



Mary Ella Cowan

May 2, 1937 - July 6, 2022

Mary Ella Cowan, 85, Tombstone, Arizona, passed away on July 6, 2022 in Tucson. Mary Ella was born on May 2, 1937, in Douglas, Arizona, to Frank and Irene Sproul. She began her early education in Turkey Creek and later moved to Douglas for junior high and high school. But most of her education came from riding the ranch up Turkey Creek with her father, where she developed a passion for horses and the land.

Mary Ella was among the first Cowbelle as a two-year-old at the first Cowbelle meeting in October 1939. Her mother, Irene, and her future mother-in-law, Mattie Cowan, were founding members. In 1952 Mary Ella married Robert E. (Bobby) Cowan. They moved to the JO Bar Ranch near Tombstone, where they had three daughters. Mary Ella worked on the ranch and was a skilled seamstress, making clothes for the entire family for Cochise County parades. Bobbie and Mary Ella participated in a horseback square dance team for several years.

When her daughters were teenagers, Mary Ella went to work for the Cochise County Sheriff's Department as a Deputy Sheriff. In 1997 she married Leonard Christian. They resided on Mary Ella's small horse property near Tombstone, where they raised quarter horses until Leonard's passing in 2017.

Throughout her life, Mary Ella enjoyed rodeo by both participating as a team and break-away roper and watching. The Cowboy Channel provided her countless hours of entertainment over the last few years.

In addition to Leonard, Mary Ella was preceded in death by her parents, her brother Bob Sproul, sister Ruth Williams and their spouses.

Mary Ella is survived by her daughters Caren, Albuquerque, New Mexico; Connie, Camp Verde, Arizona; and Carol, Atoka, Oklahoma; grandson and the apple of her eye, R.W. Wood, wife Ande, and great-grandson Forrest; as well as nieces Becky Sproul MacGowan and Val Williams Nelson, nephews Robbie Sproul and Bobby Willimas, and a world full of friends.

Services will be at 1:30 pm, Thursday, July 14, at Saint Paul's Episcopal Church, 55 N. 3rd Street in Tombstone. The Service will be live streamed at <https://www.facebook.com/stpaulstombstone> Honorary pallbearers are R.W. Wood, Robbie Sproul, Bobby Williams, Fred Davis, Oscar Villa, Omar Villa, Jesse Grassman, Sheriff Mark Dannels, and Billy Ben

Snure.

There will be a reception following the Service at the Crystal Palace Saloon, 436 E. Allen St., Tombstone.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations to the:

Mattie Cowan Cowbelle Scholarship

916 West Adams Street

Phoenix, AZ 85007

Pat Nowlin CowBelle Scholarship

<https://www.newmexicocowbelles.org/donate>

Cattlegrowers Foundation Inc.

PO Box 7035

Albuquerque NM 87194

or

Protect Americans Now

P.O. Box 1708

Elephant Butte NM 87935

Previous Events

Memorial service

JUL 14. 1:30 PM (MT)

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
55 N. 3rd Street
Tombstone, AZ 85638

Tribute Wall



“ *Mary Ella Cowan*

January 30, 2023 at 12:50 AM



“ *Great neighbor and friend.Helped me and my family through a very difficult time.I will always remember her kindness and generosity* *Pixie Burlison*

Pixie Burlison - July 11, 2022 at 10:18 PM