



## **Tom Carlton**

1927-2020

By [Messenger Staff](#) | Published on March 04, 2020

Bridgeport ~ Tom Carlton, 92, of Bridgeport, will be laid to rest Thursday, March 5, in East Bridgeport Cemetery. Tom passed away Monday, March 2, 2020, at The Hills Nursing Home in Decatur, following a brief illness.

Funeral is 2 p.m. Thursday, March 5, at Hawkins Funeral Home Chapel in Bridgeport with burial in East Bridgeport Cemetery. Family will receive friends at the funeral home one hour prior to the service.

The Rev. David Lowrie will officiate. Pallbearers include Cody Carlton, Mason Bridwell, Austin Cook, Kyle Swift, Kyser Swift and Doug Bridwell. Honorary pallbearers are David Carlton and Terry Carlton.

Tom was born Sept. 12, 1927, in Agnes in southern Wise County to John Onie and Ruth Wright Carlton. The family moved from the Agnes area to near Paradise when Tom was a child, later settling in Bridgeport around 1940.

His early years were spent working on the family farm where the family raised cattle, chickens, hogs and team horses. The farming operation also involved dairy cattle, and Tom spoke often – although not very fondly – of milking the herd of dairy cattle before going to school.

He was a graduate of Bridgeport High School and a proud veteran of the U.S. Army.

He enlisted in the Army July 17, 1946, at the age of 18.

He married the love of his life, the former Betty Evelyn Elliott, on April 19, 1952 – a union that lasted 66 years before her death.

Tom spent most of his working life as a delivery driver for the local Exxon distributorship, hauling fuel to area gasoline stations, as well as to farmers and ranchers who maintained bulk fuel tanks on their properties. Following his retirement from the Exxon distributor, Tom took a job with Wise County, working with the Precinct 4 road crew. And, for a number of years, he supplemented his income by wrangling livestock at the Bridgeport Livestock Auction barn.

In addition to the love Tom had for his family, he maintained a lifelong passion for farming and ranching. A sizeable herd of beef cattle was the staple of his ranching operation, but cattle were often joined by other breeds of livestock. He bought, sold and traded horses for a number of years before developing his large herd of goats and sheep, which became a fixture for many years on the “Rolling C” ranch along Farm Road 920. The goats were then joined by a group of donkeys and finally, by his beloved pet llama, “Annie.” Not only was Tom a hardworking and successful farmer and rancher, he also deeply cared for his animals.

He was active for many years in the Bridgeport Riding Club, serving as president of that organization for a time.

Tom was preceded in death by his wife, Betty; a son, Tommy Curtis Carlton; a great-grandson, Carver Swift; his parents, John Onie and Ruth Carlton; his brothers, Rayford and Bill Carlton; and sisters Gertrude Price and Evalee Carlton.

Left to cherish Tom’s memory are his two daughters, Barbara Stewart and Lynda Bridwell and husband, Doug, all of Bridgeport; daughter-in-law Sharon Carlton of Decatur; grandchildren Amanda Petty and husband, Lance, of Azle, Adrian Swift and husband, Kyle, of Decatur, Morgan Cook and husband, Austin, of Plano, Cody Carlton and fianc , Stephanie, of Bowie and Mason Bridwell and wife, Jaclyn, of Midland.

He is also survived by his great-grandchildren, Alex and Brody Johnson, Everett, Kyser, Witten and Garner Swift, Cameron Bridwell, Halen Carlton and Piper Petty.

He is also survived by a number of nephews and nieces, as well as a host of dear friends and extended family members.

*Hawkins Funeral Home Bridgeport*

*Bridgeport, Texas, 940-683-2211 [hawkinsfuneralhome.com](http://hawkinsfuneralhome.com)*