

Donna Mahoney Ball

September 18, 1929 ~ April 2, 2026

Our mother, grandmother, and friend, Donna Mahoney Ball, passed away peacefully in Salt Lake City on Thursday, April 2, 2026, at the age of 96, surrounded by her family.

Donna was born September 18, 1929, in Center Creek, Utah, to Elisha Rodney and Julia Emeline Sweat Mahoney. She grew up in the Heber Valley with four siblings—Vern, Maevon, Shirley, and Richard—who remained an important part of her life. The family lived on a farm, which softened some of the hardships of the Depression. In those years, before television and with little awareness of life beyond their valley, Donna never knew they did not have much. She shared a bed with her sisters, picked wild watercress along the banks, and delighted in the simple pleasures of farm life, including the arrival of their first washing machine. When Donna was 13 years old, her mother died, and life was never the same.

Donna graduated from Wasatch High School in Heber in 1947. The years following her mother's death were difficult, as she moved from house to house. Even so, she enjoyed the social side of school, and a love of learning became a lifelong habit.

After high school, Donna attended Brigham Young University, where she met her future husband, Melvin Ball. Before he left for service in the Korean War, they were married on the Army base in Oklahoma. They later divorced.

Donna and Mel raised their four daughters—Melanie, Laurel, Sharyn, and Diana—in the Mount Olympus Cove neighborhood of Salt Lake City. She treasured the years of raising her daughters and remained very close to them throughout her life. Donna was a homemaker in the truest sense, creating a lovely and welcoming home for her family. She was known for her special carrot cake and famous Christmas cookies. She took great pleasure in decorating for every holiday, especially Christmas, with trees in the living room and in every bedroom, each flocked a different color.

Donna loved hosting friends and family in her home throughout the years. She and Mel shared a close-knit group of friends with whom they enjoyed monthly dinners and extensive travel. She took great pride in her garden and patio, spending countless hours planting flowers around the pool and creating a beautiful retreat for her children and grandchildren.

She was never one to withhold an opinion, whether on everyday events or world politics. An avid reader, she kept three or four books—each with a bookmark tucked inside—beside her reading chair. Donna was an accomplished tennis player and skier. She especially loved Alta and treasured her time there with her ski buddies. She was impeccably put together, rarely leaving the house without her lipstick and always dressed to the nines.

Donna was deeply proud of her Irish heritage. She collected a library of books on Ireland, traveled there twice, and decorated her home with Irish treasures that reflected her love of its history, beauty, and spirit. She freely shared

her joy in Ireland with others, often sending visitors home with a book from her collection. She also carried the feisty spirit of the Irish, which those who knew her well will always remember.

Donna made friends easily. “I love your mom!” was something her daughters often heard from people who had known her only a short time, especially in her final years at her assisted living center. She was truly interested in people and their histories.

She devoted much of her life to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, serving as Primary President, MIA President, and in many other callings. Her faith remained deeply important to her throughout her life and brought her great comfort in her later years.

At age 84, Donna rekindled a romance with her high school boyfriend, Grant Clayburn, and they enjoyed many happy years together before his death.

Donna was preceded in death by her parents, her siblings, and her daughter, Melanie Ann Boswell. She is survived by her daughters, Laurel Caryn Rizzotto (Bernard), Sharyn Isom (Wade), and Diana Mulligan (Sean), as well as 10 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren.

The family extends sincere thanks to Dignity Hospice and to those at Capitol Hill Assisted Living for their compassionate care. They are especially grateful to Elisa, her dear friend, for her love and companionship.