Mary Etta Williams

May 28, 1940 ~ April 15, 2015

On Wednesday, April 15, 2015 our Lord and Savior took Mary Etta home to be with her family.

In her family history reminiscences, which she wrote the last two years of her life, Mary Etta opened with the following: "I was born Mary Etta MacDonald and my address was Wrencoe Loop, Sandpoint, Idaho, U.S.A.. I am named for both my grandmothers Mary Elizabeth Bates MacDonald and Laura Etta Frisbee Williams. The hospital in Sandpoint, where I first drew breath, was a large white clapboard Victorian house with a wrap-around porch. The building still stands in town and has returned to its original purpose as a home. It always seemed to me an elegant place to begin one's journey through this world and perhaps it had a subconscious effect on my tastes and goals in life. I know I was shaped by the land of forests, gentle mountains, crystal lakes, and broad rivers that surrounded me and formed the basis for my explorations of the natural world. The land, plants, and animals were my friends and my teachers. I developed a strong sense of place and of belonging to the land which still survives in me today. From my family and community I learned the value of hard work, to take advantage of opportunities, and to find the good in where life takes you."

Mary Etta MacDonald Williams was born in Sandpoint, Idaho, May 28, 1940, to Clark and Margaret MacDonald whose families settled in the Pend O'reille area in the 1920\s. She attended grades 1 through 6 in a small, rural, one room community built school on Wrencoe Loop, and junior and senior high school in Sandpoint, graduating in 1958. At the University of Idaho, in 1962, she graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Home Economics. An extensive collection of newspaper articles, certificates and ribbons from 4-H and school activities reflect the pursuance of excellence early in life. Her first job was teaching high school "Home Ec" in Rocky Ford, Colorado.

In 1967, she graduated from Colorado State University with her Masters Degree in Clothing and Textiles. The University of Utah Home Economics Department hired her to teach Clothing and Textiles, and Fashion Design where she became a tenured instructor. Later, she served as Department Chair of Family and Consumer Studies. Her students and the University recognized her teaching with a number of honors. To show how blankets were made at the Utah Woolen Mill, she produced the film "From Fiber To Fabric." She studied for a doctorate at Utah State University. Over her career, she served in numerous scholarly and service organizations. Bob and she met at CSU. In 1968, Bob Williams and Mary Etta were married in Sandpoint. They settled in Salt Lake where Bob taught at Cyprus High School. Mary Etta was a bright, widely well-read, positive person, very considerate of others, ever listening with a smile, who enjoyed extensive traveling, photography, researching family history, and tending her flower gardens. Her love for and devotion to her family knew no bounds.

Always kind, caring, and forgiving, she met the challenge of learning about her body full of tumors with strength and optimism. The cancer organization and doctor assigned to annually monitor for the return of her Carcinoid cancer, after her 2001 surgery, failed to administer the required tests, Chromogranin A and Seratonin, which would have detected the Carcinoid cancer's return in time for successful treatment. Mary Etta never looked back and made the most of the time she had left. Mary Etta's sister, Winifred, died from breast cancer in 1999, leaving her daughter, Charliann, in the care of Mary Etta and Bob. Mary Etta will be laid to rest with her parents, Clark and Margaret, along with her sister Winifred, at Pinecrest Memorial Cemetery in Sandpoint.

A visitation will be held Friday, April 24, 2015 from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at the Larkin Sunset Lawn Mortuary (2350 E. 1300 S. Salt Lake City, Utah). A service will be held Saturday,May 9, 2015 at 2:00 pm, at the Coffelt Funeral Home, 109 N. Division Ave. Sandpoint, Idaho. www.coffeltfs@frontier.com.To those interested, flowers are appropriate. Salt Lake: www.roseshopflowers.com. Sandpoint: www.niemansflorist.net.