

Ernestine Lotella Herriott Steward | 1919-2015

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Ernestine Lotella Herriott “Kewpie” Steward

Ernestine Lotella Herriott “Kewpie” Steward, 95, a banker, died Saturday, Jan. 24, 2015, in Hurnville. Funeral is 2 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 31, at First Baptist Church in Chico with the Rev. Ronnie Geesling officiating, assisted by Bill Steward. Burial will follow at Chico Cemetery. Visitation is 6 to 8 p.m. Friday at the home place, 610 N. Hovey in Chico. Pallbearers are Eddie Cox, Avery Cox, Arnie Barksdale, Raleigh Cox, Robert Cox and Audie Morris.

Kewpie was born May 27, 1919, to John and Clara (Cox) Herriott on the family farm just north of Chico. She was delivered by a pioneer woman doctor, Dr. Lotella Poteet, and was the last surviving granddaughter of pioneer Basilee Pierce Cox, who arrived in North Texas in 1851. Kewpie grew up in Chico and graduated from Chico High School in 1936. She attended Texas Christian University and Draughn’s Business School and began her banking career in 1936 working for Lee Morris at his Chico bank. She retired after 36 years, most of it with the Lacy family’s Central National Bank in Oklahoma City.

In 1951, she met Carl W. Steward when he opened a new account. Having been called to serve in the military during the Korean Conflict, Carl asked her to write him while he was stationed in South Dakota. After a year-and-a-half of writing they were married Jan. 26, 1956, in Oklahoma City. They set up housekeeping in Del City, Okla., where they resided until moving to Texas in 2008. In May 1959, they welcomed a son, Bill Elbert Steward and also served as surrogate parents to Roger D. Moore. They later became grandparents to Amie, Eb, Karey Beth, Charlie and the baby Kewpie. They also welcomed Roger’s children, Jessica, Katie and Andrew, and later expanded to include Rachel and Raleigh Cox. Kewpie was a member of the First Baptist Church of Chico. Her passion was serving her family, her Southern Baptist faith and finally, her career. In her final days, she brought joy and laughter to those who sought to help her. It was a good life.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband; and son by heart, Roger D. Moore. Survivors include her son, Bill E. Steward and wife, Kelly, of Hurnville; seven grandchildren; great-grandchildren; and other family members and friends. Memorial contributions may be made to Hospice of Wichita Falls, 4909 Johnson St., Wichita Falls, TX 76310, and Cal Farley’s Boys Ranch, P.O. Box 1890, Amarillo, TX 79174-0001.