watercolors of vintage buildings on the high plains, and read novels and articles on current events until her death.

Shaped by her boarding-house childhood, the Great Depression, and WWII, she was kind and always willing to help, while also expecting recipients to pull their share of the load. She and Hoyse circumnavigated the United States by car and traveled through Canada, Western Europe, and even the Soviet Union at a time when gaining entry was difficult and unusual. Ever willing to try something new and examine things from different perspectives, she exemplified the best of the attributes of her remarkable generation.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Hoyse, and is survived by her daughter Kathryn McMurtry Hunt and husband Warren, son Allan and wife Nancy, and son Steve and wife Gwat. Also surviving her are sister-in-law

Elizabeth McMurtry Devin of Vigo Park, grandchildren Kevin Hunt and wife Ginger, and Melissa King of Lubbock; Brandon, Ryan, and Erin McMurtry of Austin; Caitlin McMurtry of Lawrence, KS, and Alex McMurtry of Shorewood, WI, along with great-granddaughters Amy Hunt and Calli and Makenna King, all of Lubbock. Funeral services will be Friday at 11:00AM at Bowman Chapel of First United Methodist Church in Lubbock.

# Previous Events

## Service

JUN **22**. 11:00 AM (CT)

First United Methodist Church  
1411 Broadway  
Lubbock, TX  
<http://fumc.com>