

## **Ruth Dilley - Obituary**

## **Margaret Mary Beattie Kambour Obituary**

Margaret Mary Beattie Kambour died on Sunday, July 29, 2012, peacefully in her sleep at the St. Johnsbury Health and Rehabilitation Center.

Complications from a spinal compression fracture became too numerous and acute for her strong will and constitution to overcome. She is now in the next great adventure that awaits us all.

"Maggie," as she was affectionately known to her contemporaries, was born on March 19, 1920, to Allen and Irene Graves Beattie in St. Johnsbury. A nice piece of serendipity regarding her birthday is that March 19 is the day the swallows return to Capistrano. She loved feeding and watching birds and it was a "rare bird" indeed if she couldn't identify it.

She attended Portland Street School in St. Johnsbury where she completed eight grades in seven years. In her eighth grade year she won the Vermont State Spelling Bee and traveled to Washington, D.C., to compete at the White House with other state champions under the supervision of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. Gilding it not too lightly, she was the original spellcheck.

She received her secondary education at St. Johnsbury Academy where she began cultivating her interest in languages, notably French and Latin. In 1937 she graduated from St. Johnsbury Academy as the class Valedictorian. Her curiosity and thirst for knowledge were virtually insatiable.

She then continued her schooling at the University of Vermont. In 1941 she finished her degree work and graduated magna cum laude, majoring in French with concentrations in Latin and education. She was selected for membership in the Phi Beta



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Kappa society. Her ability to apply herself until the matter at hand was completed was formidable.

From 1942 to 1945 she taught in Jeffersonville. During that era a broader spectrum of responsibilities was placed on teachers as she taught not only French and Latin, but English and some business courses as well. She was multi-tasking fifty years before it became a buzzword.

She lived in Seattle, Washington, from 1945 to 1947, traveling there with her sisters, Irene and Allene. This redoubtable trio was known in St. Johnsbury as the "Beattie Girls." She worked in a shipyard as a bookkeeper and took courses at the University of Washington, including one on Constitutional law. Years later, one of her sons, who rather fancied himself a "smarty pants," had the temerity to cross swords with his mom on a point of Constitutional law. When she was finished slicing and dicing her impious child into quivering shreds that would have impressed any litigator, that particular boy knew the meaning of chastened. All right, that "particular boy" was yours truly.

She returned to Vermont in 1947 and took a job in St. Albans at Bellows Free Academy teaching French and Latin. In 1949 she met Theodore Kambour Jr. and in 1950 she married our dad, her partner for 55 years. They moved to Lancaster, New Hampshire, to accommodate his career. While there, my two big brothers were born, Peter George in 1951 and James Dodge in 1953. In 1953 the young family moved to Barton.

As it is with most mothers, family was of paramount importance to our mom. She shelved her career until her youngest son entered first grade. Son number three, Thomas Charles, arrived in 1955 and number four, Theodore III, made the scene in 1959. Chiefly a blessing, certainly a trial at times, her four boys were her biggest joy and focus in life.

In 1965 she returned to education as the French teacher at Orleans High School. Two years later Lake Region Union High School's doors opened and she was installed as the French and Latin teacher. Additionally, she was the faculty adviser for the French and Latin clubs. Although Latin was dropped from the

school curriculum, she continued as a French teacher/faculty adviser until 1984 when she retired and proceeded to an active and fruitful post-career life.

Not surprisingly, much of her "golden years" activity involved learning and education. She attended Elderhostels on both sides of the pond, continuing her quest for knowledge and cultural enrichment. She tutored a handful of former students who felt the need for increased fluency in French. She also did volunteer stints with the court-related Guardian Ad Litem program and the sheriff department's RSVP Operation call-in. Naturally, she was very involved in ONERTA (the Orleans and Northern Essex Retired Teachers Association), serving as local president and on the state board. She traveled extensively with Dad, again on both sides of the pond.

The marathon has often been used as a metaphor for life. Mom, you ran the race as well as anyone. Our unwavering moral compass, our bastion of strength and an endless source of unconditional love, you will live forever in our hearts. If this tribute seems a tad hyperbolic, please forgive a grieving son who loved his mother dearly and esteemed her to the point of awe. You inspired us, Mom. We will all meet in the clearing someday.

Our mom is survived by her sister Irene Beattie Trenholme of St. Johnsbury; her son Peter and his wife, Carol, and their son, Nicholas, all of Westford, Massachusetts; her son James of Barton and Glover; her son Thomas of Barton; her son Theodore III and his wife, Sandy, of East Lyndon, and their son, Cory of Newport; a great-grandson, Ethaniel Theodore, Cory's son; her brother-in-law Russell Smith of South Carolina and Chautauqua, New York; her niece Penelope Smith Schwartz and her husband, Eric, of northeast Pennsylvania; her niece Tracy Smith Peters and her husband, Scott, of Lake Placid, Florida, and Mayville, New York; her nephew Tyler Trenholme of New Gloucester, Maine; her nephew Gilbert Trenholme and his wife, Sandy, and their children, Megan and Nathan, all of Waterford; her sister-in-law Eleanor Kambour Sableski of Durham, North Carolina; her niece Nancy Sableski and her partner, Annie, of Jamaica Plains, Massachusetts; her nephew Steven Sableski of Charlotte, North Carolina; and by her niece Sarah Sableski of Wilmington, North

Carolina. She was predeceased by her husband of 55 years, Theodore Kambour Jr.; her sister Allene Beattie Smith; and by her sister-in-law Ruth Kambour Lang.

You have earned your rest, Mom. Love forever.