



Geraldine "Gerry" Wyatt

December 4, 1920 - March 23, 2016

On March 23, 2016, at her St. Albans home, Geraldine Mae Pettit Wyatt, 95, gently said farewell to the family members at her bedside, then took the hand of her late husband Bill who guided her to be with him in Heaven.

Gerry was born in the year that women first voted, on December 4, 1920 to dentist Dr. Joseph Pettit and Anna Mae Harrah Pettit who originally were from Amma, West Virginia. She lived her entire life in St. Albans, growing up in a house that still stands on Sixth Avenue, directly across from what now is the Save-A-Lot grocery. She graduated from St. Albans High School in 1937 and until her passing was the school's oldest living former band member. Two years after her graduation her mother died suddenly, leaving Gerry as a second mother to her twelve-year-old little sister Joanna who many times described Gerry as the second mother that she needed following that untimely tragedy.

Gerry played college basketball while attending Kanawha College, which soon merged with Morris Harvey College (now the University of Charleston) in Charleston. During one of her games she caught the eye of Bill Wyatt. They were wed on February 7, 1941, a marriage that lasted fifty-eight years, until Bill's death in 2000. Their daughter Betsy was born the following year and was just eighteen months old when World War II sent Bill to Italy. During the war years Gerry worked as a secretary at Union Carbide until Bill arrived home in

1946, stepping off the victory train in Charleston to Gerry's embrace. It was the fifth anniversary of their wedding day.

Following the War, their son Joe joined the family and, when he was five, Gerry began a thirty-two year career as a kindergarten teacher, sixteen years each in her home-based private kindergarten and in the Kanawha County public school system. During a two-year hiatus from teaching, she helped organize & wrote curriculum for a pre-school program that preceded Head Start. She worked with the program's Experience Centers in the communities of MacCorkle in Lincoln County, Ventreux in Putnam County and Twist About in Clay County. Additionally, she trained Head Start teachers at both West Virginia University and Marshall University. She retired in 1984, with her last teaching job having been at Weimer Elementary in St. Albans. During her teaching career she returned to school and completed her bachelor's degree in 1964 and later earned a master's degree as well. In the late 1960s she received a scholarship for a summer's training at University of Maryland. She was a member of the Kanawha County Association for Supervision in Curriculum Development, the National Education Association, West Virginia Education Association and the State Association for Childhood Education which she served as vice president from 1970-72.

Gerry was an active member of her community. She was a life-long member of St. Andrew United Methodist Church where she was honored for seventy years' service in the choir. She mentored many children to their confirmations and was active in United Methodist Women. She was a member of Delta Kappa Gamma teachers' honorary, her neighborhood Tri-Acres Civic Club, Pollyanna Sewing Club, Homemakers' Club, Sassy Singles, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Community Music Association and she was honored for her work with Senior Corps volunteers. An additional special interest was in hosting international students through the American Field Service. One of them, Yoshikazu Sakogawa of Japan, lived with the family for

a year in 1963-64. A second was Josef Feichtinger in 1975-76.

After nearly fifty years living in the home they built in 1950, Bill and Gerry moved off the hill in 1999. A massive stroke left Bill incapacitated that same year, and Gerry cared for him through his difficult final days. Following his passing, Gerry continued with her many community pursuits and family visits, spending special time with her daughter Betsy's family in North Canton, Ohio and son Joe's family in Hurricane.

As Gerry's health declined her activities dwindled to a precious few. Her final visit to Betsy's home in Ohio occurred in 2013 when she attended Betsy and Tom's fiftieth wedding anniversary celebration. Happy, but very weary following that trip, she remarked, "I think my traveling days are over." And they were, with the exception of day trips to her granddaughter Heather's home in Huntington and to Joe and Barbara's home in Hurricane where she enjoyed family reunions and birthdays. Her last outing was a Christmas Day visit to Joe and Barbara's home where she delighted in watching the excitement of her great granddaughters.

Gerry is survived by her sister Joanna Hopkins and Joanna's husband George and their children who were very close to Gerry. She also is survived by her daughter Betsy Douce and Betsy's husband Rev. Tom Douce and their son John Douce and his wife Deborah, Betsy and Tom's son Ben Douce and his wife Jennifer and their sons (Gerry's great grandsons) Wyatt and Charlie, and by Betsy and Tom's son David Douce. Gerry also is survived by her son Joe Wyatt and his wife Barbara and their son Sgt. Daniel Wyatt and his wife Lori, and Joe and Barbara's daughter Heather Smith and her husband Jason and their daughters (Gerry's great granddaughters) Katelynn and Kiersten Mae, the latter being Gerry's namesake. She also is survived by "Yoshi" and Josef whom she thought of as sons.

The family expresses appreciation to the Visiting Angels Company and their staff members, in particular Gail Thigpen whose tender care of Gerry spanned several years. Also special thanks to Hospice and its staff including nurse Lynese Danford, social worker Beth Plantz, and CNA Mary Motley whose thoughtful guidance provided special comfort. The family especially thanks Gerry's other long-time caregivers Tammy Bramlett and Madelyn Mazakas whose care of Gerry also was very greatly appreciated over the years. She also looked forward to the visits of church members and other friends such as Marilu Lilly (who brought the church bulletin and Gerry's favorite food, chocolate).

Visitation will be on Monday, March 28 at 10:00am at St. Andrew United Methodist Church in St. Albans with the funeral service immediately following at 12:00pm, the Rev. Dr. Ed Grant and the Rev. Krysta Rexrode Wolfe officiating. Interment will follow the funeral service, at Cunningham Memorial Park.

In lieu of flowers the family requests donations be made to St. Andrew United Methodist Church, 815 Kanawha Terrace, St. Albans, WV 25177, and designated for the Church Memorial Fund.

Family and friends are encouraged to share memories of Gerry on her tribute page at www.chapmanfuneralhomes.com.

Bartlett-Chapman Funeral Home, family-owned and located at 409 Sixth Avenue, St. Albans is honored to serve the Wyatt family.

Cemetery Details

Cunningham Memorial Park

815 Cunningham Lane
Saint Albans, WV 25177

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 28. 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

St. Andrew United Methodist Church
815 Kanawha Terrace
St. Albans, WV 25177

Funeral Service

MAR 28. 12:00 PM (ET)

St. Andrew United Methodist Church
815 Kanawha Terrace
St. Albans, WV 25177

Tribute Wall



“ *Geraldine "Gerry" Wyatt*

October 06, 2023 at 08:41 AM



“ *Aunt Gerry was one of the most lovely people I've ever met. We always looked forward to seeing her at family gatherings! She will be sorely missed! We love you Aunt Gerry!*



Joanna Moccia Kerr - March 27, 2016 at 10:09 PM



“ *To the Wyatt family, I never knew your mother, but I was a member of your Dad's scout troop for several years in the 1950's and 1960's. He was one of the greatest men I ever knew and your mother must have been a great woman also. Joe I know you probably don't remember me but we went through together. I know your mother will be missed by those who knew and loved her. Our prayers are with you.*
Jim Meddings Jr.

Jim Meddings Jr - March 26, 2016 at 08:43 PM



“ *Madeline Mazakas lit a candle in memory of Geraldine "Gerry" Wyatt*



Madeline Mazakas - March 26, 2016 at 05:55 PM

MM

“ *The Holy Spirit has called home a gentle soul.
May she find happiness in the realm of God
and his angels....Love you Gerry
Wyatt.....Madeline*



Madeline Mazakas - March 26, 2016 at 05:48 PM

TB

“ Wyatt Family and Friends

So glad you came to visit me..let me get you something to drink..how about a little bite to eat? This was Gerry's way; inviting, generous, gracious and always welcoming.

A pioneer in her field of early education, she inspired many in the St Albans community, of which, she committed her life.

Active well into her 90's, she participated in various committees within the area; always vigilant to the cause.

Her family and faith remained foremost in her life. She was a dedicated member of the St Andrews Methodist church and all it encompassed.

Let us not forget Gerry's sense of humor for she had a sharp wit! I recall a time when she was struggling in her health and I commented on how well she was looking and in "her way" she simply stated, "Well, how am I supposed to look?!"

I had the privilege and honor to care for Gerry over the last 3 yrs; her family entrusting in me and embracing me in their family circle. I am very grateful for their friendship.

I LOVE you Gerry {G} and am Blessed to have had the opportunity to be influenced by you!!

With Sympathy and Love,

Tammy Bramlett

Tammy Bramlett - March 26, 2016 at 05:09 PM

TB

“ Tammy Bramlett lit a candle in memory of Geraldine "Gerry" Wyatt



Tammy Bramlett - March 26, 2016 at 04:28 PM

BP

“ JOE/SORRY FOR THE LOSS OF YOUR MOTHER;I USE TO WALK AT H.SCHOOL TRACK AND WOULD ALWAYS SAY HELLO IF SHE WAS ON FRONT PORCH OR WORKING HER FLOWERS. DID NOT KNOW YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER VERY WELL BUT FELT LIKE I DID BY HAVING YOU AS SUCH A CLOSE FRIEND OVER THE YEARS. MAY SHE REST IN PEACE AND YOU, YOUR FAMILY ALSO FIND PEACE. The world a better place as result of her being and contributions. God Bless. Bill Phelps



BILL PHELPS - March 26, 2016 at 03:28 PM



“ I am so very sorry to hear about Mrs. Wyatt's passing. She was a very good person. I'm very happy that I had the opportunity to get to know Gerry & her husband Bill. I will keep your family in my thoughts & prayers. Sincerely, Lara Slack.

Lara Slack - March 25, 2016 at 09:59 PM

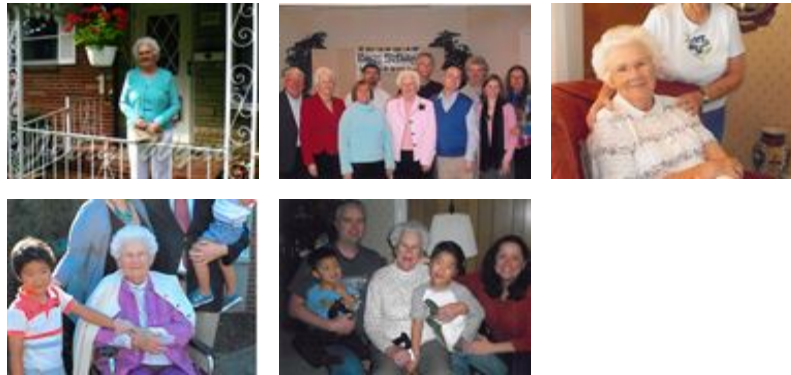
KE

“ The West Virginia and Kanawha County Associations of Retired School Employees extend their sincere sympathy to you, the family, in your sorrow. Blessings to all.

Kan. Co. Retired School Employees - March 25, 2016 at 02:24 PM



“ 81 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



Chapman Funeral Homes - March 25, 2016 at 01:58 PM

GB

“ *To the Wyatt family:*

Gerry and Bill were dear friends of the Bono family, going back to their teen years. We held them both in the highest esteem, and will always cherish their memories.

Henry and Gay Bono

gay bono - March 25, 2016 at 12:01 PM

FT

“ Dear Wyatt family.

It's a bittersweet day finding out that Gerry had passed away. but the other side of that is she is with the Lord. No more absences, no more pain for her.

We will always remember your mom and dad from their days on Wildwood Circle.

They were a blessing and made of the right stuff. Raised in a day where honor and virtue meant something. Great neighbors and friends. We will always remember Bill and Gerry with fond memories.

We will be traveling on Monday so with regrets we will not be able to attend the funeral service. Our daughters Esther and Hannah send their prayers as well. They now live in SC.

God bless you all. God give you peace and comfort for such a time as this. In Jesus name.

*Frank & Debbie Tettenburn
823 Wildwood Circle
St. Albans*

Frank Tettenburn - March 25, 2016 at 10:43 AM

FF

“ Dear Wyatt Family, we are sorry to learn of your loss. She was very active, touched many lives and will be thought of often. May your many shared family memories bring you comfort during this special time. May your prayers bring you the peace of God to guard your hearts. Philippians 4:6,7 Our sincere condolence to all of you.

Faust Family - March 25, 2016 at 05:22 AM