



Eleanor Gorss

May 20, 2021

Eleanor Baty Gorss, 97, beloved by all her family, passed away peacefully Thursday morning, May 20th, 2021, at home in Gulf Shores, Alabama. Her family wishes to thank the staff of Community Hospice of Baldwin County, Alabama, for their gentle, loving care of Eleanor over several weeks.

Born on April 28th, 1924, in Maryland, NY, Eleanor was the fifth of seven children born to Ray Don and Beatrice (Ellithorpe) Baty. The family moved to Bloomingburg, NY, and stories abound of Eleanor and sister Jeanette singing at church, square dancing, and roller skating everywhere. Growing up, their father grew and raised a lot of their food, appreciated even more so during the depression. Eleanor attended early school years in Bloomingburg, NY, where her father was teacher and principal. In 1941 she graduated from Middletown High School where writing poetry was a favorite pursuit. She went to work in the accounting department of a Middletown bank and loved it. She said it was “like playing”. When she was just 15, Eleanor met Donald Gorss, of Montgomery, NY, at a Grange square dance. They started keeping company. They went fishing together. He taught her to drive his Model T. On July 8th, 1942, they became husband and wife, settling in Montgomery. A few months later, in the midst of WWII, her young husband enlisted. While he trained to become a pilot in the US Army Air Forces, Eleanor traveled to see Don wherever she could. In 1944, their first of four children was born. After Don came home in 1945, making ends meet running the small airport in Montgomery was a struggle. Always rooted in faith and family, in early 1949,

now with two children, and one expected, they changed course. Don and his brother Gerald partnered in opening Gorss Chevrolet in Cornwall-on-Hudson, NY. In 1950, with their three little ones, they moved to Cornwall. The move involved Eleanor and her brood being “interviewed” to rent a house on Storm King Mountain. After a couple tense “kid” moments, it all worked out and both parties gained instant playmates for their children in this idyllic paradise. In 1953 they welcomed their fourth child.

We were raised on a foundation of love, discipline, security and fun. We learned by example and made memories we treasure. As little kids, we remember Mom dressing up to go out with Dad. We did a lot of things as a family unit, unaware of the steadfast role our Mother played in all of it. We had exciting adventures on ponds, rivers, lakes and mountains. Summer suppers together usually included fresh sweet corn and tomatoes. We knew all our Grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins, gathering with them often.

Thanksgiving and Christmas were extra special family events. In 1958 we moved back to Montgomery. By then, Dad had taken up golf and then, so did Mom – a pass-time they enjoyed together into their eighties. She was a natural, playing all the time, with Dad, in foursomes, and excelling in league competition – even scoring a hole-in-one one time on her home course at The Osiris Country Club in Walden, NY. In the off-seasons, she and her sister Lois volunteered as Brownie troop leaders and also participated together in a competitive bowling league.

In the 1960s, Indian Lake in the Adirondacks became a focal point for our family, and still is. Mom and Dad had become Grammy and Grampy and spent a lot of the summer there. Their six Grandchildren grew up making memories, too, with lake activities, hiking, campfires, and Grammy’s abundant blueberry pancakes and tollhouse bars. Afternoons might often see the two Grandparents slipping away for a peaceful sail on the lake. All through their lives, Mom was close to her sisters and Indian Lake was the perfect place for them to gather. In 1989 our parents built a home on the intra coastal waterway in Gulf Shores, AL, permanently escaping northeast winters. And now they

could golf year round! Starting in 1996, and well into the 21st century, 15 Great-Grandchildren arrived on the scene. Family traditions our parents started in the 40s continued, and will continue, on through the generations at Indian Lake. At the heart of it all was our Mother.

As a lifelong member of the Presbyterian Church, bible study and prayers of all kinds were also regularly a part of Mom's day. Throughout her life she was sharp on facts, figures and family history, and an eyewitness for much of it. She had many stories to tell and knew everyone's birth date on both sides of her large extended family. In later years, especially on birthdays, Aunt Eleanor kept in touch with many of her nieces and nephews. "And that's the story of Eleanorie", she used to say. A life of genuine goodness, faith, loyalty and love. A life well-lived.

Eleanor was predeceased by Donald, her husband of 68 years (2010); her son, Jeremy, (2019); her parents; and all her siblings (Ray Don, Allen Lee, Dorothy Sickel, Lois Wolf, Jeanette Baxter, Beatrice Eriksen) and in-laws of that generation.

She is survived by her children, Jeff (Peggy) Gorss, Jane (Greg) Prine, Lois (John) Nixon; her grandchildren, Dan (Linda) Gorss, Karen (Alex) Benko, Connie (Pat) Wall, Carrie (Zack) Brocker, Travis (Stacy) Nixon, Jamie (Kevin) Saff; her great grandchildren, Meghan, Sarah, Caitlin, Adriel, Klara, Maddie, Ellie, Liam, Ava, Wyatt, Weslee, Ajax, Avery, Jenna and Brayden; and her many nieces and nephews.

The Family will gather for a memorial celebration at Indian Lake later July 24th. Burial will be July 28th at Riverside Cemetery, Montgomery, NY.

Donations in Eleanor's memory may be made to Community Hospice Foundation of Baldwin County, 1450 N McKenzie St, Foley, AL 36535 or First Presbyterian Church of Gulf Shores, PO Box 256, Gulf Shores, AL 36547.

Tribute Wall



“ *Lynne E Jacks lit a candle in memory of Eleanor Gorss* ”



Lynne E Jacks - July 21, 2021 at 11:58 AM