




# Sue Sword

1924 - 2021



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Sue J. Sword

1924-2021

Sue J. Sword passed away peacefully on October 17, 2021, at her home at age 96, just short of her 97th birthday.

Born on November 4, 1924, in Rosebud, Texas, the youngest of five sisters and one brother, Sue attended elementary and high school in Chilton, Texas. She graduated from Chilton High School in 1942 where she was honored as valedictorian of her graduating class. She received scholarships to Baylor University, Waco, Texas, and the University of Texas, Austin, Texas. As a teenager, Sue made the decision to work in the business world, despite receiving the scholarships, and chose to attend Central City Commercial College, Waco, Texas. "I wanted to be a business lady," Sue said, "and I didn't have time to be a college coed so I went to a commercial college in Waco for my business training."

After World War II, Sue traveled to Santa Maria, California, in 1945 where she met Erl Julian Sword, an army veteran and a Santa Maria native. They married on November 23, 1946, and enjoyed 49 years together until Julian passed away on March 11, 1995. Sue's five sisters, Elma Wright, Louise Riggs, Beverly Campbell, Sadie Aldridge, Minta J. Miller, and her brother, Roy Slay Jones, predeceased her.

After settling in Santa Maria in 1945, she began work as an administrative clerk at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Hospital, fondly referred to as Sisters' Hospital and the predecessor to Marian Regional Medical Center. This employment became her first contact with Marian Regional Medical Center. Seventy-two years later, the hospital renamed its Heart Center after Sue in appreciation of her lifetime of generosity and service.

In 1948, Sue's business career began to take shape in earnest when she began employment as an accountant for the Santa Maria Valley Railroad

Company, then owned by Captain G. Allan Hancock. This experience led her to other positions within the Hancock companies. Sue retired on July 1, 2000, after 52 years and 3-1/2 months of service. During that time, Sue also worked as Chief Clerk, Assistant Auditor, Auditor, Secretary-Treasurer, Manager, Vice President and then eventually as President of the Santa Maria Valley Railroad. From July of 1968 to her retirement, Sue served on the Board of Directors of Santa Maria Valley Railroad and the La Brea Ice Company. She also served as a corporate board member of Rosemary Farm from April of 1994 to March of 1997.

Throughout the years Sue remained a loyal and dedicated employee of the Hancock enterprises. Marian Hancock recognized Sue's professional skills and talents by appointing her on September 19, 1989, as the President and Manager of the Santa Maria Valley Railroad. Sue held this position until her retirement. During Sue's tenure and because of her leadership, the railroad prospered.

Sue always felt fortunate to have had Marian Hancock as her mentor and lifelong friend. In later years, Sue became Marian's confidant and she affectionately called her my My Susie. Because of her special relationship with the Hancock family, Marian named Sue as Co-Trustee for the Marian Hancock Charitable Trust. Sue had actively served in that capacity since 1993.

Sue's association with the Hancocks brought her close to Marian Regional Medical Center where she served in many ways. Sue was a charter member of the Marian Regional Medical Center Foundation, first formed in 1982. She served on the Board of Trustees from 1983 to 1989 and on the Community Board of Marian Regional Medical Center from 2002 to 2009. Sue followed Marian Hancock's example by continuing to support the Santa Maria community, particularly the Marian Regional Medical Center Foundation.

The Marian Regional Medical Center Foundation in its Cornerstone publication in Autumn 2003 featured Sue Sword. Ask anyone who has been around Santa Maria very long who Sue Sword is and they'll probably know. Appropriately so, the Cornerstone article is titled: Sue J. Sword: Legacy of a Lady.

The Foundation article points out that Not only does Sue make a lasting impression with her graciousness and intelligence, but she also is recognized as a lady who rolls up her sleeves and gets the work done! Sue served as president or board member of multiple civic organizations and had been the recipient of numerous awards and honors since she arrived in Santa Maria in 1945. Sue can best be described as the quintessential volunteer and community leader.

In lieu of flowers, please make a donation in Sue's memory to [your favorite charity](#).

To Plant Memorial Trees in memory, please visit our [Sympathy Store](#).

Published in Santa Maria Times on Oct. 29, 2021.

## MEMORIAL EVENTS

No memorial events are currently scheduled. To offer your sympathy during this difficult time, you can now have memorial trees planted in a National Forest in memory of your loved one.

Funeral services provided by

Dudley-Hoffman Mort, Crematory & Memory Gardens

[1003 E Stowell Rd](#)

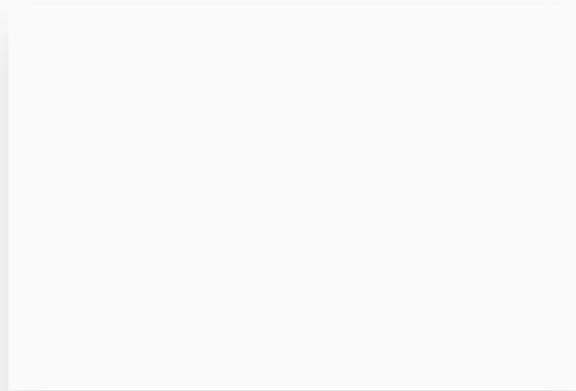
[Santa Maria, CA 93454](#)

[\(805\) 922-8463](tel:(805)922-8463)

**Plant Memorial Trees**

### MAKE A DONATION

Please consider a donation, as requested by the family.




### MEMORIES & CONDOLENCES

Guest Book sponsored by Dudley-Hoffman Mort, Crematory & Memory Gardens

What would you like to say about Sue?

Not sure what to say? 

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