Dorothy, who was always known as Dottie, was born on October 13, 1935 in Dallas, Texas, the youngest child of Lewis N. Payne and Irene Millette. She was raised in Dallas and lived just a short block away from another spelunker, Arthur Simpson.

After graduating from Woodrow Wilson High School in Dallas, she went off to the University of Texas. Her first roommate there was Jan Stephens, who introduced her to caving. Jan’s father was a geologist who took his family into every cave that he got close to. Jan, on learning that UT had a cave club, insisted that Dottie come along. And she did.

From the fall of 1953 until 1957 she was an active member of the University of Texas Speleological Society. After graduation she returned to Dallas, where she was wooed and won by Robert M “Bob” McClure, another spelunker she had met at UT. They were married on March 1, 1958 and then became parents to a daughter, Lisa, and a son, Larry.

In 1961, they returned to Austin so that Bob could resume his graduate studies in Electrical Engineering. While there they continued active friendships with a number of the old cavers they had known but did not resume active spelunking themselves. In 1963, after receiving his PhD, Bob and the family returned to Dallas.

Over the years, Bob and Dottie lived in Texas, New Jersey, Virginia, California, and Colorado. Their final move was to Arizona in 1998 where they spent the rest of their lives. Dottie fell in 2014 and broke her hip. A subsequent fall later that year required her going to assisted living. Dottie passed away December 14, 2018 at age 83.