

Roberta Elvira Meline Kelly

January 27, 1933 ~ May 28, 2022

Roberta Elvira Meline Kelly departed this life at the age of 89 on a beautiful spring morning just before dawn at her home in North Salt Lake, Utah, with her husband and daughter by her side. She lived a long and fulfilling life.

She was born in a humble one-room home during a fierce blizzard on January 27, 1933, in Burley, Idaho, to Irven and Elvira Nielsen Meline. She was an unexpected but welcome surprise following the birth of her twin brother, Robert. They were the first of six children and grew up as “Bob and Bobbie” or just “the twins.” Theirs was a close relationship throughout their lives, and it was a devastating loss for Roberta when Robert passed away in June 2021.

Roberta was a genuine Idaho farm girl and loved her childhood on the family farm. She was responsible for her fair share of chores and competed in the fields with her three brothers, Robert, Peter and Jay, to see who could accomplish the most work. She usually won. It was while working the land that she developed her characteristic work ethic that motivated her throughout her life and has been passed to the generations that have followed her. During one particularly harsh harvest and winter, her family adopted the motto “Keep on keepin’ on” from a poem, which Roberta quoted frequently throughout her life to inspire her children and grandchildren during times of difficulty.

Roberta loved nature and the outdoors. She enjoyed the sunshine and a good walk, as well as just sitting on her porch to watch the world go by. Her grandmothers taught her how to grow beautiful flowers, and when she was a young girl her father gifted her a few precious rows of farmland for her own flower garden. She continued this activity throughout the rest of her life, and cheerful flowers always marked the walkway to her home to welcome family and friends.

Although Roberta’s dedication to hard work made her rather serious in nature, she always enjoyed a good laugh, particularly when being teased by her grandchildren or regaling the family with stories of youthful hijinks with her siblings. Her parents taught her to be honest and trustworthy and to treasure these qualities in others.

Education was also important to her. Even though her own opportunities for formal, higher education were limited, she and her husband always encouraged their children and grandchildren in their educational and personal aspirations and generously subsidized their tuition expenses to help them attain their goals.

Roberta excelled in the workforce as a legal secretary for several Salt Lake City law firms during different stages of her life. She was especially meticulous in her attention to detail and was praised for her thoroughness and competency. During her early working years, she lived at the Beehive House, which served as a boarding home for young, single women, and made many lifelong friendships during her time there.

In 1956, Roberta’s brother Peter asked her to write to a fellow missionary, Walter Kelly, which she did, and the two finally met in person in 1957. They quickly became engaged during a visit to Lagoon and were married on

September 26, 1957, in the Salt Lake Temple. They settled in the Avenues area of Salt Lake City. Her four children—Mark, Steven, Tamara, and John—kept her constantly on her toes with their schooling, music, sports, and other activities. She served in various church callings, including as secretary for the stake patriarch and the bishop as well as Cub Scout leader and music chairperson. She and her husband frequently opened their home to those in need and taught their children to recognize and fulfill the needs of others, thus showing gratitude to God for their own blessings.

Roberta cherished the gift of music. She was a self-taught pianist who played and sang with her father and uncle in a regional dance band in southeast Idaho. She performed in trios with her younger sisters, Ora and Helen, then later with good friends Larae and Charlene. She was a member of the Tabernacle Choir for 20 years and was thrilled with the opportunity to travel the world, sharing her testimony of Jesus Christ. She filled her home with music and passed this love down to her posterity. She spent countless hours accompanying them at recitals and competitions and attending their concerts and performances. She also nurtured their other interests and talents. She spent an incredible amount of time supporting her children and grandchildren in their athletic pursuits, sometimes traveling long distances for games and events.

Roberta had a burning passion for family history from a young age. She compiled detailed histories of her ancestors long before it was a popular pastime and prior to the advent of FamilySearch, which has made that work so much easier. She worked hard to pass those stories on to her children and grandchildren and especially enjoyed traveling with some of her family to Scandinavia to visit many of her ancestors' towns and churches.

Roberta was a loving and supportive wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. She took immense pride in her children and found great joy in her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She loved spending time with them, baking her famous sugar cookies, singing at the piano, making memories, and teaching them countless life lessons that will continue to inspire them throughout their lives. We love you, Mom and Grandma, and we'll "keep on keepin' on," knowing that you are watching over us!

Roberta is survived by her loving husband, Walter; children Mark Kelly (Jill), Steven Kelly (Stacey), Tamara Thueson (Eric), and John Kelly (Kymberley); 15 grandchildren; 19 and counting great-grandchildren; brothers Peter and Jay Meline; and sister Helen Redd. She is preceded in death by her parents; twin brother, Robert Meline; and sister Ora Davis.

Her family would like to give special thanks to caregivers Angela, Izzy, Alex, and Ashlyn as well as the staff of the Lakeview Hospital Geriatric Unit, who kindly and patiently helped her maintain her dignity and some independence in the last months of her life.

Friends may join the family for visitation on Friday, June 3, 2022, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at Larkin Mortuary, 260 E South Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah and on Saturday, June 4, 2022, from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. at the Foxhill Ward, 200 S Eagle Ridge Dr, North Salt Lake, Utah prior to the funeral service, which will take place at 11:00 a.m. Interment will be at Wasatch Lawn Memorial Park, 3401 S Highland Dr, Millcreek, Utah.

The Zoom link for those who cannot attend in person is https://zoom.us/j/98519102167?pwd=OVMyNWc0SFdhaW5CbWpNQVVvT0NXUT09 Passcode:Foxhill or Webinar ID:985 1910 2167