

Marjorie Emma Nilson Pett

June 24, 1920 ~ July 17, 2021

Marjorie Emma Nilson Pett was born in Salt Lake City on June 24,1920. She was the first of three remarkable daughters born to Clarence and Olive Baer Nilson. Marge's amazing life ended peacefully at home on July 17, 2021. Of her beloved siblings, she was preceded in death by Shirl Groesbeck and is survived by Patti Owens.

As a child of the Great Depression and one of the last of the Greatest Generation, she lived a long and full life with determination, ingenuity, resourcefulness, practicality, and a sense of duty.

She attended Wasatch Elementary, Bryant Junior and East High schools. She received her BA from the University of Utah. She received her MFA from the University of Utah in 1972. Marge was attending the Chinouard Art Institute in LA when Pearl Harbor was attacked and she immediately returned to Salt Lake to participate in the war effort by inspecting munitions for Remington Arms.

Prior to her art training in LA, Marge worked as a ticket agent and baggage handler for American Airlines. Setting her sights higher, she trained for a pilot's license and obtained one.

It was during WWII that Marge met Stu who was on leave from his Naval assignment in the South Pacific. On the home front, he didn't stand a chance. Marge and Stu married on June 8, 1945. In 1950, with three kids in tow, they relocated to their home in Millcreek where Marge resided with the wildlife in the backyard until her death. She created a beautiful home, magnificent garden, and a landmark gathering place ("The Wall") for seven decades.

Marge, with her keen eye, creativity, natural talent and enthusiasm was an accomplished artist in every aspect of her life: master gardening, gourmet cooking (she and her sisters collected family recipes and made "The Baer Essentials" cookbook), painting and sculpting, fashion design, prize-winning quilting and knitting. Marge and her sisters opened Salt Lake's first yarn shop called "The Knitwits". Her station wagon was always packed with groceries, flats of flowers, pastries from Carol's, bushels of Cutler's corn, paint supplies, garden tools, cow tongue from Emigration Market, boxes of Bear Lake raspberries, bolts of fine fabric from the Yardstick, and bags of cement and dirt - and all from one day's outing.

Since Stu was a homebody and Marge had a great sense of adventure, she joined Morris Travel as an agent and travelled from Machu Picchu to the Nile and from Tokyo to Rome. But she loved best walking (with Stu) barefoot in the sand on Coronado beach in San Diego. Stu wanted to put his foot down when Marge packed four kids into the station wagon (with a canvas bag of water for the radiator) and took off for camping or travels to Monument Valley and San Francisco. But, Marge put the pedal to the metal because she wanted her kids to see and appreciate some of the wonders of the world. And Stu ended up having adventures anyway when rescuing Marge from any misadventures.

Marge was a social being and, over the years belonged to The Junior League of Salt Lake, Willow Creek Country Club, The Town Club, The Garden Club, a sewing club and a bridge club. She was well known for being smart, witty and very good company.

Her greatest joy, however, was in being a loving and dedicated wife, mother, sister, aunt, friend, and neighbor. She was deeply and widely loved.

Stu died in 2001. Marge is survived by her children; Susan (Mary), Stuart “Randy” (Mary Virginia), Richard “Rip“ (Claire), and Robert; six grandchildren (Amelia, Jake, Katya, Maxwell, Robbie, and Michael); and three great grandchildren.

Marge was a force of nature and one of life’s treasures. The family is deeply appreciative of Marge’s compassionate medical care from Dr. Hanadi Farrukh, Dr. Roger Freedman, Brenda Fish and Polly Chapman. The family extends special thanks to Kylee, Maria V., Hannah, and Antonio who devotedly cared for Marge and her home for many years. And the family expresses the deepest gratitude to her dear friends in life, in the neighborhood, and in her LDS ward (you know who you are and Marge’s family is indebted to you).

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations to The Utah Food Bank or The Road Home or the charity of your choice

Funeral services will be held on Saturday July 31, 2021 at 11 a.m. at the LDS Church on 20th E. 3900 S., followed by interment at the Salt Lake City Cemetery attended by immediate family members only. COVID precautions would be greatly appreciated.

Funeral arrangements by Larkin Mortuary; casket and floral arrangement by Julie Prince.

The service was previously recorded and can be viewed here:
https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/XFx_VHr2OxBvFXpWUbdWdhqT5gfGWmcAfU5RcwLWLzCQmoICtK0Dh_UKc4KDtV