



Mary Eleanor Early

April 23, 1942 - June 6, 2026

Mary Eleanor Early of Estill Springs, Tennessee passed from this life on Saturday, June 6, 2026, at her residence in Estill Springs at the age of 84 years.

A native of Thomaston, Maine, she is the daughter of the late Arthur V. and Eleanor Moore Cullen. Along with her parents, she is preceded in death by her husband, Ronald Joseph Early Sr. in 2020, brothers, Eddie and Freddie Cullen, sisters, Vera Hunt, Vada Soucey, Bonnie Fago and one granddaughter Desiree Bernarducci.

Per her wishes, the family has chosen cremation, and no services are being planned at this time.

Mary was a loving wife and mother. Her husband and children always came first. To her family meant everything and she would always make sure that they were happy, loved and well cared for, from the children down to the great grandchildren. She had the kindest, biggest heart and was always giving and helping others. One example is that she enjoyed making crafts, but they were always to give away to someone else. Those who loved her would describe her as kind, and helpful, a friend who would give you the shirt off her back. She always found a way to keep her family close, and she will be forever missed.

Her survivors include her children, Ronald Joseph (Chris) Early Jr. of Massachusetts, Michael Thomas Early Sr. of SanAntonio, Texas, Arthur James "Jimmy" Early of Estill Springs, Tennessee, Susan Marie Bernarducci

of Estill Springs, Tennessee, Jean Lynn (Michael) Berg of Covington, Kentucky, brother, Robert Thomas (Karen) Cullen of Maine, 17 grandchildren and 16 great grandchildren.

Online condolences may be made at www.davesculbertsonfuneralhome.com
Daves-Culbertson funeral home is honored to assist the family of Mary Early.

Tribute Wall

BC

“ *Brett Cullen sent a virtual gift in memory of Mary Early*



Brett Cullen - June 12 at 05:44 PM

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“When I think of Mom, one of the first things that comes to mind is a nickname that followed her for years.

Many of our friends called her “Sarge.”

The funny thing is, Dad was the one who served in the Air Force. Mom never wore a uniform, yet somehow she earned the military nickname. Anyone who knew her understood why.

She believed in respect, responsibility, and getting the job done. She wasn’t one for complaints or excuses. In fact, one of the things I admired most about her was her incredible strength. She could be in pain and never let on. After major back surgery, she was up and walking within days. Most people would have been focused on what they couldn’t do. Mom focused on what still needed to be done.

That was who she was.

She faced challenges head-on. She worked hard. She took care of her family. And she expected the same determination from the people she loved.

Our friends respected her enough to call her “Sarge,” but they loved her enough to keep coming back. Behind that strong exterior was a woman with a huge heart who would do anything for her children and grandchildren.

After Dad passed away, my sister Susan and I had the privilege of spending the last several years by Mom’s side, helping with appointments, daily life, and eventually hospice care. Through it all, we saw the same strength she had always shown us.

One of Mom’s greatest fears was being alone. After watching Dad die during the COVID years, that fear stayed with her. But in the end, she was never alone. Family gathered from near and far to be with her, to share stories, to laugh, to cry, and to say goodbye.

Looking around that room, it was impossible not to see the life she had built and the people she had touched.



Arthur Early (Jimmy) - June 12 at 05:07 PM

DL

My mother, Naoko K. Marriitt, thought the world of your mother. She was her best friend. I remember spending time with her in Okinawa. She was a very sweet and warm woman. She will be greatly missed. My heart goes out to all your family. May she be greeted by God and all her loved ones that passed before her.

Diana Marriott Lobzun - June 18 at 04:25 PM