



Gertrude Jean (Willard) Whitehill passed away very peacefully on Friday, August 19th, in the Kirby home where she had lived and loved for 64 of her 86 years on a beautiful summer afternoon in the loving embrace of her family.

Trudy was born May 1, 1930 in Newport, Vermont and grew up in West Charleston. She graduated from Lyndon Institute in 1948. She lived and worked for a time in Boston, working for the Red Sox organization. The next phase of her life began when she met a handsome young "Pony Boy" named Bernie Whitehill. She danced into his heart and remained there for the next 36 years. They were married in 1952 and she came home to Kirby, where she was a busy young farm wife and mother to Donna, Bradley, Cheryl and Gary.

Trudy worked at the Goss Company in St. Johnsbury, Maple Grove Farms for nine years and then for many years at Fairbanks Scales. It was during this time she earned the nickname "Mario" for her rapid trips to work in the morning.

Trudy had a caring, giving, generous heart. She cared for Bernie with his health issues until his death in 1988. Three weeks after Bernie's passing, her life would take another turn when her youngest son Gary was diagnosed with MS at the age of 26. For the next 18 years, she devoted herself to his care, travelling to Florida for months at a time to help him manage in his home, helping him move to Salt Lake City, Utah, taking him to Germany for treatment at a special clinic, and sharing a trip to Maui, Hawaii with him. She helped him make the most of all his life, whether driving him on steep mountain roads to Park City, Utah to take a run with the Olympic bobsled training team or holding her breath while he went hang gliding or other assisted sports. He did not tell her he had been skydiving until he had made several jumps. She was a tenacious fighter for all of his needs. When Gary returned to Kirby, a specially outfitted apartment was built on to her home and she continued her devoted care until his death in 2005.

Trudy was known for sending wonderful packages to her children and grandchildren, containing everything from fishing poles to fully frosted cakes. Her cookies were happily devoured by the grandchildren as soon as they arrived. You would never leave her home hungry if she had anything to say about it. She rarely showed up to visit without at least a fully cooked turkey and a bowl of her famous potato salad. She loved the simple country pleasures in life, nature, birds, heifers grazing in the pasture across from her home, lilacs in the spring and beautiful leaves in the fall. She enjoyed spending time with her sister Isabel and husband Dwight in Orleans or heading out to Alan and Doreen Hubbard's on many an evening after Bernie's passing. She was an avid fan of "The Bold and the Beautiful" and rarely missed an episode.

Trudy is probably best known as the "Worrier in Chief" of her family. Her care and her thoughts were always for others. She was an involved and loving grandmother to Jeff and Allie, and was thrilled to be "Gigi" to Madden, Linley and Easley.

She handled her 2010 Parkinson's diagnosis with grace and dignity and kept her sense of humor through some very challenging days. Her medical conditions would limit her mobility, but not her spirit.

Trudy is survived and will be missed forever by her children Donna Whitehill, Bradley Whitehill and Cheryl McMahan, all of Kirby, her grandchildren Jeff McMahan and his wife Michelle and their children Madden, Linley and Easley of Colchester, Allison McMahan of Stratton, her brother Anson Willard of Newport and nieces Lisa Burke, Loraine Limlaw,

Mona Gadwah and Helen Bicknell and her nephews Wayne Willard, Scott Willard and Rod Roberts.

She was predeceased by her husband Bernie Whitehill, her sisters Helen Willard and Isabel Roberts and her brothers Gordon and Stanley Willard.

Special thanks to the many loving caregivers who helped make it possible for Trudy to live all of her days in the home that she loved: Marilyn Williams, Mary Smith, Connie Simons, Ellen Gray and all the helpers from Caledonia Home Health and Hospice.

A celebration of Trudy's life will be held in Kirby at a date to be announced by her family. Memorial contributions, marked for 'Hospice' could be directed to Caledonia Home Health, 161 Sherman Dr., St. Johnsbury VT 05819.