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Margaret "Peggy" Griffin Seitz

Feb. 13, 1922 - Dec. 12, 2013

Margaret "Peggy" Griffin Seitz, 91, of Morganton died peacefully on Thursday, December 12, 2013, at Grace Ridge Retirement Center. She was held in the light of love by her Grace Ridge family, as well as her personal family, throughout her passage.Peggy was born in Amherst, Massachusetts on February 13, 1922, the youngest of four children of Michael Joseph Griffin and Bridget Sullivan Griffin. Peggy's parents emigrated from Ireland to America in the early 1900's. Her father was a construction worker and her mother, a homemaker. While Michael and Bridget had limited educational opportunities, they understood its importance and made sure all their children achieved post secondary degrees. Peggy's mother taught all the children to read before they started school; the love of reading and books continued for Peggy throughout her life. Peggy was a 1939 graduate of Amherst High School, Amherst, MA, and received her nursing degree from Providence Hospital in Holyoke, MA in 1944 becoming a Registered Nurse. During her professional career she worked at several doctor's offices in Morganton and at Grace Hospital and Valdese General Hospital. She later became a supervisor at Broughton Hospital where she worked for ten years, retiring in 1987.Peggy met her husband, Howard, during World War II while he was stationed with the U.S. Army Air Corp at Westover Field in MA and she was a nurse at Providence Hospital in Holyoke, MA. Following the War's end, Peggy and Howard moved to Morganton where Howard returned to his job with Drexel Furniture Co. Although Peggy adopted Morganton as her home, she made sure the family had cultural influences that were wide and varied. She and daughter Linda

made regular trips to visit her family in New England. Linda remembers fondly the trips by train each summer, the excitement of visiting New York City with boat trips around Manhattan, the view from the top of the Empire State Building and stage shows featuring the Rockettes at Radio City Music Hall. The contrast of spending a few weeks in a New England college town each summer left an impression that

lasted all year.Peggy found the relocation from New England to an industrial town in the south challenging. Morganton, in 1946, lacked opportunities in higher education. Burke County was a dry county, offering little entertainment; Peggy and Howard got together with friends for house parties on weekends, cooking and playing cards. Additionally, they traveled regularly, especially enjoying trips to South Carolina and Florida beaches.Finding housing in post-war Morganton was challenging. Peggy and Howard lived sequentially with relatives until finding their own apartment. Peggy said they moved often in the first years of their marriage, once four times in one year, as they sought better housing.

Peggy worked first at Grace Hospital. As she recalled, the hospital, still racially segregated in 1946, assigned her to the Negro ward, stating that, since she was a "Yankee" she wouldn't mind. In fact, she didn't mind and made life-long friendships with staff assigned to work with her.In addition to her professional employment, Peggy was engaged socially and civically in her community. She regularly volunteered for the March of Dimes and the Easter Seals campaign. She was a Girl Scouts sponsor for Linda's scout troop. She was a long-time member of the Morganton Woman's Club, serving as club President from 1976-1978. She was a member of the Elks Club women's group, the Does, and a member of the Moose Ladies Auxiliary. She was a life-long Democrat who worked in her precinct and in the county organization.Peggy was well known for her fashion sense and her jewelry collection, always being perfectly turned out for every occasion. An artist by nature, she drew in pencil in her high school years and, in later life, painted in oils. Both she and her home were always attractive and welcoming. She always enjoyed a good laugh with friends and refused to take anything too seriously, feeling that, as long as she could laugh, things would be okay.

Following retirement, Peggy kept busy with a local Red Hat club and as a volunteer at Blue Ridge Health Care, contributing over 6,500 hours of volunteer time. She wrote

profile pieces for the News Herald for a time as a Neighborhood Reporter.Peggy's husband of fifty-six years, Howard Lawrence Seitz of Morganton, died in 2001. Peggy and Howard had one child, Linda Seitz Fowler, of Asheville, N.C., and one granddaughter, Jessica K. Fowler. Jessica and her husband, James Krissel, live with their two children, Katherine Fowler Krissel and Walter Fowler Krissel, in Cornwall

Bridge, CT. Peggy's brothers, Michael Joseph Griffin, Jr. and Timothy Griffin, and sister, Katherine Griffin O'Rourke, are previously deceased. Peggy is survived by a number of nieces and nephews and their descendants.Peggy was a member of First Baptist Church of Morganton.Friends are welcome at the Celebration of Peggy's life, to be held Saturday, February 1, 2014, at 2:00 p.m. in the Table Rock Room at Grace Ridge, 500 Lenoir Rd., Morganton, NC.

Memorial contributions may be made to Burke Hospice and Palliative Care Center, 1721 Enon Road, Valdese, NC 28690.

Tribute Wall

No tributes added yet.