

Gerfers helped run Loop store 31 years

Edna Mae DeKunder Gerfers, with her husband, owned and operated Gerfers' Store for 31 years.

Their business was at the corner of Jones Maltsberger and old North Loop [Road] from 1946 to 1977, when the airport bought the property as a necessary clear zone for landings.

Gerfers died Monday at age 75 in a hospital of cancer diagnosed three years ago.

A lifelong San Antonian, she was a descendant [relative] of John Coker, who fought in the Battle of San Jacinto.

Coker, her great-great-uncle, devised the plan to burn Vince's Bridge to prevent Santa Anna's retreat after the battle. For his service in the victory, Coker received 2,000 acres in a land grant from Anson Jones, last President of the Republic of Texas.

Gerfers graduated from Alamo Heights High School in 1931 and worked at S.H. Kress downtown for a short while. In 1934, she and Clarence A. Gerfers were married in Coker United Methodist Church.

"They were one of the last couples to be married in the original wooden church, which is now over 100 years old," said her son, Clarence A. "Butch" Gerfers, Jr. of San Antonio, president of Armstrong Plumbing Supply.

"My father worked for Handy Andy grocery stores during World War II and decided to open his own place when the war was over. The store was an anachronism; it was like an old general store when there were hardly any of these left. The store was a gathering place for the community until it was knocked down in 1978." A similar store, Bigs in Boerne, was owned by Archie Gerfers, a cousin.

When the couple retired, they traveled and spent much time visiting their four children.

"My mother was a very generous and giving person," said her son. "She would go without to give to her family and her friends.

"We always had big family gatherings at our home. Having 20 to 30 for a meal was not unusual. My mother liked to cook, and she was a good cook. After she became ill, she had a strong will to live, and she was tough. Until the last six weeks, she lived a full life."

"She was a Christian, and as a 60-year-plus member of Coker Methodist, was one of the members with the longest standing."

Her husband died in 1987.

Survivors are three daughters, Peggy Blucher of San Antonio, Connie Emmick of Dallas and Dorothy Scyrkels of Denver, Colo.; her son; 11 grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

Services will be at 11:00 a.m. Wednesday in Coker United Methodist Church with the Rev. Norman Roe and the Rev. Harold Sassman officiating. Burial in Coker Cemetery will be arranged by Porter Loring Mortuary.

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