Betty Margaret Smith



AUGUST 12, 2022

Smith (nee Bryden), Betty Margaret. On Friday, 12 August, our beloved Betty Margaret went to join the angels she loved so much. Born in Princeton in 1938, Mom was blessed to grow up in a sheltered bubble of innocence that would be nearly impossible to recreate today. Her friends were incredibly important to her, and the pictures of the group of girls at “the cabin,” as Mom often said, show a joy and freedom that are both beautiful and enviable.

She and her sister-friend, Sandra Tyson, were not only what Anne Shirley called “bosom friends,” but they also grew up to be each other’s maid of honour and the godmother to each’s eldest. Joyce, Mary, Mary Jane, Rill, Helen, Susan…these were the names of the women closest to Mom with whom she went to Moose Milk parties, played bridge, and lunched. Her friend, Pat Ferman, joined her circle later in life, and Pat’s keen intelligence and wit made her a wonderful match for Mom.

Besides Mom’s involvement in various choirs over the years, she was also very actively involved in politics. She had great pleasure traveling to Ottawa for a convention and skating (another love of hers) on the Rideau Canal.

Travel, too, loomed large for Mom. On the trip to Ottawa, she won one million airmiles, so in addition to her youthful trip to Europe with friends, she and her late husband, J. Gary Smith, traveled extensively, going through the Panama Canal twice, cruising Southeast Asia, cruising up the Amazon, and, of course, descending

on their Australian family. Mom quipped that the problem with the free airmiles was that dad believed every free flight should have an expensive cruise at the other end of it.

Mom’s biggest love, however, was children. She was a high school math teacher at Kitsilano and Balmoral before starting her own family. Mom made potato print cards with us, held whatever cockamamie party we’d conjured up, and made gift giving an art. When her grandchildren from Australia (Chloe, Violet, and Ashlyn) came to Vancouver, there was always a beautifully done, super cool box of art supplies for each of them. At Mara Lake, her older grandchildren (Rowan and Andrew), were introduced to math with fake money.

She is survived by her daughters, Shonagh (Dave, Rowan, Andrew), Leslie, and Meghan (Mark, Chloe, Violet, Ashlyn), and by friends and acquaintances old and new who appreciated her sharp mind and quick wit.

Calling herself “Decorative, not useful,” Betty lived a very successful and happy life. She lived and passed precisely on her own terms. Her father, Wilfred (Wilf) Bryden, and mother, Janet Thomson Bryden, as well as many deeply loved aunts and relatives have surely welcomed her into the angel choir.

In lieu of flowers, please donate to the Vancouver Sun’s Adopt a school program. Vancouver Sun Children's Fund Adopt-a-School 2022 by Vancouver Sun Children's Fund Society (fundrazr.com)

Messages of Condolence

Shonagh and Megan I have long tried to find out where your wonderful mother was as her email address seemed to be out of commission. I am so sorry for your loss. Betty was a wonderful person, intelligent and very classy while having, as you said, that wonderful wit. As it has been quite some time since her passing I am not sure you will even get this message but maybe you are still checking for condolences.
Judy Grimes (Gibbins)

— Alan and Judith Grimes

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Printed on November 2, 2026