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Barbara Ostenkamp Underwood

June 12, 1925 - Dec. 23, 2019

Barbara Ostenkamp Underwood, age 94, died peacefully on December 23, 2019 at Grace Ridge Retirement Community in Morganton, NC. Born on June 12, 1925 in Richmond, VA, she was the second daughter of Theodore and Marie Rosa Otterbourg Ostenkamp, grew up during the difficult years of the depression, and was cared and loved by her large extended family.

Barbara, known as Bobbie to her myriad of friends and Mums to her adoring immediate and extended families, was loved and appreciated for countless reasons. She was fun, hospitable, accepting, engaging, nurturing, encouraging, loving, positive, perceptive, wise, curious, energetic, beautiful, stylish and funny. From a young age, singing and music were a source of great joy her entire life. With her beautiful soprano voice, she was passionate about singing in choruses in almost every community she lived in, the most renowned being the Asheville Symphony Chorus and the last being the chorus at Grace Ridge Community.

Trained as a nurse, Bobbie married a doctor, devoted herself to her children, her friends, her church, then to her second husband Raymond Underwood and her ever-expanding extended family. Bobbie's strong, abiding love for the Episcopal Church

expressed itself in various ways over her lifetime. Her favorites were singing in the choirs, working with young people in the Episcopal Young Churchmen, ministering through the Lay Academy and studying theology through the Education for Ministry. She greatly enjoyed people, and music, the arts, nature, gardening, the beach, the

mountains, traveling and all things “beautiful.” Mums, our Matriarch, personified the value of living in the “precious present,” a life lesson that she shared with all of us.

She is survived by her best friend and husband Raymond Underwood, whom she shared life with for 38 years, by her children, Marie Kirksey Riggs (David) of Raleigh, Bill Kirksey (Marcy) of Midland, MI, by grandchildren Ashley Riggs (Beth Martin), Kelly Riggs Sandberg (Keith), Gresham Lee Riggs (Jennifer), Michael Johnson (Alysia), Laura Johnson, son-in-law Joe Johnson, by seven great grandchildren, and by Raymond’s children, Julia Underwood of Valdese and Trip Underwood of Asheville. Bobbie was predeceased by her beloved sister Marie Eteson, by two dearly loved children, Robert Gresham Kirksey, Kate Horner Kirksey Johnson, and by former husband Dr. William A. Kirksey.

Even in declining health with Alzheimer’s, Bobbie and her family were blessed that her happy and fun loving spirit remained essentially intact and delightful. Bobbie’s family is grateful for the loving care given her by Grace Ridge Retirement Community and Burke Hospice. A Celebration of her Life will be held at Grace Episcopal Church, 303 South King St. in Morganton on Sunday, February 16 at 2:00 with a reception following in the adjoining Grace Parish House. In lieu of flowers, please send donations in her memory to Grace Episcopal Church (303 S. King St., Morganton, NC 28655), to either the Music Ministry or the Camp Henry Scholarship Fund.

Sossoman Funeral Home and Crematory Center is assisting the family with the arrangements.

Tribute Wall

No tributes added yet.