

Joan Willoughby Holmes

May 16, 1942 ~ June 7, 2024

Joan Willoughby “Mimi” Holmes passed away peacefully and painlessly into the arms of her loving Father in Heaven and her waiting father on June 7th, 2024, at 10:19 AM. When she passed, she was at her home in Sandy Utah, with her husband and son Ed by her side (Steve who lived farther away made it about 60 seconds later).

Joan was Born May 16, 1942, in Salt Lake City to Norman R. Willoughby and Ardis Jones. From a very young age she had to take responsibility to assist in the care and raising of her 3 younger siblings: Carole (Seeley), Lynn Willoughby and Doug Willoughby. She has a half-brother Earl Jones who is much younger. All her siblings survive her.

She recalls at a very young age seeing a man in a soldier’s uniform get out of a taxi in front of her house and asking “Mommy, who is that man?” It was her father returning from the Pacific Theater of World War 2. In the fierce fighting of Okinawa he took some Japanese machinegun bullets in his legs and spent the next six months in military hospitals. Until the day she died she always loved and cherished her
daddy. During her illness she carried a big picture of him in her purse showing it to everyone willing to look.

Mimi loved visiting Norman’s relatives in Roosevelt Utah. She was raised in Salt Lake City. In the 10th grade at Olympus High School she met her future husband, Bruce Holmes. It was love at first sight for Bruce, but it took Mimi a couple months to dispense with her current boyfriend. Bruce and Joan have been a pair ever since that day in 1958. They were seen together at all school functions, parties and activities and even shared a locker. Joan went to Granite High for her junior year. So, Bruce would leave Olympus at lunch and race down to Granite high, to see her before he had to race in his fast car back to Olympus. Bruce bought a $99 diamond ring and they were secretly engaged in their junior year of high school.

Within a week after high school, Bruce volunteered for advanced infantry training in the Army spending 6 months at Fort Ord and Camp Roberts in California. Advanced infantry training was grueling but the separation from Joan was worse. In every step of the long runs, the arduous 20-mile hikes and all the boring marches Bruce thought only of Joan.

After the Army, they easily stoked up their never-ending love affair until they ultimately decided to get married. They eloped and got married in Malad, Idaho on November 23, 1961, (solemnized in the Saint George Temple in 1963). Although Bruce was raised in an affluent family, neither he nor Joan needed more than a small 1-bedroom apartment to start their life together. The brand-new Chevy Impala convertible went back to Bruce’s dad, but that was okay because Joan had a 1953 Chevy Bel Aire and $400 cash in the bank.

Joan wanted a baby and on October 3, 1962, little Eddie Babe was born. Three years later Stevie Babe joined the family. They raised their boys in Salt Lake, West Valley City (then Hunter) and Holladay. Joan was an absolute

“mama bear” when it came to protecting her sons. It was not healthy to cross Joan or be disrespectful to her sons. She was a fierce protector as some schoolteachers and administrators found out.

When her sons were teens, their friends always thought Joan was very cool. The teenage friends sometimes spent nights in Joan’s house when they were having trouble at home.

Joan always wanted to help. She invited 3 Navajo Indian girls to live with her family. She also sponsored two families of Vietnamese Boat People.

In the late 1970s the family spent a lot of time camping on the boat at Lake Powell. Joan could not swim, and she was terrified of water but still made the trips on the boat. Each turn on the water, caused the boat to lean that direction and she would always scream “Bruce!!!” fearing he was tipping the boat over. In a sharp turn she once tipped over in her lawn chair in the back of the boat. She was so upset she took the Indians and immediately drove home. She was brave enough to once try waterskiing but when she got up on the water, she saw that she was headed out to the middle of the lake and let go of the rope.

Bruce and Joan were blessed to travel the world together including China, Egypt, Turkey, Lebanon, Mexico, South America, Central America, and all over Europe. When the boys were still at home, they were able to travel with them.

In 1985 they welcomed their first grandchild, Rachelle. Rachelle couldn’t say “grandma” but managed to say something like “Mimi.” The name stuck and that is what she is called by her family. Mimi leaves behind 7 grandchildren and 12 great grandchildren, each one deeply loved.

Bruce and Joan served 2 inner city missions. When Bruce retired, Joan had a personal revelation that she and Bruce needed to serve a full-time mission. They turned in their papers almost immediately and got a call to serve in South Carolina. They had requested South Africa, but for health reasons the church (rightfully so) was leery about sending Mimi out of the country. Charleston, South Carolina was home for a year.

No one loves kids more than Mimi. She loved kids everywhere and made special friends with them in South Carolina.

Mimi will be greatly missed but we all look forward to seeing her again on the other side in the presence of our heavenly parents.

Funeral Services will be held at the Dimple Dell Ward (10945 South 1700 East, Sandy Utah) as follows:

Viewing- 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm, June 24, 2024, at the ward
Viewing- 10:00 am to 10:45 am, June 25, 2024, at the ward
Funeral services 11:00 am to 12:00 noon, June 25, 2024, at the ward
Interment at Camp Williams Veteran’s Memorial Gardens on Redwood Road, approximately 1:00 pm after the funeral.

To view a recording Joan's service, please click on the tab above that says "Watch Service" or follow this link:
https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/AnY2c5vZGgFlJO3IseLQ3OTOJhlpJaGZ5o65BWh8abU-zBYSV4QHePOHZ9RKZE_2