

Tribute to Rachel Mary Rachal Dawson 10 January 1916 - 29 June 2016

by
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Rachel Dawson was born on January 10, 1916, in Corpus Christi, Texas. Rachel's ability to always look at the bright side no matter what came her way was gained from her mother, Lula Shaw **RACHAL**. Rachel, her two brothers, two sisters, and her Mom and Dad all survived "The Storm of 1919" when many did not. Rachel's family lost everything in the storm but the clothes they had on their backs. Rachel's mother was left with wearing a hideous hat with a large plume feather. All her mother could do was laugh at how comical she looked. Thus at the age of three started Rachel's legacy of never dwelling on the negative but always the positive.



It was only a year later that Rachel had to endure another hardship. At the age of four, she became blind in her left eye due to a doctor misdiagnosis. She accepted this problem, didn't dwell on the negative, and moved forward. Besides, she had one good eye and that was all she needed.

After graduating from Corpus Christi High School, Rachel moved to Falfurrias to start her own dance school. She built a one room dance studio on the east side of Falfurrias. She loved to dance. She taught ballroom dancing, tap dancing, ballet, and acrobatics. She was known to call square dancing and Quad Drill at local rodeos.

It didn't take long after Rachel moved to Falfurrias that she met her husband, James Henry Dawson. Jimmy had heard of this pretty new dance teacher that moved into town. It was only fitting she marry a rancher because it was in her **RACHAL** bloodline. Her cattle baron grandfather owned a multi-thousand acre ranch at White Point, Texas.

Soon after their marriage, Rachel had to weather another storm. She lost her first born son at the age of 18 months to leukemia. Undaunted, she went on to have four more sons. She believed that having a child was the most wonderful experience. She kept having babies hoping to have a girl, but all that she would bear were four more boys.

In the late 40's times were tough. The only car they had broke down and was unrepairable. The local Plymouth dealership in Falfurrias was having a new car raffle. Rachel purchased only one ticket hoping for a miracle. As Rachel and her two sons Frank and Bryan watched through the tennis court fence, the winning ticket was drawn. The announcer asked, "Is Rachel Dawson in the audience?" Rachel began screaming, hollering, and jumping up and down. Instead of leaving carless, they left with a brand new four door 1947 sedan.



Rachel's life span of 100 years covered many historical world events, world wars, the Great Depression, and every president since Woodrow Wilson. She was politically astute and couldn't wait to turn on Fox News every morning to see what occurred over night.

Rachel had a strong will to live. She endured a major hip replacement at the age of 99. In fact, she was in the hospital recuperating on the day of her 99th birthday. The doctor on call and about 15 nurses from the Spohn Hospital Rehab Center walked into the room and surprised her by singing happy birthday! The doctor then asked her what her secret to living a long life was?

She stated:

I loved to dance. In my younger years I taught dancing. Then, later I loved to go dancing with my husband. He and I both loved to go dancing, so we would go to parties almost every weekend and dance until midnight. My only regret was that we loved dancing so much we would leave the boys at home by themselves and not telling what they were doing while we weren't there.

Then, one of the nurses asked what advice she would give them, and she said:

Stay happy and don't dwell on the negative. It is important to give and do for others.

As we know, life is full of ups and downs. Ranch life is no exception to this rule. However, Jimmy and Rachel were able to withstand any adverse economic condition that was thrown their way. Rachel was always praying for rain and a good price for cattle. During cattle roundups, she would roll up her sleeves, pull her boot straps up, and help by cooking stew and beans for all the cowboys. She was a true rancher's wife at heart and loved their ranch land.

Rachel had a gift to always see the positive in any of life's storms. The silver lining to any cloud was all she sought. People were drawn to her because of this positivity that she exuded. They reached out to her for advice and respected her wisdom.

Looking back on her 100 years of life, besides leaving her sons to go dancing, I am sure she would only have one more regret ... She wouldn't live long enough to see Obama step down from office.

In Loving Memory



Rachel R. Dawson

January 10, 1916 - June 29, 2016