

Vivian Holliday Pennington
February 28, 1923, to February 21, 2023



Vivian Holliday Pennington (nee; Vivian Louise Holliday) joined her beloved “Preach” on their final journey together on February 21, 2023, just 7 days short of her 100th birthday. Vivian was the firstborn of seven children born to Millard Alvarez Holliday and Nina Maude Holliday (nee; Morrison). She was born in Edmond, West Virginia. She was predeceased by both parents and all of her siblings: Millard Alvarez Holliday II, Daniel Mays Holliday, Elizabeth Jane Holliday (infant death), Janice Rose Holliday (infant death), Lou Henry Holliday Viewig, Phyllis Holliday Fox. She was also predeceased by her beloved son Ron who is survived by his partner Richard Plante of NYC.

Vivian graduated from Nuttall high school at the age of 16 and was class Valedictorian. After graduation, she met the love of her life, R.C. “Preach” Pennington while working at the coal company store. Things were tough then and she said that her dad allowed her to keep the coin from her paycheck but she gave the paper money to the family. She married Preach in 1941 and he joined the US Navy to do his duty during WWII. She read in the paper that his ship had been sunk and had to wait for almost 6 weeks to hear whether he was safe or not and found out as he walked through the front door on survivor's leave. After the war and Preach's discharge from the service, their life together really started. Preach worked for Vicellio and Grogan on multiple construction projects in the West Virginia area including building the Charleston WV Airport. In 1947 they were blessed with their eldest child Ronald Charles Pennington (deceased) born in Charleston. When the job market started to wind down in West Virginia they decided to try a move to the wilds of New Mexico and arrived in Albuquerque in 1949. In 1952 they had their second child Daniel Holliday Pennington. In 1953 Preach took a position with the Thai Corps of Engineers in northern Thailand to build a dam for flood control. The contract was for 2 years and they extended it for a third. During the third year, their daughter Carolyn Anong Pennington (Ugarte) was born in Bangkok. In honor of her birth in Thailand, she was given a Thai middle name. It was at the close of this contract that Vivian and 2 other women from Albuquerque, Laura Newcomer, and Mary Yates, were given the honor of cooking dinner for the King and Queen of Thailand. She/they cooked chicken pot pie, as requested by the king, in an oven made of sheet metal and heated on charcoal braziers. The women were all rewarded with a small bag of gold-dipped coins by their majesties. The family next moved to Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and spent the next 5 years in that island paradise. Vivian hiked to the top of Adams Peak where it was said that Buddha first stepped into Ceylon, she went on safari with Preach and the family, dug for sapphires, spent time on a close friend's tea plantation, and climbed Sigiriya Rock. The next move was to Cairo, Egypt as Preach took a contract

position with the Department of State helping to drill Artesian water wells in the Western Saharan Desert. New adventures were had here as well – digging up mummies and exploring a desert area where it was estimated that it had only received one inch of rain in the past 100 years. As was to be her modus operandi, Vivian joined the American Women's Club and became the president — this was to be an occurrence for every organization she joined. From Egypt she returned to Albuquerque with her children while Preach spent the first of two years in Vietnam, the second year of that duty they moved the family back to Thailand where Vivian became President of the American Women's Club and rallied the women into modeling for the Thai Silk Company of Jim Thompson. This was a return to the modeling she had done during the war years for the Diamond Department Store in Charleston, WV. The family next moved to Vientiane, Laos for 10 years where she again won the presidency of the American Women's Club and spearheaded their charity efforts. In addition to those efforts, she taught conversational English for the Defense Language Institute and took over as Postmaster for the embassy Post Office. When Laos fell to the Communists in 1975, she and Preach were virtual hostages in Vientiane for a number of weeks until things could be sorted out for evacuation. Preach's last posting was to Manila in the Philippines where he retired in 1977. Upon retirement, they came home to Albuquerque where Vivian had a satisfying career in real estate, fleshed out both her and Preach's family histories, and joined The Daughters of the American Revolution. True to form, she successfully ran for and won the post of State Regent for the Lew Wallace Chapter. She wrote the history of the Lew Wallace Chapter and that book is listed in the Library of Congress. She lost Preach after 56 years of marriage and for a while dated Robert Hooper of Arizona. Eventually returning to Albuquerque, she spent her final years doting on her children Anong and her husband Cesar Ugarte, and Dan and Angela Pennington (nee: Petrino), her grandchildren Daniel H. Pennington II and Stephanie E. Pennington Corner and her husband Brian Corner. Up until the beginning of the Covid pandemic, she enjoyed playing bridge weekly with her partners Betty Lovering, Ruth Montoya, and Royce Fletcher at Palo Duro Senior Center.

The family thanks the caregivers from Home Instead to include among others Martha Lucero, Michelle Carpenter, Yvette Mathews, Heidi Markham, Marie Lakits and Roadrunner Hospice for their care and concern for Mom.

She will be missed by her children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and friends around the world who loved her stories of adventure in the jungles and deserts of the world.

She had a love of life and a mantra that gave her solace and that was that she “was not older than us – she had just been young a whole lot longer than we had.”