



Joan A. Beard

January 3, 1937 - January 17, 2015

Obituary of Joan Beard

Two weeks after her 78th birthday, the stage darkened for Joan Beard on January 17; in preparation for her new role performing in God's kingdom. Her chosen hometown of The Villages, FL is merely the last of a series of moves as distant as London and Okinawa; from her former home in Chalfont, PA.

Born January 3, 1937 in Scranton, PA to William Edgar Duncklee and Lenore Arleine Davies, Joan learned to dance, laugh, and love in the company of her brother Donald. As she grew to love ballet under the instruction of Connie Reynolds, Joan adopted the rigorous training and discipline required to excel, and at 17, after graduating from Scranton Technical High School in 1954, Joan was one of two Americans selected to attend the Royal Ballet School in London. In this cosmopolitan environment, she enjoyed her independence and the friendship of both students and international travelers. Her Mother's sudden death a year later brought Joan back to Scranton, and dimmed her hopes of a professional ballet career.

In Fayetteville, NC, Don introduced her to a fellow Army officer, but Joan instead found his Air Force friend more to her liking; and in 1957 married

Harry Robert Beard; settling in Fayetteville; where their sons Mark and Scott were born. Military life required moves to South Carolina, Alabama, and Virginia; which were culturally distinct from her Pennsylvania roots -the move to Okinawa in 1966 was life-changing. Apart from family and friends, she could have chosen isolation among the officers base housing, but instead chose to live off-base in a solid concrete home that had but one feature -- an expansive view of the South China Sea. Joan immersed herself in the local culture, teaching English to the Okinawans, and learning Japanese language and culinary skills in return.

Joan returned to a different United States in 1970; settling into a new home on the water (albeit a canal) in Alexandria, VA. In 1973, after Harry retired from active service, Joan and family moved to Doylestown, PA. While a neglected stone farmhouse came to new life under her patient efforts, Joan began teaching ballet to serious students at the Budzysnski and Dance Elite Studios. In 1990, after her divorce, Joan moved to Chalfont before starting her own studio (Dance Techniques). In later years she taught at the Professional Dance Academy of Montgomery County in Willow Grove. Her students remember both her love and gentle but firm insistence on proper form. She also worked tirelessly at Mark's studio, applying her gentle touch and discriminating eye to the finishing of stained glass windows, a process she loved.

In 2012 after enduring enough PA winters, she and Sharyn Gatter moved to a new home in The Villages, FL, where they could play tennis, swim, play billiards, and enjoy a new beginning. Health challenges followed close behind, but her perseverance and Sharyn's support made it possible to celebrate with friends till the very end.

Joan had a thirst for beauty and a quiet grace that belied her desire for excellence in all of her endeavors; her acceptance of God's blessings and challenges is an example for all who knew and loved her.

Joan is survived by her sons Mark (Allison) and grandchildren Duncan, twins Ashley and Alyssa in Doylestown; and Scott (JoAnn) and granddaughter Alexandra in Lake Ariel, PA. She was preceded in death by her mother, brother, and father.

Memorial Services will be held in FL and PA. On Saturday, February 7, 2015, a memorial service will be held at New Life Presbyterian Church, 201 LaVista Street, Fruitland Park, FL 34731; beginning at 11:00 AM. A reception will follow.

Donations in Joan's name can be made to New Life Presbyterian Church at the above address.

Online condolences may be left at www.beyersfuneralhome.com

Arrangements entrusted to Beyers Funeral Home and Crematory, Lady Lake, FL

Tribute Wall



“ *Joan A. Beard*

February 05, 2015 at 12:00 AM