



ALICE ANNA BRETT SAUNDERS

August 24, 1922 - May 20, 2016

Alice Anna Brett Saunders passed her last days with the grace and love with which she lived her life, sharing cheerfulness and gratitude with her family and caring nurses in the Hospice Unit in Cape Canaveral Hospital, where she died on May 20, 2016. Alice was born on August 24, 1922, in Buffalo, NY, to Hazel Russell and King William Brett, Sr. She reveled in the fact that her father was the manager of the ornate and historic Shea's Buffalo Theater, and she could attend performances and films whenever she wished. During WWII, she worked on the assembly lines at the Buffalo Chevrolet plant which had been converted to making GE airplane engines. She met her future husband, George Jerome Saunders, when he moved from Tennessee to work at the Curtiss-Wright airplane factory, and rented a room in her parents' home. After the war, she earned her PHT (Putting Hubby Through) at the University of Florida and became an ardent Gator fan, going to all the Gator home football games from 1962 until she and George retired to the beautiful and cool mountains of Sapphire, NC. They discovered that the mountain area not only had beautiful scenery and weather, but the communities were friendly, close-knit and full of activities. Alice was always happiest when she could bring many branches of her family together. Some also fell in love with life in the mountains and over time, retired close by.

All her life she was intrigued by stories of her ancestors and how they came to America. Finally, on a trip to Canada, she delved into the National Archives in Ottawa and found confirmation that her great-grandfather had received a land grant for his military service with Lord Wellington during the Napoleonic Wars. With the new knowledge, she was able to hire researchers in England to search further back to the 1500's to discover that her ancestors had owned land and a tanning operation. She loved to tell about one ancestor who was burned at the stake. On her 90th birthday, one of her nephews presented her with a large album of documentation he had uncovered by thorough genealogical research. Alice was an avid reader of historical fiction, with her most favorite genre, the Regency/Napoleonic War. When she found the pages of documentation of medals awarded to her great-grandfather for his valor on the battlefield at Waterloo, it was a treasure to her beyond words.

Alice was an insatiable traveler, loving to experience the places she had read about or seen in the many movies she'd seen. Once she traded houses with a family in a London suburb and invited her sisters-in-law and daughter's family to join her and George for 3 weeks of sight-seeing, again bringing all the family together she could. She continued traveling after she became a widow, with friends to Australia, alone to Turkey, to Tunisia with British friends she had made in Turkey, and took her daughter's family with her to China. She joined her daughter & son-in-law for a month roaming Europe, including a wedding of a pen-pal's daughter in a French village, then a month's trip driving all over England, Wales, and Scotland visiting the friends she had made in Turkey, finding the charming hamlet where her Brett ancestors had lived and discovering by accident on a chance diversion to the Isle of Skye, where her Scots-Irish McCorkel (MacCorquedale) ancestors had come from. On another month's trip around Ireland, she reveled in visiting the little one-pub hamlet in far north Donegal where her grandmother had once lived. At the age of 88,

she accompanied a dear friend and her daughter to stay in a timeshare on Waikiki Beach and on another occasion to Thailand. Her indomitable spirit amazed and inspired us all.

Alice was predeceased by her parents, siblings Russell Balz, Lorraine Balz, (whose father died in the Spanish Flu epidemic of 1918), and beloved brother, King William Brett, Jr. She is survived by her beloved and loving daughter Anne and son-in-law Robert Byrd of Merritt Island, FL, granddaughter Kathy Byrd Hohn (Todd) and great-grandson Craig of Altus AFB, OK, and grandson Kevin Byrd (Valerie) and soon-to-be born great-grandson of Dearborn, MI In recent years, Alice was the family's matriarch to many dearly loved and adoring nieces and nephews.

A memorial service to celebrate her life will take place in July in her mountain Church at Sapphire in Sapphire, North Carolina.

Tribute Wall



“ ALICE ANNA BRETT SAUNDERS

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